

Sought Help for Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) against Women: Does it Actually Reflect Women's Experience of IPV? A Study of National Bangladeshi Sample



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Introduction

- Nearly one-half of ever-married Bangladeshi women (49%) have ever experienced physical violence¹
- 18% report ever having been physically forced to have sex by their husbands when they did not want to¹
- More than half of all ever-married women (53 %) have experienced physical and/or sexual violence, while 13% have experienced both types of violence¹
- Most of the women abused physically by their spouses (66%) never told anyone about their experience (75% of the moderately abused women in the urban areas and 86% in the rural areas)²

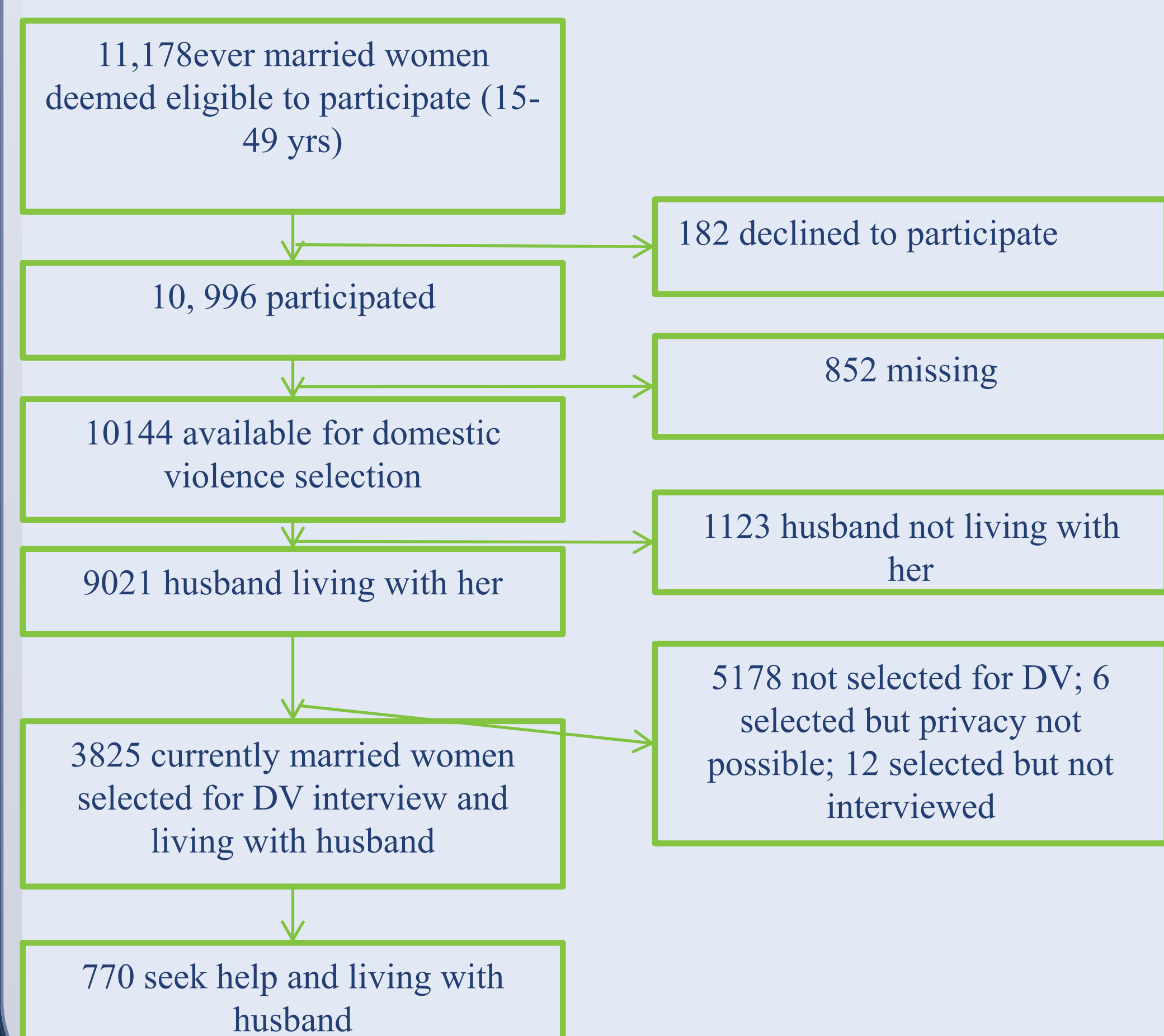
Objectives

This cross-sectional study focuses on help-seeking behavior of abused women and also assesses whether this help-seeking reflects women's actual experience of IPV among Bangladeshi women

Method and Materials

- This study utilized data from Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey (BDHS) 2007
- Women aged 15-49 years, living with husbands, selected for domestic violence schedule were included in this study
- χ^2 - test and logistic regression analysis were used to analyze the data
- SPSS 17 was used to conduct statistical analyses

Selection of Samples



Measures of IPV

Each married women was asked, (Does/did) your (last) husband ever do any of the things to you:

- push you, shake you, or throw something at you;
- slap you;
- twist your arm or pull your hair;
- punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you;
- kick you, drag you, or beat you up;
- try to choke you or burn you on purpose;
- threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or any other weapon;
- physically force you to have sexual intercourse with him even when you did not want to?

The survey measured IPV with a shortened and Modified Conflict Tactics Scale³.

