

**“SOCIAL SUPPORT AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF WIDOWS  
INVOLVED IN SOUTHERN THAILAND’S VIOLENCE”**

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## Abstrak

Situasi keganasan yang berterusan di selatan Thailand telah memberi kesan terhadap komuniti penduduknya. Salah satu pihak yang paling menanggung akibat adalah balu-balu yang kehilangan suami mereka dan terpaksa menyara keluarga. Mengambil alih tugas sebagai ketua keluarga adalah sesuatu yang mencabar. Oleh itu, kajian ini secara umumnya ingin mengenalpasti sokongan sosial dan kualiti hidup dalam kalangan balu yang terlibat dalam keganasan di Selatan Thailand memandangkan. Kajian ini mengukur sokongan sosial dan kualiti hidup berasaskan faktor-faktor demografi (umur, agama, tahap pendidikan, pekerjaan, saiz keluarga dan pendapatan isirumah). Kaedah tinjauan telah digunakan melalui soal selidik WHOQOL-BREF dan SSQ-12 untuk mengukur kualiti hidup dan sokongan sosial balu. Seramai 337 orang balu di daerah Pattani terlibat sebagai responden. Hasil kajian ini mendapati bahawa sokongan sosial dalam kalangan balu yang dikaji berada pada tahap yang sederhana manakala hasil analisis bagi keseluruhan aspek kualiti hidup memperoleh skor normal. Dapatan kajian juga mendapati bahawa sokongan sosial dan kualiti hidup balu berbeza berdasarkan agama, tahap pendidikan dan pekerjaan. Saiz keluarga dan pendapatan isirumah pula mempunyai hubungan negatif dengan sokongan sosial dan kualiti hidup. Selain itu, hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa sokongan sosial mempunyai hubungan positif dengan kualiti hidup balu yang terlibat dalam keganasan di selatan Thailand. Kajian ini mencadangkan agar pihak kerajaan Thailand dapat menyediakan bantuan kepada para balu melalui polisi kebajikan berasaskan keperluan dan turut memperkasakan keluarga mereka bagi membantu mereka dalam jangkamasa panjang.

**Kata kunci:** Sokongan sosial, kualiti hidup, balu, selatan Thailand

## Abstract

The on-going violence in southern Thailand has affected the community as a whole and one of the most affected groups are the widows who lost their husbands and are left to care for their families. Taking over the role as the head of the family is a challenging task for these women. Therefore, the general aim of this study is to investigate social support and quality of life among widows involved in southern Thailand's violence. The study measures social support and quality of life based upon demographic factors (age, religion, education level, occupation, size of family and household income). A survey method was employed utilizing the WHOQOL-BREF and SSQ-12 questionnaires to measure the quality of life and social support respectively among widows. A total of 337 widows were involved as respondents in the Pattani province. This study found that the overall social support among the widows is at a moderate level while the analysis for their quality of life yielded a normal score. The results also indicate that social support and quality of life differ based upon religion, education level, and occupation. The findings also show that the size of family and household income have negative relationship with social support and quality of life. Moreover, the results also indicate that social support is positively related to the quality of life of widows involved in southern Thailand's violence. This research suggests that the Thai government should provide aid to the widows based upon a needs-based welfare policy and also empower their families to aid them in the long run.

**Keywords:** Social support, quality of life, widows, southern Thailand

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This study investigates the relationship between social support and quality of life among widows resulting from the southern Thailand's violence. Specifically, it discusses the importance of the relationship between social support and quality of life of widows. This chapter contains the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope of the research, the research framework and hypotheses.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

The instability in Southern Thailand which is due to the continuous violence is a fact that cannot be ignored. When there are violence and tension between social or political groups, there would be consequences and lateral effects that would negatively affect people. One of the main victims of the violence are women who lost their husbands during the violence. These women are now widows who will have to face many difficulties and hardship to maintain their lives and support themselves and their families. When they lose their husbands, most of them have to take the responsibility of caring for the family and become the leader of the family. In such cases, many would face poverty and no longer be able to provide food, clothes and education for their children. Furthermore, since it is common for women in the southern part of Thailand to be housewives, it would be a challenge for the widows to find jobs and earn money. This contributes to social and economic

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