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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH THE PERFORMANCE OF MADONNA SIN VALOR



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NUR FATWA SYUHADA BINTI BAHROM

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2023



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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH THE PERFORMANCE OF MADONNA SIN
VALOR

NUR FATWA SYUHADA BINTI BAHROM

DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN
PERFORMANCE STUDIES
(RESEARCH AND COURSEWORK MODE)

FACULTY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2023



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ABSTRACT

This study examines the issue of domestic violence against women in Malaysia, utilising Leo Tolstoy's theory as a foundational reference. It incorporates Bertolt Brecht's V-effect techniques to encourage critical thinking about domestic violence. By integrating these two distinct approaches, the researcher aims to evoke emotions and facilitate scrutiny and critique of domestic violence issues. The study uses qualitative methods to collect primary data through interviews, surveys, participant observations, focus group discussions, movie reels, and questionnaires. Secondary data sources such as articles, journal books, and previously published data are also utilised. The study's primary objective is to provide participants with an immersive experience of domestic violence situations, particularly in phase 1, known as "The Experience." In this phase, participants are exposed to real domestic problems to evoke their emotions and feelings regarding domestic violence. Phase 2, known as 'The Engagement', involves interactions between the actors and participants, allowing the researchers to observe participants' reactions based on their experiences in Phase 1. In Phase 3, known as 'The Reflection', the study analyses participants' thought processes and responses to domestic violence issues after completing phases 1 and 2. Consequently, the study finds that participants who undergo all three performance phases gain a deeper understanding of domestic violence issues and exhibit increased awareness. The participants' feedback is overwhelmingly positive. This study raises awareness within the community regarding the severity of domestic violence, empowering individuals to assess and respond appropriately if they encounter such situations.

KEGANASAN RUMAH TANGGA MENERUSI PERSEMBAHAN MADONNA SIN VALOR

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini memfokuskan kepada isu keganasan rumah tangga terhadap golongan wanita di Malaysia dengan menggunakan pendekatan dari Leo Tolstoy sebagai asas rujukan terhadap kajian ini. Ia juga menggabungkan teknik V-effect dari Bertolt Brecht bagi menggalakkan pemikiran yang kritis mengenai keganasan rumah tangga. Dengan menyatukan dua pendekatan berbeza ini, ia bertujuan untuk membangkitkan emosi dan memudahkan penelitian dan kritikan terhadap isu keganasan rumah tangga. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah kualitatif bagi mengumpul data primer melalui temu bual, tinjauan, pemerhatian peserta, perbincangan kumpulan fokus, filem, dan soal selidik. Sumber data sekunder seperti artikel, buku jurnal dan data yang diterbitkan sebelum ini juga digunakan. Objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk memberikan pengalaman terhadap peserta dan perasaan yang mendalam mengenai situasi keganasan rumah tangga, terutamanya dalam fasa 1, yang dikenali sebagai '*The Experience*'. Dalam fasa ini, peserta didedahkan kepada situasi masalah rumah tangga yang sebenar untuk membangkitkan emosi dan perasaan mereka mengenai keganasan rumah tangga. Fasa 2, dikenali sebagai '*The Engagement*', ia melibatkan interaksi antara pelakon dan peserta, membolehkan penyelidik memerhati reaksi peserta berdasarkan pengalaman mereka dalam Fasa 1. Dalam fasa 3, dikenali sebagai '*The Reflection*', di dalam fasa ini mengkaji ingin melihat dan menganalisis proses pemikiran peserta dan tindak balas terhadap isu keganasan rumah tangga selepas melalui fasa 1 dan 2. Oleh itu, kajian ini mendapati bahawa peserta yang telah menjalani ketiga-tiga fasa tersebut mendapat pemahaman yang lebih dalam pemahaman dan kesedaran terhadap isu keganasan rumah tangga. Maklum balas para peserta adalah sangat positif. Kajian ini dapat meningkatkan kesedaran dalam komuniti mengenai keterukan keganasan rumah tangga, memperkasakan individu untuk menilai dan bertindak balas dengan sewajarnya jika mereka menghadapi situasi sedemikian.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Inspiration and Motivation

Inspiration occurs when somebody sees or hears something that causes them to have exciting new ideas or want to create something, especially in art and music. (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d.) Motivation is the act of motivating and the condition of being inspired. (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) This proposal is born out of my personal experience and surroundings. They are my inspiration and motivation.