Measures of Formal and Informal Help-seeking

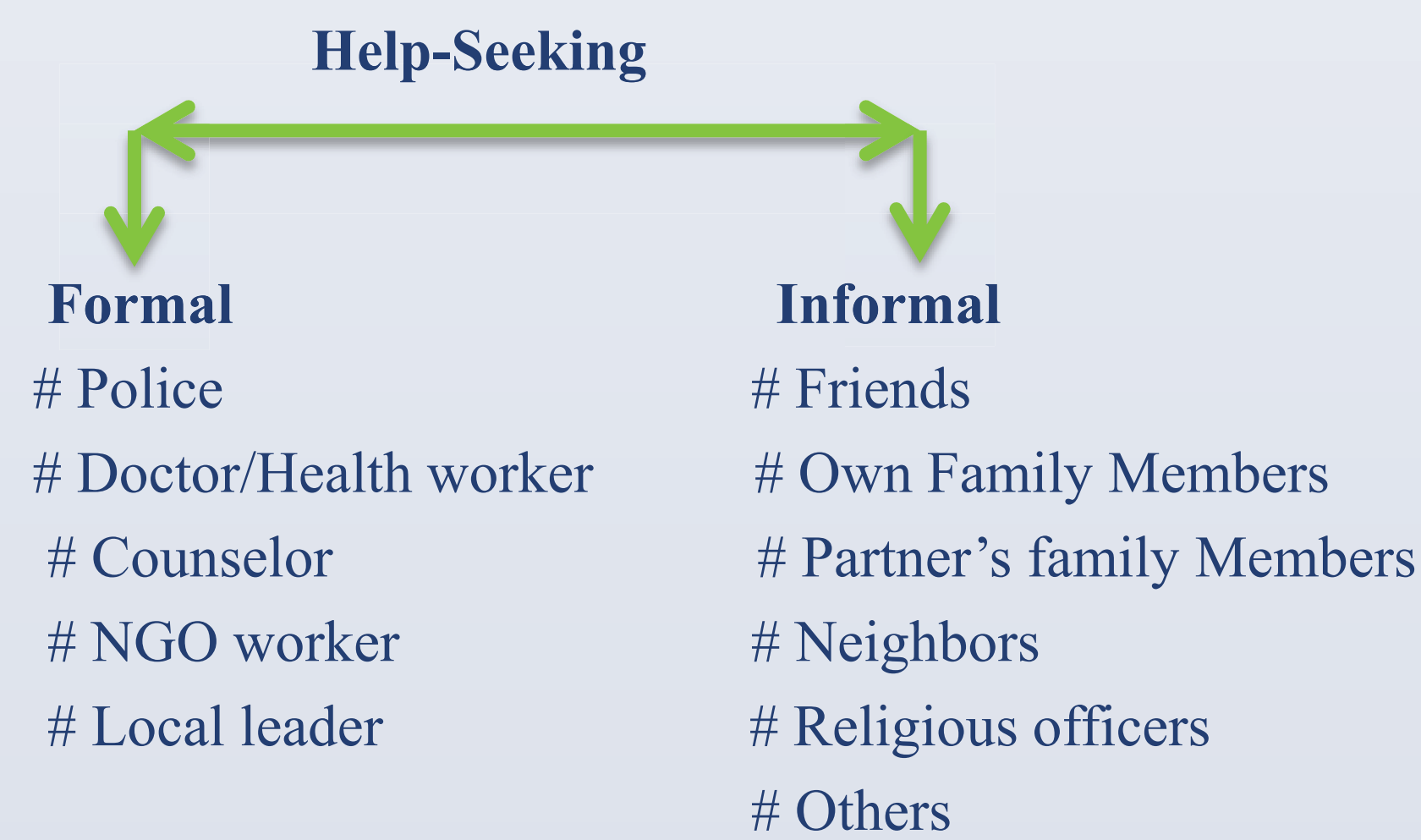
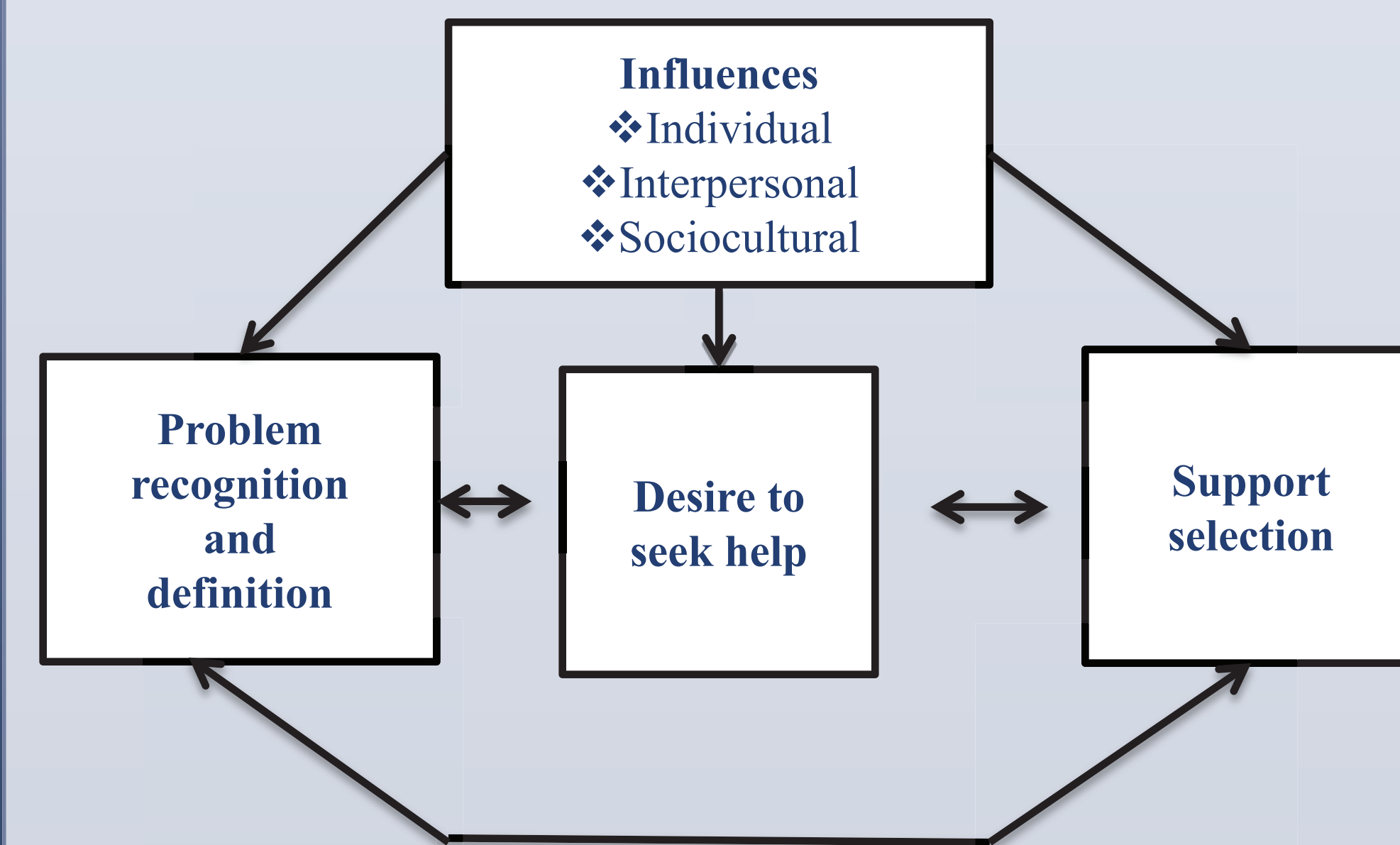


Figure 1 A Model of Help Seeking and Change⁴



Results

Figure 2 Forms of IPV Experienced by Ever-married Bangladeshi Women

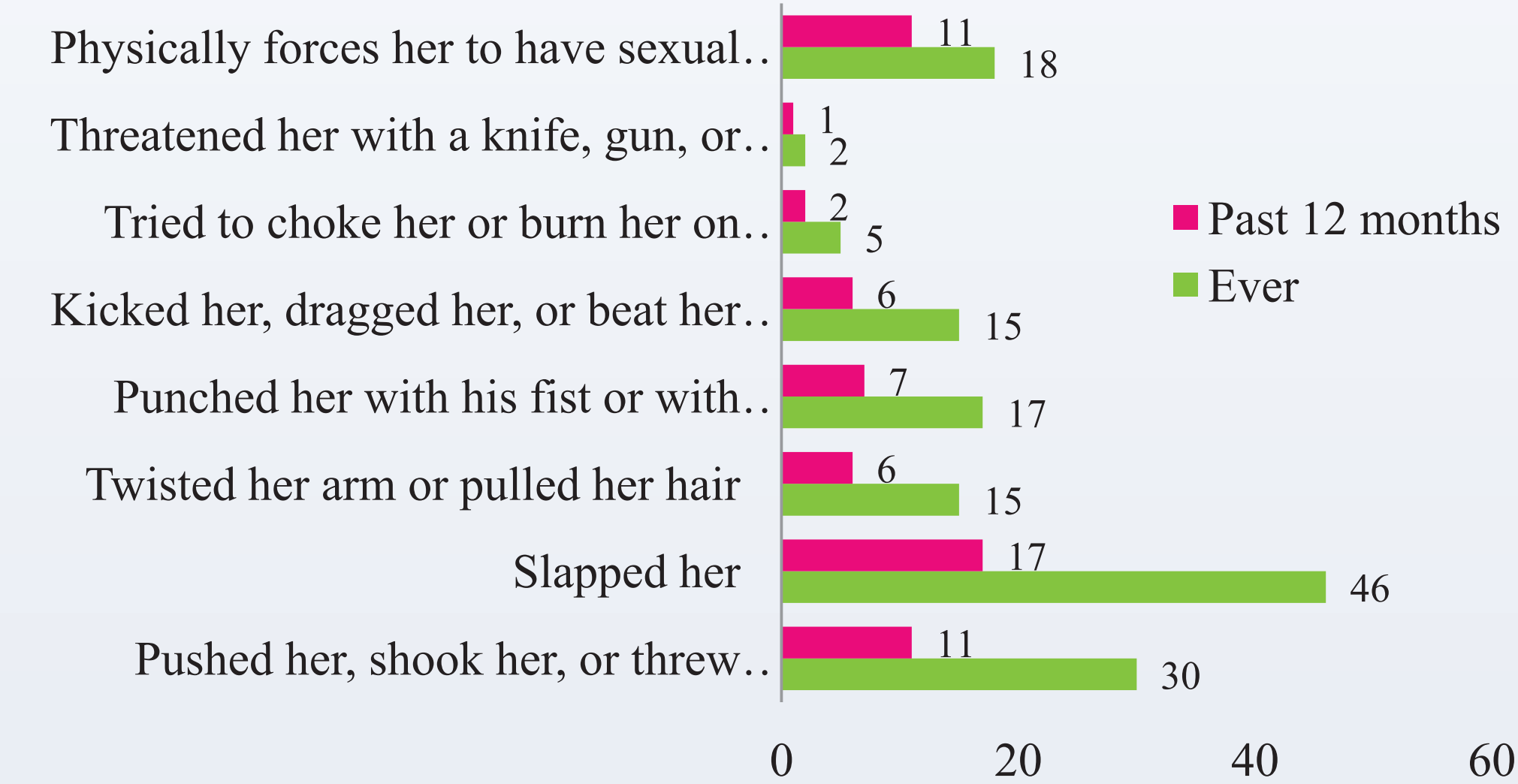


Table 1 Sociodemographic characteristics and IPV

Sociodemographic characteristics	Sexual IPV	Minor physical IPV	Severe physical IPV
15-24 years	14.5	46.2	14.1
25-34 years	11.0	50.9	17.1
35+	7.9	49.1	17.5
P-value	0.000	0.061	0.042
No education	12.2	57.8	22.3
Some education	9.5	42.0	11.7
P-value	0.007	0.000	0.000
No autonomy	11.3	38.7	13.5
Some autonomy	10.6	50.5	16.8
P-value	0.648	0.000	0.036

Table 2 Background characteristics among married Bangladeshi women who seek-help

Demographic characteristics	Mean (SD)	Socioeconomic characteristics	Percent
Age (15-49)	27.28 (7.98)	No education	48.8
Age at first marriage (10-29)	14.95 (2.21)	Some education	52.2
Children ever born (CEB) (0-10)	2.69 (1.91)	Rural	64.3
		Urban	35.7
		No autonomy	12.7
		Some autonomy	87.3

Figure 3 Experience of IPV among married Bangladeshi women and living with husband (n=3825)

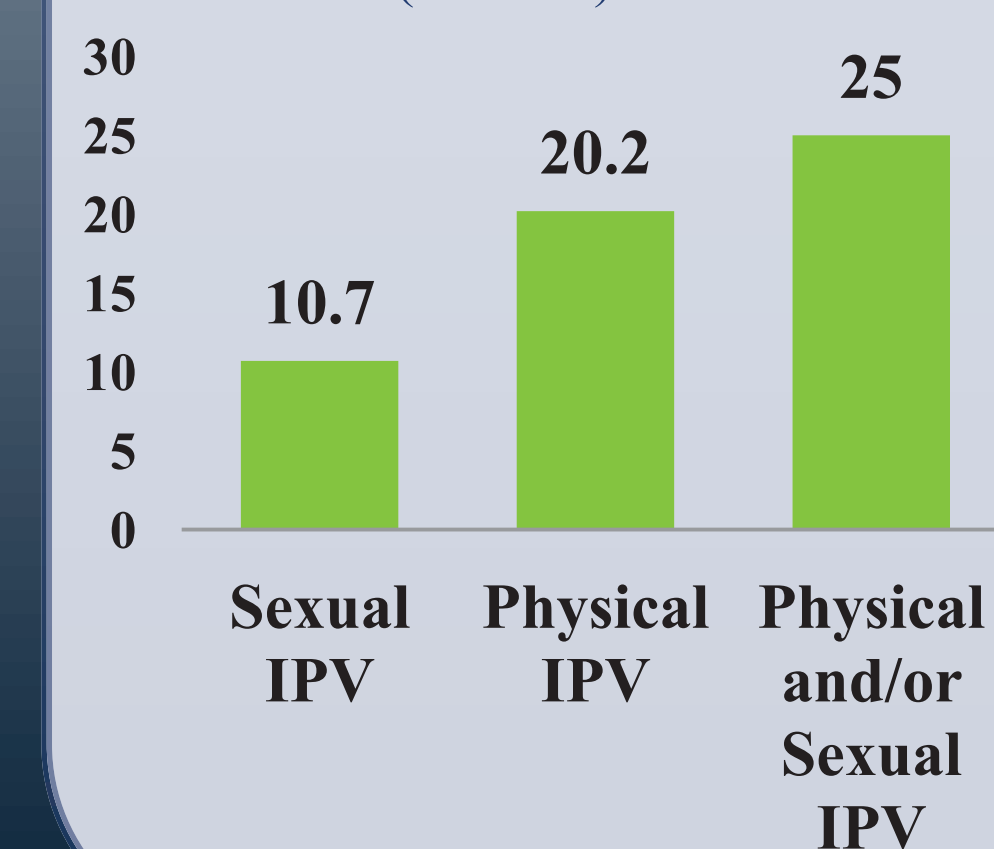


Figure 4 Experience of severe and sexual IPV among women who seek-help and living with husband (n=770)

