Overlooked Victims of Domestic Violence: Men

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Background

- Patriarchy is the cause of domestic violence
  - Guides our policies, laws, and programs
- But women commit ~40+% of domestic violence
  - All in self-defense or retaliation?
  - Low-level, low-frequency violence that is reciprocated by their partners and is a result of arguments getting out of hand?
Background

• Terroristic violence
  ▫ Frequent and severe, accompanied by severe psychological abuse, and takes place within a context of power and control
  ▫ Exclusive domain of men?
Background

- 2004 Canadian General Social Survey
  - 36.8% of the victims of terroristic violence were men
  - 40% of male IPV victims were terroristic violence victims
- What do we know about these men?
Goals of Our Study

1. What are the characteristics of men who seek help for IPV victimization?
2. How much and what kinds of IPV are experienced by male IPV victims?
3. What are the potential consequences of experiencing IPV for men?
4. What prevents male victims from leaving their relationships?
5. What happens when they try to seek help?
Study Description

- 302 heterosexual men, between ages of 18-59
  - In a relationship lasting at least one month in the previous year & physically assaulted
  - Sought outside assistance/support
  - Lived in U.S.

- Data collected through Internet survey
  - Conflict Tactics Scales
  - PTSD Checklist
  - Closed-ended and open-ended questions on:
    - Why man has not left
    - Help-seeking efforts
Q1: Who are these men?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male Helpseeker M (SD) or %</th>
<th>Female Partner M (SD) or %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>40.49 years (8.97)</td>
<td>37.91 years (8.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q1: Who are these men?

- Approx. Income: $50.4K (25.7)
- Approx. Education: 2-4 year college degree
- Approx. Occupational Level: technician/ associate professional
  - Approx. 33% were employed in stereotypical masculine jobs or at high-prestige jobs
Q1: Who are these men?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean (SD) or %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Length</td>
<td>8.16 years (6.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Since Relationship Ended</td>
<td>6.10 months (7.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% with children</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% still in relationship</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Pie chart showing relationship statuses: Married 46%, Engaged 2%, Dating 4%, Ex-dating 7%, Divorced 7%, Separated 18%, Ex-cohabiting 6%, Cohabiting 4%, Ex-engaged 4%, Married 46%]
Q2: How Much and What Kinds of IPV are the Men Experiencing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% Female Partners Who Perpetrated</th>
<th>Mean # of acts in previous year among perpetrators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological Aggression</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Psychological Aggression</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>28.90 (26.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling Behaviors</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>42.62 (36.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Aggression</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>98.7</td>
<td>32.01 (34.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>16.74 (22.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Severe</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>7.46 (10.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>46.72 (53.48)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q2: How Much and What Kinds of IPV are the Men Experiencing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner falsely accused helpseeker of hitting or beating her</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner filed restraining order against helpseeker under false pretenses</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner falsely accused helpseeker of physically abusing children</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner falsely accused helpseeker of sexually abusing children</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3: What are the Possible Consequences of This IPV?

**Physical and Psychological Injuries**

- **2004 Canadian General Social Survey**
  - 68.8% of the male victims of severe terroristic violence were injured
  - 33.8% feared for their lives
  - Physical and psychological consequences concentrated in terroristic violence victims
- 58% Scored Above Clinical Cut-Off for PTSD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Males Who Were Injured</th>
<th>Mean # of Injuries Among Men who were Injured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any</td>
<td>78.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q3: What are the Possible Consequences of This IPV?

*Child Witnesses*

- Children who witness father abusing mother
  - behavioral, emotional, social, cognitive, and physical health problems
- Main reason that male victims do not leave their relationships is for the children
  - Possible longer exposure

![Pie chart showing percentages of witness exposure: 60% Witnessed, 20% Did not witness, 11% Heard but didn't see, 9% Maybe/don't know.](image_url)
Q4: What Prevents the Men from Leaving?

- Concerned about the children: 89.6%
- Marriage is for life: 85%
- Love: 77%
- Think he may never see children again: 70.8%
- Think she'll change: 59.3%
- Not enough money: 55.3%
- Nowhere to go: 54.7%
- Embarrassed others will find out: 54.7%
- Don't want to take children away from mother: 49.6%
- She threatened suicide: 29.2%
- She threatened to kill someone else: 25.7%
Q5: What Happens When they Seek Help?

% Who Called Hotline
- Yes: 23%
- No: 77%

How helpful was this hotline?
- Very helpful: 7.5%
- Somewhat helpful: 23.9%
- Not at all helpful: 68.7%

- Said only helped women: 63.9%
- Referred to batterers’ program: 31.7%
- Gave references to local programs that have helped: 27.0%
- Gave phone #: turned out to be batterers’ program: 25.4%
- Referred to another hotline: 18.3%
Q5: What Happens When they Seek Help?

% Who Contacted a Local DV Program

- Yes: 44%
- No: 56%

How Helpful was the DV Program?

- Very helpful: 9.8%
- Somewhat helpful: 25%
- Not at all helpful: 65.2%

Impressions of the DV Program:

- Gave impression that they were biased against men: 95.3%
- Said they don't help male victims: 78.3%
- Suggested that he's the batterer: 63.9%
Q5: What Happens When they Seek Help?

% Who Contacted the Police

- Yes: 46%
- No: 54%

How Helpful were the Police?

- Not at all helpful: 56%
- Somewhat helpful: 25.4%
- Very helpful: 18.7%

Arrested:
- Partner: 17%
- Helpseeker: 26%
- Both: 8%
- No one: 49%
Implications

- Must educate about men sustaining severe IPV, their experiences, their barriers to leaving, and resources available.
- Policies and procedures need to be developed that require an increase in training about the diversity of IPV victims for members of the DV service system.
- Police departments should re-examine how officers respond when victims do not meet our gendered notions of the dynamics of IPV.
- Governments should fund research and programs on male IPV victims and the impact the IPV has on the child witnesses.
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