

Received: December 2023 Accepted: January 2024

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.58262/ks.v12i2.252>

## Assessing the Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice of those who Use Family Protection Units in Jordan to Preserve the Rights of Battered Women

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### Abstract

*Family protection units (FPUs) in Jordan were established to cope with the increasing cases of domestic violence, mainly in family context. The objective of the present study is to explore the level of knowledge, attitude, and practice of participants towards the use of FPUs. A cross sectional study was conducted to achieve the objectives of the study. The number of 117 participants responded to this study. A study questionnaire consisted of 4 sections: demographic section, knowledge section, attitude section, and practice section. Results showed that the participants had high levels of knowledge ( $4.09 \pm 0.32$ ) and attitude ( $4.12 \pm 0.36$ ). On the other hand, practice level was relatively low. Taken together, study participants were aware of the FPUs provided responsibilities and services, and they had developed good attitude towards the use of FPUs.*

**Keywords:** domestic violence, FPUs, knowledge, attitudes, practice

### Introduction

Domestic violence, also known as intimate partner violence, is one of the most common forms of gender-based violence (Flury et al., 2010). Moreover, the domestic violence is a significant societal issue and a global public physical and psychological health concern (Perryman and Appleton, 2016). Domestic violence (DV) entails two individuals with a complicated social and power dynamic. Domestic violence is also known as "family violence," is a form of violence in the immediate social environment," (Flury et al., 2010; Lambert, 2014; Perryman and Appleton, 2016; Mayo Clinic, 2020). In common usage, these terms are frequently and interchangeably used According to Lambert (2014), "domestic violence" (abbreviated as "DV") refers to "any threatening incident or behaviour whether it is physical psychological, emotional, sexual, financial, and psychological that occurs within intimate partner relationships or marriages." In

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other terms, DV includes all of these forms of violence. Domestic violence can occur in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships. The most prevalent form of domestic violence, according to Lambert (2014), and Perryman and Appleton (2016), is when men abuse their female partners. It is obvious that domestic violence can't only affect the married parties, but also it might affect others who are related to the couples like children, parents, grandparents, friends (Lambert, 2014; Rogers, 2015).

In September of 1997, the Public Security Directorate (PSD) in Amman began conceptualizing the Family Protection Division in an effort to combat all forms of domestic violence, including the sexual assault (Abu Sarhan, 2019).

The overarching objective of the division's establishment was the implementation of a cooperative framework with organizations devoted to women's and children's concerns, thereby reinforcing the fundamental principle underlying "Police Serve the People." (Abu Sarhan, 2019).

In February of 1998, the Family Protection Division, which was initially designated as a Unit, began its official operations. Its primary mission revolved on managing cases involving domestic violence and sexual abuse. The primary mission of the Family Protection Unit was to investigate instances of physical abuse and neglect of children within familial contexts, as well as sexual abuse affecting all victims, regardless of their age, gender, or the origin of the abuse (Abu Sarhan, 2019).

Notably, on November 2, 1999, the Unit underwent a major transformation, becoming a full-fledged department known as the Family Protection Department, a name it still bears. Thus, the Family Protection Division evolved from its origins as a division in a police station west of Amman to its current status as a comprehensive police department within the Jordanian PSD (Abu Sarhan, 2019).

## **Study Objectives**

The main objective of the present study is to explore the levels of knowledge, attitude, and practice towards the use of family protection units as far as the participants in Jordan are concerned.

## **Methods and Subjects**

### **Study Design**

A Cross-Sectional Study Design was Conducted

**Study Sample:** a total of 117 persons participated in this study.

**Study Questionnaire:** a questionnaire was constructed to measure knowledge, attitudes, and practice of participants towards the use of FPUs. The researchers revised various studies in relation with the topic and formulated the questionnaire to include the following paragraphs:

- 1-Demographic variables, including gender and age.
- 2- Knowledge domain includes three items.
- 3- Attitude domain includes three items.
- 4- Practice domain includes two items.

Five Likert scale was used to record the responses of participants.

## Statistical Analysis

Frequencies, including means and standard deviations, were used to describe categorical variables such as age, whereas non-categorical variables such as gender were analyzed using frequencies and percentages.

## Results

**Survey language:** survey of the study was distributed in both languages English and Arabic. The majority of participants preferred Arabic (86.3%) (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Preferred Survey Language.

Language	Frequency	Percent
English	16	13.7
Arabic	101	86.3
Total	117	100.0

## Demographic Variables

As shown in table (2), the majority of participants were females (78.6%), (3.4%) were males, 3.4% did not mention their gender, and about 15% of participants did not send their responses.

**Table 2:** Frequency and Distribution of Participants According to Gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Missing	17	14.5
Male	4	3.4
Female	92	78.6
Prefer not to mention gender	4	3.4
Total	117	100.0

## Age of Participants

As shown in table 3, the age of participants was  $26.95 \pm 8.13$  years.

**Table 3:** Age of Participants.

Age	Mean	SD
	26.95	8.13

## Knowledge of Participants About Fpus in Jordan

As shown in table (4), the highest mean of knowledge variables is for the first variable "I am aware of the existence of Family Protection Units (FPU) in Jordan" ( $4.42 \pm 0.867$ ). This is followed by the variable "I understand the role and purpose of Family Protection Units in addressing cases of battered women" ( $4.07 \pm 0.897$ ). The least mean is for the variable "I am aware of the services and support provided by Family Protection Units to battered women" ( $3.78 \pm 1.035$ ). The total mean of knowledge variables is  $4.09 \pm 0.32$ .

**Table 4:** Knowledge Level of Fpus Among Participants.

Knowledge variable	Mean	SD
I am aware of the existence of Family Protection Units (FPU) in Jordan.	4.42	0.867
I understand the role and purpose of Family Protection Units in addressing cases of battered women.	4.07	0.897
I am aware of the services and support provided by Family Protection Units to battered women.	3.78	1.035
Total	4.09	0.32

### Attitudes of Participants Towards Fpus in Jordan

As shown in table (5), the highest level of attitude is “Battered women should be encouraged to seek help from Family Protection Units” ( $4.35 \pm 0.91$ ), followed by the variable “Society has a responsibility to support and protect battered women through initiatives like Family Protection Units” ( $4.30 \pm 0.83$ ). The least mean is the variable “Family Protection Units play a crucial role in preserving the rights and safety of battered women” ( $3.71 \pm 1.15$ ). The total mean of attitude is  $4.12 \pm 0.36$ .

**Table 5:** Attitude Levels Towards Fpus Among Participants.

Attitude variable	Mean	SD
Family Protection Units play a crucial role in preserving the rights and safety of battered women.	3.71	1.15
Battered women should be encouraged to seek help from Family Protection Units.	4.35	0.91
Society has a responsibility to support and protect battered women through initiatives like Family Protection Units.	4.30	0.83
Total	4.12	0.36

### Practice of Participants Towards Fpus in Jordan

As shown in table (6), the majority of participants have not had previous experience with family protection units (75.8%). The tendency of participants to interact with FPU when there is a need, was reported in similar patterns either to use or not to use (29.9%, 29.1% respectively).

**Table 6:** Practice of Participants Towards Fpus in Jordan.

Practice variables	N	%
Have you ever interacted with or visited a Family Protection Unit in Jordan?		
• Yes	13 88 16	11.1%
• No		75.2%
• Missing		13.7%
If you or someone you know has faced issues related to domestic violence, did you consider seeking assistance from a Family Protection Unit?		
• Yes		29.9%
• No	35 34 31 17	29.1%
• Not applicable		26.5%
• Missing		14.5%

## Discussion

The results of the present study showed that participants had high level of knowledge among participants. This can be attributed to different perspectives, including active use of media by family protection units in the police department. Also, the existence of teaching settings in various universities in Jordan that are interested in this issue.

The results also showed that the total mean of attitudes of participants to use FPU was high. It is plausible that media has helped the adoption of positive attitude towards using the FPU by study participants. Social improvement may also help in developing positive attitudes towards the use of FPU.

The results showed that a low percentage of participants had experience with FPU, and this may indicate that family problems are not as common as it was thought. About 30% of participants reported to recommend the use of FPU once there is a need. Although knowledge and attitudes of participants were high, practice was relatively low. However, further studies are required to explore this issue.

## Conclusion

The results of the present study showed that participants have high levels of knowledge and a relatively a low level of practice.

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