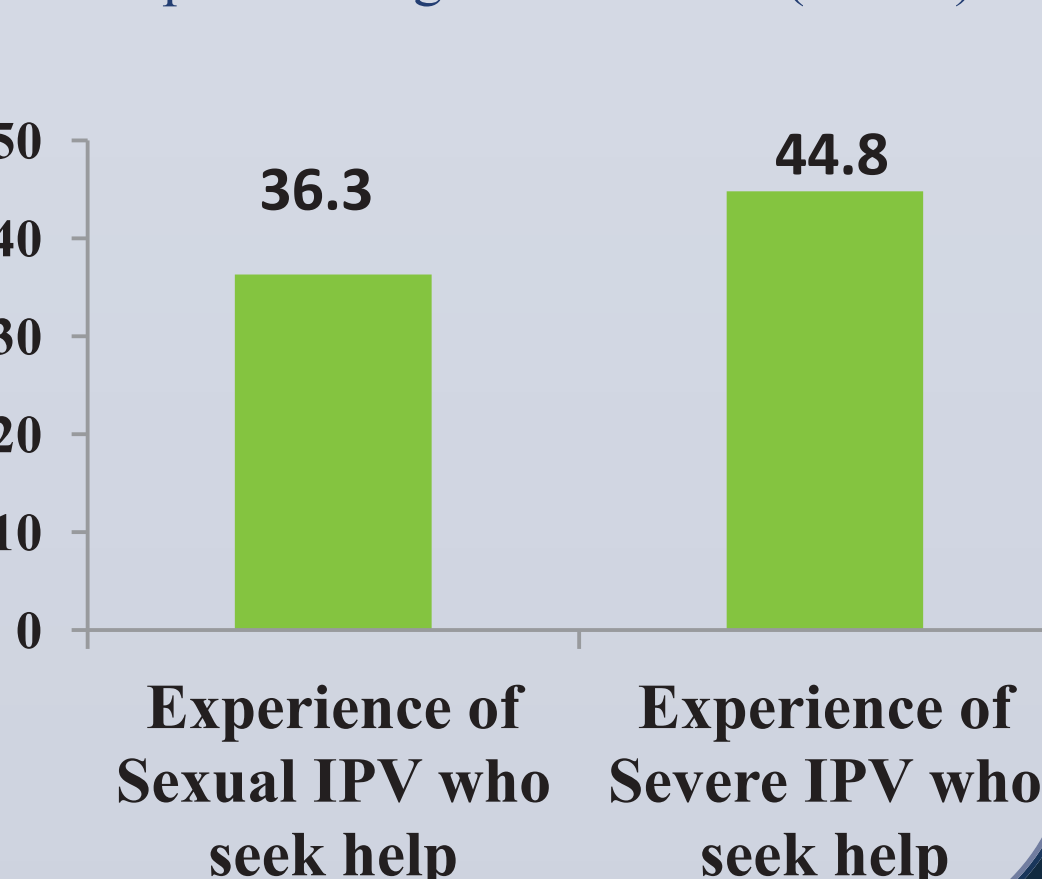


Figure 5 Help-seeking behavior among married Bangladeshi women living with husbands

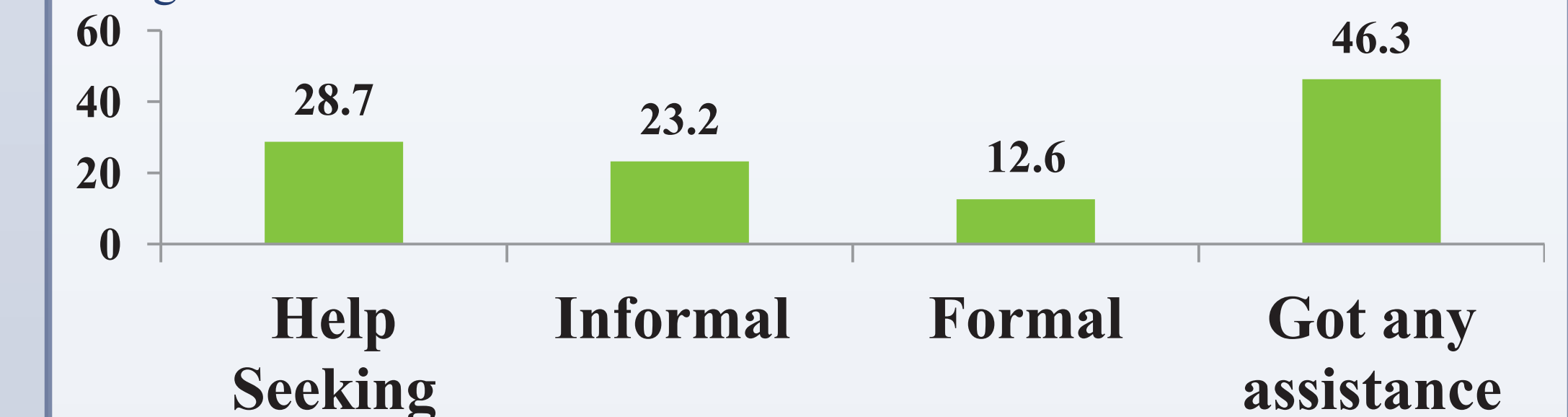


Table 3 Risk of experiencing sexual IPV with minor physical IPV and severe physical IPV compared with minor physical IPV among Bangladeshi women who seek help

Forms of IPV	Tell anyone	Informal help	Formal Help	Get assistance
Sexual IPV with minor physical IPV	1.70**	1.49*	1.95**	1.68**
Severe Physical IPV	4.37***	3.70***	4.51***	3.36***

*P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001

Adjusted for age, respondent's education, husband's Education, place of residence, wealth index, children ever born, household decision making autonomy and belongs to any NGO.

Discussions

- A very little number of IPV victimized women ever report their experience and only a few among them seek any kind of help
- Help-seeking is likely to be influenced by a wide range of factors such as socio-economic status, the presence of children, cultural norms about marriage and the family, and cultural norms about help-seeking more generally
- Women may be reluctant to disclose the abuse due to fear of jeopardizing family honor, stigma that will damage women's reputation, securing child future, fear of repercussions from husband, hopelessness, expectations that things would change, threat of murder, and belief that violence is husband's right
- Most of such informal sources might not even provide any sort of help to the victims
- Although there are limited provisions for women to go to formal institutions in Bangladesh, almost none of them go to those sources for the same reasons they do not reveal their experiences of abuse in the first place and also because they are rarely encouraged by the family members or friends or the community to seek help stepping outside the home
- Continued availability of wide range of services and programs are needed to ensure the safety of these women and their children and to help address their long-term economic and health needs

References

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