The Day My Life Changed

Regarding my personal experience, my childhood was delightful, followed by my teenage life. Unfortunately, I had a few abusive relationships from my experience. I was a little girl full of smiles and joy in my life. My father showered me with love and attention as I see no man I had ever met was like my father, and I never loved any other man as much as I loved my father in my life. I always did things with my father and most likely acted a little like a boy. However, my mother treated me differently, and I did not get so much love and attention from her as she perhaps did not know how to show it to me. For her, it seemed to yell and hit me was how she showed me her love. When I got into secondary school, I found that most of my female friends were in a relationship with their boyfriends, but it was different with me as I did not want to have any connection as I was scared and did not trust boys much. I do not trust boys because most of my female friends have been used by their boyfriends -for having sex, for fun, and even getting involved in drug abuse and being hit and physically abused; my friends, due to drug abuse, were also often beaten by their boyfriends. From my perspective, I saw how my father acted differently towards my mother and me at that time. Consequently, I didn't want to have a boyfriend as most boys did not protect girls but took advantage of girls.





Sadly, even the most beautiful moment I had in my life will eventually end. The most traumatic moment that happened was when I was seventeen years old. This story begins with one man. I will not reveal his name and will keep it as it is. It happened when this man got to know me through my mother, as his sister-in-law was a friend of my mother. He always comes to my family's house, brings food, and talks to my mother. One day, he asked for my phone number and started getting to know me. Initially, he seemed like such a nice guy; even my mother told me the same thing. He always asked permission from my mother to pick me up from school, take me out shopping, and ask someone to come together with me, and we never went out if it was just the both of us. However, I still remember that late afternoon, he picked me up from school by himself, and I was stunned as he had never come to pick me up by himself before, usually with my mother or siblings. Inside the car, he told me that we would go to his niece's birthday party, and I said I needed to ask my mother first, and then he said my mother allowed him to take me to that party. Afterwards, when I arrived at his brother's house, I did not see any party or people coming around, so I questioned him where the party was then, and he said it would be a bit late as it did not settle the preparation. Suddenly, his brother came out of that house and invited him and me into that house. I was nervous and panicked, but I felt better and got into that house when I saw his brother's wife and niece.





That moment was the most anxious moment when I did not see any preparation for a birthday party - no decorations, no food preparations; basically, nothing happened when my feet stepped into that house. My nerves tingled with fear when I saw his brother taking drugs near the kitchen. I started to panic and asked him to take me back home. Once he realised I knew there was no birthday party, he pulled me, took me to his brother's room, and locked me inside. I ran over and tried to unlock it but couldn't get out; I was trapped. I looked at him, but he was laughing, and then it hit me. I did scream and ask for help from his brother's wife, but it seemed nothing happened; no one cared and just pretended nothing happened. I cried so severely and screamed and prayed that somebody would help me, but no one cared. 'I want to go home,' I said, my voice beginning to shake. 'Let me out, right now!' I demanded.

After that, he screamed at me and asked me to shut my mouth, and he held me so hard and could not even fight him back as I felt weak and powerless. From that moment, I found my life was dark, and it just felt like I was lost in the middle of the ocean at night, and it changed me and my whole world.

Starting from that day, I feel dirty and useless. I was scared to tell anyone; I felt depressed and wanted to hide from everyone, including him. Unfortunately, I could not hide from him as he haunted me. He threatened me with his words, "No one will marry you", "No one will accept you as a wife or even girlfriend", "Only me will understand you", "I will marry you", and many more. He did not even say sorry for





what he did to me but felt so happy as he had power over me. Since that day, he has tried to control my life, abuse me physically or mentally, and show his actual colour. I tried to break up with him, but he got aggressive and hit me. That man ruined my life. I could not run away from him. My mental health was horrible, and I could not even think of a way out of this life. He was jealous and did not let me work and talk to anyone after school. It happened almost one year. It is always the same every day and every night. I became a different person, not even smiling or enjoying my life. I cried every night before I went to bed and wished the next day would be a better day for me and God would give me strength to fight him back as everything he did was totally against my will.



Finally, after almost one year of such a horrifying life, my prayers were answered. I was free from him, and I had the strength to fight him and just left him without worrying what he might do to me as he said he would blackmail me and make sure my life suffered forever. However, he forgot that every person had their limit when it came to an end; it happened one evening after I finished my part-time job as a baker; I went to the snooker centre with my female friend. That guy came to me and started to attack me and swear at me, and he pulled me from the stairs till downstairs, and my waist hit the fire extinguisher, and he also almost hit me by using his helmet. Luckily, one of my friends stopped him, and I was on my feet, running towards my friend, grabbing my phone, calling my mother, and asking my mother to take me home. I was





crying, and not even one word came out of my lips as I could not tell her anything about my terrifying moment. I do not want my mother to blame herself after what that guy did to me as he told me, “Your V was paid by the money I gave to your mother” before he left that evening. He tried to manipulate my family, especially my mother, by giving her some money to show that he was a generous guy, but he was not. On the other hand, he just wants to take advantage of me and cover up his wrong side by pretending to be such a generous guy towards my family.

Starting from that evening, I did not see him anymore. I just wanted to sleep for a hundred-thousand years. I was quiet and lost my confidence level. I had horrible dreams and often woke up thinking he might come and hit me and abuse me. I scarcely had the strength to cry, but the tears did come - in pitiful sobs. I was mentally exhausted as well as physically broken. It was going to be a long road to recovery for me. I no longer cared whether I lived or died. It is a bizarre feeling when you no longer care about anything. Everything just went black and white. There is no colour, my mind has completely shut down, and I am going on autopilot. It sounds like just the living dead. It was not easy for me, and I am sure for other women who have been abused mentally and physically by their partners. Rebuilding my life to become like today was not easy, I've been fighting and keep moving and fighting for myself and learning to love myself back. It is a hard road, but it is worth it, and today I am the most robust and powerful woman, and I believe I do.





Her Secret

Subsequently, my creative work's inspiration came from my personal experience and appeared from others' experiences and my surroundings. This story begins with one friend of mine. She is such a clever girl and always the best student in school. I started to know her when I went to the same kindergarten school. Every morning, we walked to school, picked a flower, and put it into our ears—the best feeling was when we danced as if we had caught a butterfly. Afterwards, we laugh so hard that we cannot get that feeling from anywhere as we enjoy ourselves as kids. After finishing school, we went to the playground. We played without thinking about tiredness, or we both would get into trouble with our mother as our school outfits would be covered by mud sometimes, especially after a rainy day. We always caught up with one another if our parents got angry, and we will hide in bushes or climb the tree just like my mother did when she was a teenager to hide from my grandmother. It was a good memory I love to recall and write about in my writings. Those memories of being a girl without being harmed or abused by a man are just the happiest moments I can remember forever, and she will surely recognise them too.

Eventually, all the good memories only can be remembered, they will not be coming back into my life or her life, but it is worth it to be recognised as something good to be reflected in our lives. I still remember one series that I watched before





called 'How to get away from Murder', which is an American Series on Netflix created by Peter Nowalk. In that series, the dialogue from the old lady (Ophelia), the mother of Annalise Keating, captivated me. In that scene on season 1, episode 13: Mama's here now, Ophelia did mention;

Men were put on this planet to take things, you know? They take your money; they take your land; they take a woman and any other thing they can put their grabby hands on. That's men. Women are made to give love, nurture, protect, and care for. That's a woman.¹

(How to Get Away with Murder, 0:24:29-0:25:12)

From what she said truthfully, it has the truth on it according to what my friend experienced in her life at that young age when she was only eleven years old when an adult took her beautiful life only for being such a little girl! I think she will not erase it from her mind from what she was through in her childhood.

I knew something was wrong with my friend. She was different, and she did not seem cheerful and gleeful. I did try to entertain her: Her face looked gloomy and despairing. But she was not interested. Suddenly, she started to cry, and she held my hand tightly. I began to panic as she had never acted like that before. She kept mumbling, 'I hate myself.' 'I hate myself.' 'I hate myself.' I hated seeing my friend act like that, and it terrified me. Afterwards, she started to share her problem with me

¹ 'How to Get Away with Murder', S1: E 13 Mama's here now (0:24:29-0:25:12) (Netflix)





as she knew I could keep her secret, so she told me that her brother-in-law had been molesting her. I was blank and did not know what to do. That news just makes me shocked and feel like something just knocked out my head.

Her story began when she went to the bathroom to take a bath, and after she finished her shower, suddenly, her brother-in-law was sitting at the dining table. She was stupefied as she wore a towel to cover her body. Her brother-in-law came to her and asked her to remove her towel. However, she refused, and he began to touch her breast, push her inside the bathroom, and molest her. She was startled and froze as she did not understand what was happening, and tears appeared in her eyes. The stored tears continued to flow, and the sobs wracked her body, robbing it of the ability to speak and scream. She can only hide and does not want to see her brother-in-law any more. She was scared to tell her sister as she worried that her sister did not believe what she said. Sadly, those bad memories remained in her mind forever, and she kept them for herself to make sure everyone was happy, especially her sister. However, that evil guy will still be her enemy, and she will not forgive him as that kind of behaviour cannot be accepted, and it was awful and ashamed to be called a man.





A Country Side Girl

Apart from that, another inspiration and motivation for my creative work came from observing my mother. She was born as a little girl living in a village on the East Coast side. She did not have a chance to do things she wanted and, more likely, had no freedom. She cannot say or do what she wants as my late grandmother and grandfather were very strict and did not allow her to have a good time with her friends. Regrettably, she grew up as a conservative child. Previously, she married my father and lived so happily with him. My father took her to Singapore, where my father used to work before. My mother seemed so happy over the past years as she could work and get her own money, drive a car, and get a driving license my father paid for. My father bought a car and gave it to my mother as a present, and always took her out and spent time together; she has a lot of friends that she can spend time with during her free time.

Unfortunately, my father changed to a conservative mindset and became very protective once he became religious. He tends to control my mother's life - he does not allow my mother to go out without him, but at the same time, he also does not take my mother out anywhere like in the good old days since he turned out to be a religious person. For me, it is unfair, and he cannot make my mother stay at home and do all the cleaning, cooking, washing and taking care of the child while he did not





even help my mother do that.

Furthermore, my father was keen to use bad words, constantly complained, and was impatient. For instance, if, let's say, my mother cooked a bit late, he groans and gets angry rather than just buy the food or help my mother cook for that day, every morning my mothers must prepare him coffee or tea or otherwise, he will be swearing at my mother. Sometimes I do not understand why someone who became a religious person has to act like that rather than be full of patience and think positively. I feel sorry for what my mother has to face in her life. She could not run away from him as she did not have any job, and if she left him, she would not have a place to stay.



Whenever I see my mother cry, my mind keeps saying this kind of marriage it's not what I dreamed of. I would rather be single forever than be with someone who wants to control my life. Control someone's life that is not love; love supposedly supports each other, helps, and understands each other. All the stories I wrote have inspired me to bring this issue to the community. Many women face the same issues and problems as my mother, beloved friend, and myself.

Fervently

The stories I have written are all based on my own experience and other's experience based on my observations, which I kept in my heart for so long that I am scared to



reveal them to people. However, now I am a strong woman, and I know that was not my fault, my friend's or even my mother's fault. It happens without our wish for it. I never thought that being a woman was very tough. To be honest, there are many more stories about my life and others' stories regarding abuse and violence against women that I had experienced. At this time, I took a chance to do something for women, especially in Malaysia, to fight for themselves and their rights. No more obeying a man who doesn't know how to respect women, no more wasted tears just because we feel bad for people and keep blaming ourselves. For me, this is the time to change and be a woman full of spirit, and power with a strong mind, good health, and a happy life.

1.2 The Objective of Creation

There are three main objectives that I would like to achieve from my creation of this creative work:

1) To identify the issue of domestic violence against women in Malaysia that can bring it to the next stage.

I only knew the main title, domestic violence, but I need to learn more about it in this research. For instance, domestic violence can be in many ways; physical abuse, sexual,

financial, and psychological. In this research, I will find out more about domestic violence so that it will be helpful for my study.

2) To present a creative work that applies Leo Tolstoy's theory on domestic violence issues through V-effect techniques.

I am choosing Leo Tolstoy's theory as a foundation of my performance to help the actor to express the emotions and convey them to the participants. The V-effect techniques are a tool to bring the participants' ability to reflect or think differently about domestic violence issues at the end of the performance. Additionally, the V-effect techniques will help my participants think critically about domestic violence,

as I would like their brains working while watching my performance rather than being lost.

3) To scrutinise the participants' responses based on my performance of my creative work.

Participants' responses are an essential part of my creative work process - the outcome that the audience and my actors will get from the performance. I want people to realise how important it is to be aware of domestic violence, how many guises it has, and what the consequences are for women's (and the family's overall) health - both physical and mental. And also what the effects are on women's career and their futures.



1.3 The Goal of Creation

Everything that we do in life we will put goals on what we would like to achieve in everything that we do in life. When we wake up, we will write down a list or just say what we would like to do for that day. Many of us will set a target for what we want to achieve yearly. All of that list we have written down yet. Therefore, the goal of the creation of my creative work is going to be simple: to bring out a discussion and to expose the issue of domestic violence in our society in Malaysia, especially for women, so that they can take action accordingly, based on what they have faced in their lives. Thus, my performance will help people think differently about what they've been doing now or before is relevant to their happiest life and question what they should do when someone takes their happiness away and treats them without value. Sometimes people need something almost like a 'start button', an impetus that will stir their memories so that they will understand the consequences of what they have been suffering in their lives. The goal also could help them with what is the right thing to do when they feel there is no way out from the terrible burden they are experiencing. No one deserves to be hit, treated without respect, or tortured.





1.4 Contextualization Topic

In this section, some terminologies are used to describe in principle. It will help the researcher steer any uncertain words in the writing journey and production. A more comprehensive and extensive report will be in Chapter Two (2), presenting a literature review and creative work review that can be used as equipoise and differentiation.

1.4.1 ‘*Madonna Sin Valor*’

‘*Madonna Sin Valor*’ is the idea of the title of my creative work. According to Merriam-Webster. (n.d.), ‘Madonna’ is a synonym for woman. In terms of etymology, ‘Madonna’ came from the Italian word, which is ma (“my”) + donna (“lady”) and ‘*Madonna*’ is also used as a form of respectful address. (Merriam-Webster, n.d.) Thus, I chose the word ‘*Madonna*’ as it is a term that eulogises women; it shows respect for the highest standard. So, apart from calling women ‘a lady’, we also use the word ‘*Madonna*’, and for me, it sounds glorious and brings out the actual value of women.

Meanwhile, according to Cambridge University (n.d.), ‘*Sin Valor*’ means worthless or valueless in Spanish. I am choosing the word ‘*Sin Valor*’ as I found it suitable to represent how men can see women as objects they never truly appreciate as





valuable people in their lives. As a woman, it hurts me when I see many women abused, hit, raped, and cheated on, left without anything, especially single mothers. The most disgusting idea I find is women having sex for money. I am sure many people will say we cannot blame men one hundred per cent, but if there are no requests from buyers to sellers, there will be no sales. Women have been treated like toys for too long, and it cannot happen anymore. I found many things that are unfair to women and need justice. Therefore, '*Sin Valor*' is the right word chosen for my creative work to clarify the issue of my performance; the contradictory nature of the perception and the reality of women in cases of abuse. Furthermore, concept naming can introduce border thinking and interpretation possibilities from the outset and become a byword for an ideology.



I am choosing Spanish Words as my title partly from the TV series I watched before on Netflix (Queen of South). I found the main character (Teresa Mendoza), who Alice Braga acts, portrayed as a powerful character and such a mighty woman in that series. In that series, she showed the audience how she could become a drug cartel leader and how smart she was in dealing with immoral people, especially in dirty business. The spirit shown in her character makes me think that is how women should be in this world, not only become homemakers and be treated without value but have to be intelligent and independent and always fight for themselves. Never put yourself down just because you loved someone like that is not worth it, and it will



make you regret that decision one day.

I also chose Spanish words as Spain is modern Western culture. Still, historically the country held women back alarmingly at various times in this history, such as the code of morality for women in the Franco era (of course, there was no code for men). Spain still has some beneficial conservative views about the role of women in society. It is an excellent example of the global nature of the problem that offers a religion-cultural contrast to Malaysia - East, West, Muslim, and Christian.

Violence is a complicated problem that happens worldwide and comes in different forms. Defining it as a physical matter is a problem in our society today. According to Lopez and Nakhjavani (2018, p. 54), violence has many facets and faces; it assumes different forms at different times. For instance, physical, sexual, emotional and psychological include verbal manipulation and abuse. I believe violence can be assault, such as abuse, torture, killing, kidnapping, rape, war, and bullying. Still, it can also be bullying and hurting someone in many more subtle ways, and anyone, known or unknown, can do it to the victim. Violence can also be classified as physical violence, emotional violence, sexual violence, or domestic violence.

Thus, many types of violence will affect someone's mental health, spiritually, culturally, or even financially, and more obviously, affect the physical condition of someone. Violence also can be usefully described as 'any action taken to someone without that person's willingness to receive that action'. Any behaviour that can harm someone can be called 'Violence'. Someone can be violent towards someone by verbally insulting them or cursing them. Violence does not require a physical form or act towards someone. If people think of violence as being more than just physical violence, the percentage of violence will decrease year by year. Many believe that violence comes in physical forms only and would only try to prevent the acting out of violent acts.

The fact is any violence is still violence. In short, violence has negatively affected civilisations since time began. We need to open our minds to different and less obvious types of violence to address the full scale of the problem. For instance, we can see from wars that the quintessence of violence has destroyed or ruined millions of lives. However, even more, it could prevent subtle forms of violence in many instances if everybody took responsibility to try and prevent it and were more aware of its many forms. Meditation and exercise are solutions to help people with violent behaviour.

They will help people be calmer and more relaxed in doing things or reacting to any situation. Violence has to be taken highly as it can quickly impact children, their future and the nation's future. Producing morally good people in this world has to start early and start from home. Every person has to realise that violence will ruin lives, and it is nothing of which to be proud. Violence takes away happiness and loveliness, the sweetness in yourself. And for violent men, their roles as a protector of women also will be gone. Women will not trust men anymore if violence continues and nobody takes action. Education is the key to limiting and removing violence from society, and drama has played a part in the education of society and communities for as long as written human history has existed. I want to be part of that narrative to

One crucial article explained the meaning of the worst forms of violence to me. According to Purna (1998), violence can be justified as “Rape, domestic violence, trafficking, sexual abuse, incest, female infanticide, prostitution, genital mutilation - there are so many ways in which women experience violence”. (p. 7). From that explanation of violence, we see many acts of violence women face. These kinds of violence that women face are unsafe for their safety. Drastic and immediate action needs to protect women's lives and their futures. Violence will otherwise create reactions such as people dying and getting injured and cause far more insidious but potentially just as traumatic incidents of mental illness. So, violence can also be like a

virus or sickness; if you do not get any treatment or ‘medicine’, it will worsen and even be fatal. Thus, violence can be extreme in our minds and hearts, creating mental and emotional trauma. As a result, it will potentially harm that person’s family, friends and victims.

Apart from that, violence can happen to men but mainly do not lodge a police report, so the data, sadly, cannot be recorded. It is most likely that men, as symbols of the strong person and protector in the family, fear that no one will believe or care if they share their problem about domestic violence with their friends or family members or will even laugh at them. Or indeed, they think that even an organisation for domestic violence help will not solve the problem and will only be a source of personal embarrassment. Hence, many people worldwide are unaware of the extent of violence against men. Research shows that men will be ashamed if somebody knows that their partner abused them, especially a woman. I think most men don’t look at this issue so severely as they are busy with work, womanise, friends and sports. In short, most men believe their credibility will be threatened and are too tied up by gender and social stereotypes to protect themselves from many kinds of violence.

Chynoweth, Freccero, and Touquet (2017), in ‘Reproductive Health Matters’ discuss violence against men regarding sexual violence; the stories of sexual violence among refugees in the Middle East make my hair stand on end; the violence included

sexual torture and rape against men and adolescent boys in Syria by state and non-state actors. (p. 1). From that story, it is clear that gay and transgender refugees described being sexually prayed upon by multiple perpetrators. Tragically, many aid workers, including health providers, were either unaware of these problems or were unsure how to address them. Some did not believe men or boys were being sexually victimised. Hence, from the explanations shown, many people will not accept the story when men report abuse, and many more are too ashamed to say it will remain a profoundly worrying issue unless more people understand and take further action. Education is vital in this process, and drama can allow, or at least make more likely, the debating of such controversial matters.

1.4.3 Domestic Violence

Lopez and Nakhjavani (2018), a study by the World Health Organization, finds that one woman in three in the world will experience violence sometime during her lifetime, and one in four will experience domestic abuse. (Lopez and Nakhjavani, 2018). I never appreciated that domestic violence was prevalent and had many types. I knew that if their partner physically abused someone, it amounted to violence. Still, I did not appreciate the psychological violence or damage of behaviour such as controlling their partner, for example, their social life or finances. Based on some



Islamic teachers, I also believe that every wife has to obey whatever her husband says. I felt this in such a way that I thought some forms of abuse were typical. The biography about a young teenager being abused, *Stolen Girl*, by Katie Taylor, opened my eyes further to domestic violence. I researched and read more about it to get further insight into this terrifying phenomenon of violence in the home, a place that should be a sanctuary. I now understand domestic violence because it is often when a husband and wife or boyfriend and girlfriend are in a relationship. Their partner tries to control their lives in several ways: financially, their social life, their attire, using them, abusing them, and thereby torturing their mental health. It could be verbal abuse, not supporting their career progress, or not wanting to see their partner succeed.



My understanding of domestic violence was further helped by a recent article from The United Nations that occurred due to the rise in domestic abuse during COVID-19. It defined domestic abuse as “a pattern of behaviour in any relationship used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner” and “abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person”. (United Nations, n.d.). In addition, United Nations mentioned domestic violence forms like your partner embarrassing you in front of your friends or family, making you unable to make a decision or mistreating you-grabs, pinches, pushes, shoves or hits you; then this means your partner is abusing you, and we called that as domestic violence. Ultimately, domestic violence





has many types, including physical, mental, and verbal actions, and sometimes it is harm done mentally rather than physically. If this violence continues without further action, many women worldwide will be removed from a healthy reality. Even more frightening when we realise that women being abused have a much higher chance of suicide and depression.

Lopez and Nakhjavani (2018) stated domestic violence “could happen within the family home, sexual harassment in the workplace, and aggression on the streets constitute the most chronically underreported crimes and, at the same time, the most common forms of violence against women in the world”. (p. 65). According to Lopez

and Nakhjavani (2018, p. 65), domestic violence is far worse than any other type of violence and has become the silent killer of women worldwide. Moreover, many people struggle to understand this as serious violence. For them, violence must be physical and done by a stranger, and then they will be more concerned. Still, if that is ‘only’ a family member, it will be seen differently, and it will be much harder for them to take action as it seems not severe. Thus, we must look more closely at this issue to improve the efficacy of the movement of government and non-governmental organisations to control it.

1.4.4 Violence against Women

When I was only a child, I first heard about this issue when one of my neighbours always complained to my mother about her husband hitting her. Every time she came to my house, I could see her face full of bruises, and I asked my mother why her face looked like that, and my mother would tell me the stories behind that. This issue was brought to light when I was older on social media and the news. It became like a virus as the case increased year by year. Violence against women can be explained as any deliberate behaviour that can cause harm to women in terms of their physical and mental health. Violence against women can happen anywhere, any time, in any kind of relationship, and in fact, it has been seen that women are more often abused and victimised by men known to them. Violence against women also can be an undisguised or disguised application of force or threat to harm or destroy a victim's reputation and life.

According to Chapman (2014), violence against women is framed within discourses on gender justice, human rights, health and well-being, partner violence, intimate partner violence, battered women, gendered violence, sexual assault, women abuse, wife abuse, rape, aggravated rape, marital rape, and date rape, among others. (p. 49). Chapman's definition shows that a lot of violence happens to women in various ways. Even nowadays, many women still feel unsafe when they go out alone- to a



shopping mall, workplace, public transport or even an educational institute. Moreover, every day we see images of male violence against women on television, in the news, in advertising, in films and drama, and in our workplaces and home. Indeed, it will even affect women's social lives and futures in every country. As we have seen, even at home can be dangerous for them, as some men will do anything to harm women.

Tragically, as even my limited personal experience with my family and friendship group shows, all too often, even members of their own family can be dangerous and take advantage of them. Even though we live in this modern world, with the internet and closed-circuit television on many roads and buildings, I still find it unsafe to walk alone or drive alone at night, even just to put fuel in my car. Therefore, we need to look further and more profound at this issue. We need to educate people. We must ensure everyone has the best possible chance to enjoy their life every day, everywhere.

1.4.5 *Verfremdungseffect* by Bertolt Brecht

Silberman, Kuhn, and Giles (2019) explained V-effect as the alienation effect or A-effect, separating the audience from the play per Willett's vocabulary. (Silberman, Kuhn & Giles, 2019). Silberman et al. (2019) also stated two fundamental





misinterpretations of Brecht's terms; first, Brechtian theatre was cold and impersonal as he wanted his productions to detach the audience rather than entertain them, and the second misunderstanding is reasonable. (Silberman et al., 2019). In that case, Silberman et al. (2019) explained that by the 1930s, Brecht was a committed Marxist; Marx's term refers to the socio-economic position of the worker in the labour process under capitalism.

However, V-effect refers to an aesthetic technique that resumes the power of perception or understanding. Thus, Silberman et al. (2019, p. 18) add that for Brecht, the aim of *Verfremdung* is that people should have a better perception to improve the world. Similarly, Britannica (2020) explained Brecht used 'alienating' or 'distancing' effects to change the way of thinking about the play by justifying, understanding and drawing a conclusion at the performance's end. Contrary, in naturalistic or dramatic theatre, the audience cares about the characters' lives onstage; Brecht was totally against it.

