Decision Making and Intimate Partner Violence: Data from Married Couples in India

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BACKGROUND

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- IPV refers to any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship. (WHO, 1997)

Global estimates
- WHO and population-based studies, 10-71%

Indian estimates
- High prevalence, 21-48%


BACKGROUND

Gender-based violence
- Violence against women is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality.

Gender norms
- Traditional, cultural norms of ideal masculinity and femininity
- Transgression of normative behaviors
- Frustration of not fulfilling ideals

(G Barker, 2006; Connell, 1987; Desai, 2005; Krishnan, 2005; Verma, et al., 2006)

BACKGROUND

Gender inequality
- Women’s empowerment
  - Process by which those who are denied the ability to make strategic life choices gain access to and control of resources (i.e. income, education), agency (i.e. decision making, freedom of movement), and achievements (i.e. improved health, no longer being a victim of violence)

(Kabeer, 1999; Batiwala, 2007; Kishor & Gupta, 2004; Malhotra, et al., 2002; Jejeebhoy, 1998; Rao Gupta & Malhotra, 2006)

BACKGROUND

- Women’s empowerment → IPV
  - Resources
  - Ability
  - Achievements

- Study includes
  - Attitudes towards gender norms
  - Men’s perspectives
  - Couple dynamics

CONCEPTUAL MODEL

DATA SOURCE
National Family Health Survey 3 (NFHS-3)
- Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)
- Conducted from 2005-2006
- Nationally representative sample
- Multistage, PPS sampling
- Stratification, clustering, weights
- 124,385 women age 15 to 49 years
- 74,369 men age 15 to 54 years
- 39,257 matched couples
- Analytical sample
  - Valid, non-missing responses
  - Unweighted N=23,318; weighted N=219,223

VARIABLES
Dependent Variable
- Lifetime experience with IPV
- 12 original questions
  - Emotional
  - Physical
  - Sexual violence
- Collapsed into binary outcome
  - Experienced any form of IPV

VARIABLES
Independent Variables
- Women’s empowerment
  - Measurement and definition issues
  - Process and an outcome
  - Current study:
    - Static state
    - Measured by proxy indicators to capture the agency and power
  - (Malhotra, et al., 2002; Jejeebhoy, 2000)

VARIABLES
Independent Variables
- Women’s empowerment: Personal power
  - Access to resources
  - Gendered ideology
  - Decision making agency
  - (Batliwala, 2007; Kabeer, 2002)

VARIABLES: Decision Making Agency
Household & financial decisions
Household
- Both spouses are asked:
  “Who usually makes the following decisions: mainly you, mainly your husband, you and your husband jointly, or someone else?”
- (1) Decisions about making major household purchases?
- (2) Decisions about making purchases for daily household needs?
- (3) Decisions about visits to your family or relatives?

VARIABLES: Household Decision Making
- Measurement of decision making
- Combined three items into three variables
- Number of sole decisions made by the
  - Wife alone
  - Husband alone
  - Jointly (husband and wife)
VARIABLES: Financial Decision Making
Two original questions

(1) Who decides how the money you earn will be used?
(2) Who decides how your husband’s earnings will be used.

• Responses include the respondent, husband, both jointly, someone else or has no earnings.

RESULTS: Descriptive Statistics
Dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience with IPV</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Weighted N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any IPV</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>83,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional violence</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>30,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical violence</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>74,626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual violence</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>16,560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS: Descriptive Statistics
Women’s demographic characteristics
• Middle-rich wealth category, rural, nuclear
• Majority Hindu, mean age 31 yrs, 2-3 children
• Education
  • 44% of women have no education
  • 4.7 years (for all women in sample)
  • 8.4 years (for women with some education)
• One quarter (25%) witnessed parental IPV as children

RESULTS: Descriptive Statistics
Access to resources & gendered ideology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Weighted N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supports women ability to refuse marital sex</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>169,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not justify IPV</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>96,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility (# places can go alone)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>90,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>19,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>32,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>77,321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has cash earnings</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>61,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a bank account</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>36,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has own spending money</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>103,664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole healthcare decision making</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>49,967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS: Descriptive Statistics
Women’s Household Decision Making Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Sole HH Decisions Made</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Weighted N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>145,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>53,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>13,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>118,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>39,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>29,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>31,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jointly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>80,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>44,792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>39,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>54,472</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS: Descriptive Statistics
Women’s Financial Decision Making Perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Decisions For:</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Weighted N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband’s Earnings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>11,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>50,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jointly</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>141,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone else</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>12,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband has no earnings</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife’s Earnings:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>12,597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>9,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jointly</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>38,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone else</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1,464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife has no earnings</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>157,259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RESULTS: Logistic Regression Models, * p<0.001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Power Characteristics</th>
<th>Regression Coeff.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of movement</td>
<td>-0.008 (0.018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a bank account</td>
<td>-0.585 (0.063)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receives cash earnings</td>
<td>0.480 (0.301)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has personal money</td>
<td>-0.070 (0.050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes health decisions</td>
<td>0.163 (0.058)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not justify IPV</td>
<td>-0.455 (0.045)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports ability to refuse sex</td>
<td>-0.213 (0.054)*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION: Review of the Findings

- Aspects of women’s personal power influence IPV
  - Gendered attitudes
  - Decision making ability
    - Women’s perceptions of financial decision making

LIMITATIONS

- Cross-sectional data
  - Temporal sequence (e.g., IPV justification and IPV)
- Abstract concepts: Gender norms, power, agency
- Use of proxies
  - ‘Power’ from a western perspective
- Indian women may actively choose certain decisions
  - Choose to let the husband make sole decisions

FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING

- Joint decision making was protective (compared to husband’s sole decision making ability)
Public Health Implications...the Future

Measurement
- Empowerment: the process and the outcome
- