

Alternative Resolution Patterns of Domestic Violence (KDRT) A Study of Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency

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Abstract

Domestic violence (*Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga/KDRT*) remains a significant socio-legal issue in Indonesia, particularly in rural communities where cultural norms influence conflict resolution. This study aims to analyze the patterns of domestic violence and examine the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency. A qualitative approach with a socio-legal perspective was employed to explore the interaction between formal legal frameworks and informal community practices. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using an interactive model involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that domestic violence in the study area predominantly affects women and manifests in three main forms: physical, psychological, and sexual violence. Physical violence is the most commonly reported, while psychological violence often precedes physical abuse, indicating a pattern of escalation. Sexual violence is underreported due to cultural stigma. The study also finds that most cases are resolved through informal mechanisms, particularly deliberation (*musyawarah*) and consensus (*mufakat*), facilitated by village authorities. Although these mechanisms are culturally accepted, they tend to prioritize reconciliation over justice and may not adequately protect victims. This study concludes that while alternative dispute resolution provides accessible and culturally relevant solutions, its effectiveness is limited by gender inequality, low legal awareness, and power imbalances. Strengthening legal literacy and integrating formal and informal mechanisms are essential to improve victim protection and ensure sustainable resolution outcomes.

Keywords: domestic violence, alternative dispute resolution, socio-legal approach, gender inequality, Indonesia

1. INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence, commonly referred to as *Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga* (KDRT) in Indonesia, remains a persistent and complex social issue that transcends cultural, economic, and geographical boundaries. It constitutes not only a violation of human rights but also a significant barrier to achieving social justice and gender equality. Globally, domestic violence has been recognized as a critical public health and legal concern, affecting millions of individuals, particularly women and children. In Indonesia, despite the existence of legal frameworks such as Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence, the prevalence of such cases continues to be alarming, especially in rural and semi-urban communities where socio-cultural norms often influence the handling of these incidents.

Domestic violence encompasses various forms of abuse, including physical, psychological, sexual, and economic violence. These forms of violence are often interconnected and may occur simultaneously within a household. Physical violence includes acts that cause bodily harm, such as hitting, slapping, or using objects to inflict injury. Psychological violence involves verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, and actions that undermine an individual's mental well-being. Sexual violence refers to forced sexual acts or coercion within a relationship, while economic violence includes controlling access to financial resources, thereby limiting the victim's independence. The multifaceted nature of domestic violence makes it particularly challenging to address, as it requires a comprehensive understanding of both legal and socio-cultural dimensions.

In many cases, domestic violence remains underreported due to stigma, fear of retaliation, economic dependence, and societal pressure to maintain family harmony. In Indonesian society, which highly values collectivism and family reputation, domestic violence is often perceived as a private matter rather than a public concern. This perception discourages victims from seeking formal legal assistance and instead encourages informal or alternative

mechanisms of conflict resolution. As a result, many cases are settled through mediation, negotiation, or deliberation at the community level, often facilitated by local leaders or village authorities.

The concept of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in handling domestic violence cases has gained attention in recent years, particularly in the context of restorative justice. Restorative justice emphasizes reconciliation, accountability, and the restoration of relationships rather than punitive measures. In Indonesia, this approach aligns with traditional values such as *musyawarah* (deliberation) and *mufakat* (consensus), which are deeply embedded in the social fabric. These values are also reflected in the philosophical foundation of the Indonesian state, Pancasila, which promotes social harmony and collective decision-making. Consequently, ADR mechanisms are often considered more culturally acceptable and accessible compared to formal legal procedures.

However, the use of alternative resolution mechanisms in domestic violence cases remains controversial. On one hand, ADR can provide a more flexible, efficient, and culturally sensitive approach to resolving conflicts. It allows victims and perpetrators to engage in dialogue, potentially leading to mutual understanding and behavioral change. On the other hand, critics argue that ADR may undermine the seriousness of domestic violence as a criminal offense and may fail to provide adequate protection and justice for victims. Power imbalances between victims and perpetrators, particularly in patriarchal societies, can further complicate the effectiveness of such approaches. Victims may feel pressured to reconcile or withdraw complaints, thereby perpetuating cycles of abuse.

Empirical studies have shown that the effectiveness of alternative resolution in domestic violence cases varies significantly depending on the context. Factors such as the severity of violence, the level of community awareness, the role of local authorities, and the availability of support services all influence the outcomes of these processes. In rural areas, where access to formal legal institutions may be limited, village leaders often play a crucial role in mediating disputes. Their authority and proximity to the community enable them to respond quickly to cases; however, their decisions may not always align with legal standards or victim protection principles.

Baruga Village, located in Pa'jukukang District of Bantaeng Regency, provides a relevant case study for examining alternative resolution patterns in domestic violence cases. The village has experienced a consistent number of reported domestic violence incidents over the years, indicating that this issue remains a significant concern within the community. Data from local authorities show fluctuations in reported cases from 2018 to 2023, reflecting both the persistence of the problem and the community's response mechanisms. In many instances, cases are resolved through deliberation facilitated by the village head, with formal legal action taken only in severe cases or when the victim insists on pursuing justice through the legal system.

The reliance on community-based resolution mechanisms in Baruga Village highlights the importance of understanding how local practices interact with formal legal frameworks. While the involvement of village authorities can enhance accessibility and cultural relevance, it also raises questions about accountability, consistency, and adherence to human rights standards. Furthermore, the tendency of victims to withdraw complaints following mediation suggests that alternative resolution mechanisms may not ყოველთვის address the root causes of domestic violence or provide long-term protection for victims.

Another critical aspect to consider is the role of gender dynamics in shaping the occurrence and resolution of domestic violence. In many traditional societies, including parts of Indonesia, patriarchal norms often place men in positions of authority within the household. This power imbalance can contribute to the normalization of violence against women and limit their ability to seek help. Women who experience domestic violence may face social stigma, economic dependency, and limited access to education or legal resources, all of which hinder

their capacity to escape abusive situations. Therefore, any approach to resolving domestic violence must take into account these structural inequalities and aim to empower victims.

In addition to gender dynamics, socio-economic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and low educational attainment also play a significant role in the occurrence of domestic violence. Financial stress and lack of resources can exacerbate tensions within households, leading to conflicts that may escalate into violence. In Baruga Village, as in many other rural areas, economic challenges are a common feature of daily life, potentially contributing to the prevalence of domestic violence. Addressing these underlying factors requires not only legal interventions but also broader social and economic development efforts.

Despite the growing body of literature on domestic violence and alternative dispute resolution, there remains a gap in understanding how these mechanisms operate at the local level, particularly in rural Indonesian contexts. Most existing studies focus on urban settings or formal legal systems, leaving community-based practices underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the patterns of alternative resolution of domestic violence cases in Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency. It seeks to analyze the forms of violence that occur, the processes through which cases are resolved, and the effectiveness of these mechanisms in achieving justice and protecting victims.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on the intersection between formal legal frameworks and informal community practices in handling domestic violence. By exploring how local values, norms, and institutions influence the resolution of cases, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in addressing domestic violence in diverse contexts. Furthermore, the findings are expected to provide practical insights for policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders in developing more effective and inclusive strategies for preventing and responding to domestic violence.

Based on the background and issues outlined above, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) What forms of domestic violence occur in Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency? (2) How are domestic violence cases resolved through alternative mechanisms within the community? and (3) How effective are these alternative resolution mechanisms in addressing domestic violence and protecting victims? Accordingly, the objectives of this study are to identify the patterns of domestic violence, analyze the processes of alternative resolution, and evaluate their effectiveness in the local context.

In conclusion, domestic violence remains a critical issue that requires a multidimensional approach involving legal, social, and cultural considerations. While alternative resolution mechanisms offer potential benefits in terms of accessibility and cultural relevance, their effectiveness depends on various factors, including the protection of victims' rights and the balance of power between parties. By examining the case of Baruga Village, this study aims to shed light on the opportunities and challenges associated with community-based approaches to resolving domestic violence, thereby contributing to the broader discourse on justice and human rights.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design and Approach

This study employed a qualitative research design with a socio-legal approach to explore alternative resolution patterns of domestic violence (Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga/KDRT) in Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency. A qualitative approach was selected because this study aims to understand social phenomena, meanings, and practices related to domestic violence resolution within a specific community context. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and interactions, particularly in relation to culturally embedded mechanisms such as deliberation (*musyawarah*) and consensus (*mufakat*). The socio-legal perspective was applied to examine how formal legal frameworks, particularly Law Number 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, interact with informal community-based dispute resolution practices. This approach

enables the analysis of both normative legal provisions and their implementation in real-life contexts, especially in rural communities where informal mechanisms often dominate.

2.2 Research Site and Context

The research was conducted in Baruga Village, located in Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. This location was selected purposively due to the relatively high number of reported domestic violence cases and the prevalence of alternative resolution practices facilitated by local authorities. The village provides a relevant setting for examining how domestic violence cases are addressed through both formal and informal mechanisms.

2.3 Informants and Sampling Technique

The study utilized purposive sampling to select informants who were directly involved in or had knowledge of domestic violence cases and their resolution processes. The selection criteria included individuals who:

1. Have direct experience with domestic violence cases (victims or family members),
2. Are involved in handling or mediating cases (village officials, community leaders), and
3. Possess institutional roles related to law enforcement or social services.

The key informants consisted of:

1. Village Head and village officials,
2. Community leaders and religious figures,
3. Victims of domestic violence (where accessible and ethically appropriate),
4. Law enforcement officers or related stakeholders.

This sampling strategy ensured that the data collected reflected multiple perspectives on the issue under investigation.

2.4 Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through multiple qualitative methods to ensure depth and triangulation:

1. In-depth Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected informants to explore their experiences, perceptions, and roles in resolving domestic violence cases. The interview guide included questions on types of violence, resolution mechanisms, decision-making processes, and perceived effectiveness.

2. Observation

Non-participant observation was employed to understand the social context, community interactions, and practices related to dispute resolution. This included observing community meetings or informal mediation processes when possible.

3. Documentation

Document analysis was conducted on relevant records, including reports of domestic violence cases, village administrative data, legal documents, and policy frameworks. These documents provided supporting evidence and contextual background for the study.

2.5 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis followed an interactive model as proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of three main stages:

1. Data Reduction

Raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were organized, coded, and categorized based on relevant themes, such as types of violence, resolution mechanisms, and influencing factors.

2. Data Display

The reduced data were presented in the form of narrative descriptions, matrices, and thematic groupings to facilitate interpretation and comparison.

3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification

Conclusions were drawn based on recurring patterns and relationships identified in the data. These findings were continuously verified through cross-checking with multiple data sources to ensure accuracy and consistency.

2.6 Validity and Reliability (Trustworthiness)

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, this study applied several validation techniques:

1. **Triangulation:** Data triangulation was conducted by comparing information from different sources (informants, observations, and documents).
2. **Member Checking:** Selected informants were asked to verify the accuracy of the data and interpretations.
3. **Prolonged Engagement:** The researcher engaged sufficiently in the field to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research context.
4. **Peer Debriefing:** Discussions with colleagues or experts were conducted to review and refine the analysis.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

Given the sensitive nature of domestic violence, this study adhered to strict ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. The confidentiality and anonymity of informants were maintained by using pseudonyms or initials. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Additionally, special attention was given to the safety and psychological well-being of victims involved in the study.

2.8 Research Limitations

This study acknowledges several limitations. First, access to victims of domestic violence was limited due to the sensitive nature of the issue and social stigma. Second, reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias. Third, the findings are context-specific and may not be generalized to other regions with different socio-cultural characteristics. However, the study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of alternative dispute resolution in rural communities.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Results

This study reveals that domestic violence (KDRT) in Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency remains a persistent and evolving social problem. Based on interviews, observations, and document analysis, it was found that domestic violence cases are not only frequent but also tend to be underreported due to socio-cultural pressures and limited legal awareness among victims. The data indicate that the number of domestic violence cases fluctuated between 2018 and 2023, with a general increasing trend. In 2018, there were 8 reported cases, which increased to 11 cases in 2019 and reached 12 cases in 2020. Although there was a slight decrease in 2021, cases rose again in 2022 and 2023. These findings suggest that domestic violence remains a recurring issue that has not been effectively mitigated at the community level.

One of the key findings of this study is that the majority of victims are women, particularly wives, indicating a strong gender dimension in domestic violence cases. Women often occupy vulnerable positions within the household due to economic dependency, social expectations, and limited access to legal resources. As a result, many victims choose not to report incidents or withdraw complaints after initial reporting. The study also identifies three main forms of domestic violence occurring in the research location:

3.1.1. Physical Violence

Physical violence is the most dominant form of domestic violence in Baruga Village. It includes acts such as hitting, slapping, and using blunt objects to harm victims. Informants reported that perpetrators often use everyday household items such as wood, buckets, or broom handles to inflict injury. Some victims suffer minor injuries, while others experience severe physical harm. Interviews with community leaders and village officials indicate that physical violence is frequently reported compared to other forms of violence because its effects are visible and more difficult to conceal.