Therefore, the central thought of utilising the V-effect in my creative work to deliver the domestic violence issue to my participants is to change the way of thinking or acceptance of domestic violence issues. Other than that, V-effect will also be more effective in educating the participants on how crucial domestic violence is towards the victims in their life so it can avoid confusion between normal behaviour or abnormal





behaviour in the relationship. Thus, I will use V-effect to deliver domestic violence issues.

1.4.6 Symbolism in Performance

In my creative work, I use some symbols to deliver messages and achieve my objective for my creative work. What is meant by the symbol? A symbol is a physical and visible thing that stands for an idea and plan that someone wants to do or show to people; it can be with a different meaning, but the same stuff depends on someone's perception and thinking about the idea. Other than that, symbols also can be seen in art, film, drama, and literature. According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), a symbol can be defined as a sign, shape, or object used to represent something else; it can also be something used to describe a quality or idea.

Moreover, according to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), symbolism can be defined as the use of symbols in art, literature, and films to represent ideas to express opinions or states of mind rather than represent the real world, using the power of words and images. Therefore, I use symbolism, such as a yacht, as a place for my performance for my creative work, as the sailor will name a yacht after a lady's name. How do I know about this? One of my friends, Peter, from Australia, mentioned his yacht name





with a lady's name. So I asked him about that, questioning why most men tend to look down on women, but they named after the feminine character. He answered me with a funny answer because the yacht seemed so sexy. However, one website, Catamaran Guru (n.d.), has explained the history of boat naming and the significance of naming the boat by the owner;

There are two significant theories from that website where the boat is named after goddesses and other mythical figures. The other one is because of the basis of the European language; French and German have a complex system of gender involving grammatical terms in which objects are assigned specific masculine or feminine tones.

(Catamaran Guru, n.d.)



Subsequently, that website also mentions that most captains will follow to use a feminine name as a sign to avoid any bad luck. Therefore, a yacht for my performance shows a symbol of a woman. Apart from that, another symbol I use inside of my creative work is a flag. A flag symbolises freedom and independence - the painted flag with a symbol of a woman's face. Lastly, the symbols ribbons my participants will wear on their wrists during the performance signify support for domestic violence issues. At the end of my performance, my participants will release balloons to show the happy moments that every survivor deserves. The moment of pleasure I showed is that survivors can find happiness if they want to, make it free from abuse, and fight for themselves.



1.5 Imagination of The Creation

My imagination of creating '*Madonna Sin Valor*' will be at this stage in three phases.

The first phase will be '**The Experience**'—the term '**The Experience**' to deliver the experience among my participants. In my imagination, the word 'Experience' means that the participants will experience the moment of domestic violence, either women or men. Experiencing it is imperative to get the feel, imagination and idea of what is meant by domestic violence. I am sure some of my participants will be unaware of this issue or be unclear about it. The question that will arise is why I put '**The Experience**' in phase 1; to understand how someone is being abused, they need to

understand, experience, and know the subject matter first. That is why I put '**The Experience**' in the first phase. Thus, the idea of Bertolt Brecht, the V-effect device I will use in phase 1, will be the stage set and acting area, sound effects and break the fourth wall.

Next is '**The Engagement**' session, in Phase 2, where the actor will engage with the participants. The actor will perform a performance that tries to wind up the reaction from the participants as a crucial moment to ensure the participants can feel the feeling or experience the actor faces in her/the victim's/survivor's life. In this phase, Tolstoy's theory (*What is Art?*) will be used for the actor to express emotions and convey feelings towards the participants of domestic violence experienced by

others. Additionally, to deliver the messages about domestic violence issues, I will use the V-effect devices or techniques, such as the stage set and acting area, sound effects, movement or gesture, and placards, and directly address the participants by breaking the fourth wall.

Lastly, there will be a reflection session for phase 3. In phase 3, **‘The Reflection’**, I will ask the participants for feedback or opinion based on phases 1 and 2 that they experienced before. I need to know the input to ensure they receive what I tried to deliver to them, especially regarding domestic violence issues. Thus, that makes me concerned about their opinions and feedback so that I can use it to create more creative work among the community as a platform to educate or change their thinking about specific issues. Therefore, in phase 3, I will use the break-the-fourth-wall device to get feedback. Based on the participants, I can see the different views or feedback to scrutinise their responses in all three phases. All participants must be honest and brave enough to share their opinions and experiences in this session.