However, even in such cases, victims often hesitate to pursue legal action due to fear of social stigma or family breakdown.

3.1.2. Psychological Violence

Psychological violence is another prevalent form, although it is less visible than physical violence. It includes verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, and actions that cause emotional distress. Victims often experience fear, anxiety, and loss of self-confidence. Findings show that psychological violence often precedes physical violence, suggesting a pattern of escalation within abusive relationships. For instance, verbal insults and threats may gradually intensify, eventually leading to physical assault. This pattern highlights the need for early intervention mechanisms to prevent the escalation of violence.

3.1.3. Sexual Violence

Although less frequently reported, sexual violence is also present in domestic relationships. It involves coercion or forced sexual acts without the consent of the victim. Due to cultural taboos and stigma, cases of sexual violence are significantly underreported, making it difficult to assess their true prevalence. In addition to identifying forms of violence, the study also examines the mechanisms used to resolve domestic violence cases. The findings indicate that most cases in Baruga Village are resolved through informal or alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms, particularly deliberation (*musyawarah*) facilitated by village authorities. Village leaders play a central role in mediating disputes between victims and perpetrators. The resolution process typically involves negotiation and consensus-building, aiming to restore harmony within the family. Legal action is generally considered a last resort and is only pursued in severe cases or when the victim insists on formal justice.

Another important finding is that many victims withdraw their complaints after mediation. This withdrawal is often influenced by social pressure, emotional ties, economic dependence, and the desire to maintain family unity. While mediation may provide short-term solutions, it does not always address the root causes of domestic violence. Furthermore, the study highlights that victims' understanding of legal rights remains limited. Many victims are unaware of the protections provided under the Domestic Violence Law, which reduces their ability to seek justice and protection. This lack of awareness contributes to the persistence of domestic violence cases in the community. Overall, the results demonstrate that domestic violence in Baruga Village is characterized by recurring patterns of abuse, gender inequality, and reliance on informal resolution mechanisms. While these mechanisms are culturally accepted, their effectiveness in ensuring justice and victim protection remains questionable.

3.2 Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into the dynamics of domestic violence and its resolution in rural Indonesian contexts. The persistence of domestic violence in Baruga Village reflects broader structural and cultural challenges that hinder effective prevention and intervention. First, the dominance of physical violence in reported cases aligns with existing literature, which suggests that visible forms of violence are more likely to be recognized and reported. However, the presence of psychological and sexual violence indicates that domestic violence is a multidimensional phenomenon that extends beyond physical harm. The pattern of escalation from psychological to physical violence observed in this study reinforces the need for early detection and intervention strategies.

Second, the strong gender dimension of domestic violence highlights the role of patriarchal norms in shaping both the occurrence and resolution of violence. Women's vulnerability is closely linked to their socio-economic position and limited access to resources. This finding is consistent with feminist perspectives that view domestic violence as a manifestation of unequal power relations within the household. The reliance on alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, particularly deliberation and consensus, reflects the influence of local cultural values. In Indonesian society, *musyawarah* is considered an ideal method for resolving conflicts, as it emphasizes harmony and collective decision-making. From a cultural perspective, this approach is highly relevant and acceptable. However, from a legal and human rights perspective, the use of ADR in domestic violence cases raises several concerns. Domestic violence is a criminal offense under Indonesian law, and its resolution through informal mechanisms may undermine the rule of law. In many cases, mediation prioritizes reconciliation over justice, potentially allowing perpetrators to avoid accountability.

The tendency of victims to withdraw complaints after mediation further complicates the issue. While withdrawal may reflect voluntary decisions, it is often influenced by external pressures such as family expectations, economic dependence, and fear of stigma. This suggests that ADR mechanisms may not fully empower victims but instead reinforce existing power imbalances. Another critical issue is the limited legal awareness among victims. The findings indicate that many women are not fully informed about their rights and the legal protections available to them. This lack of awareness reduces their ability to make informed decisions and seek appropriate support. Therefore, increasing legal literacy is essential for improving the effectiveness of domestic violence interventions. The role of village authorities as mediators is both a strength and a limitation. On one hand, their proximity to the community enables quick and accessible responses to cases. On the other hand, their decisions may lack consistency and may not always align with legal standards or victim protection principles. This highlights the need for capacity-building programs to enhance the competence of local leaders in handling domestic violence cases.

From a policy perspective, the findings suggest that a hybrid approach combining formal legal mechanisms and community-based practices may be more effective. While ADR can be used for minor conflicts, serious cases of domestic violence should be handled through formal legal processes to ensure accountability and deterrence. Additionally, addressing the root causes of domestic violence requires a broader approach that includes economic empowerment, education, and social awareness. Financial difficulties and family conflicts identified in this study indicate that domestic violence is not only a legal issue but also a socio-economic problem. Finally, this study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the complexities of domestic violence resolution in rural settings. It demonstrates that while alternative mechanisms are widely used, their effectiveness is limited by structural inequalities and cultural norms. Therefore, future interventions should focus on integrating legal enforcement with community-based strategies, while prioritizing victim protection and empowerment.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Summary of Findings

This study demonstrates that domestic violence (Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga/KDRT) in Baruga Village, Pa'jukukang District, Bantaeng Regency remains a persistent social issue characterized by recurring patterns and complex socio-cultural dynamics. The findings reveal that domestic violence predominantly affects women, particularly wives, who are often positioned in vulnerable socio-economic conditions. The study identifies three main forms of violence: physical, psychological, and sexual violence. Physical violence is the most dominant and visible form, followed by psychological violence, which often serves as a precursor to physical abuse. Sexual violence, although less frequently reported, remains a critical concern due to cultural stigma and underreporting. Additionally, the study finds that domestic violence cases are largely resolved through informal mechanisms, particularly deliberation (*musyawarah*) and consensus (*mufakat*), facilitated by village authorities. While these approaches are culturally accepted, they do not always guarantee justice or long-term protection for victims.

4.2 Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the socio-legal and gender studies literature by highlighting the interaction between formal legal frameworks and informal community-based practices in resolving domestic violence cases. The findings support the perspective that domestic violence is not merely a legal issue but also a socio-cultural phenomenon shaped by patriarchal norms, power relations, and local values. Furthermore, the study enriches the discourse on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by demonstrating its dual nature. On one hand, ADR reflects restorative justice principles and cultural relevance; on the other hand, it may perpetuate inequality and limit victim protection when applied in cases involving power imbalances. The study also reinforces feminist theoretical perspectives that view domestic violence as a manifestation of structural inequality, where gender roles and socio-economic dependency influence both the occurrence and resolution of violence.

4.3 Practical Implications

The findings of this study have important implications for policymakers, local governments, and community stakeholders. First, there is a need to strengthen the role of village authorities in handling

domestic violence cases by providing training on legal frameworks, victim protection, and gender-sensitive approaches. Second, increasing legal awareness among community members, particularly women, is crucial. Educational programs and outreach initiatives should be implemented to inform individuals about their rights and the legal protections available under the Domestic Violence Law. Third, collaboration between formal legal institutions (such as police and courts) and informal community mechanisms should be enhanced to ensure that cases are handled appropriately. While ADR may be suitable for minor disputes, serious cases of domestic violence must be addressed through formal legal processes to ensure accountability and deterrence. Finally, economic empowerment programs for women should be promoted to reduce dependency and enhance their ability to escape abusive situations.

4.4 Limitations of the Study

This study acknowledges several limitations. First, the sensitive nature of domestic violence limited access to victims, resulting in potential underrepresentation of their experiences. Second, the reliance on qualitative data may introduce subjectivity and bias in interpretation. Third, the findings are context-specific to Baruga Village and may not be fully generalizable to other regions with different socio-cultural conditions. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of domestic violence and alternative resolution mechanisms in rural communities, which remain underexplored in existing literature.

4.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should expand the scope of analysis by incorporating comparative studies across different regions to better understand variations in domestic violence patterns and resolution mechanisms. Quantitative approaches may also be employed to measure the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution in reducing recurrence rates of domestic violence. Additionally, further studies should focus on the long-term impact of mediation and reconciliation processes on victims' well-being and safety. Research exploring the role of institutional support systems, such as shelters, counseling services, and legal aid, would also contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of effective intervention strategies. Finally, interdisciplinary approaches combining legal, sociological, and psychological perspectives are recommended to address the multifaceted nature of domestic violence more holistically.

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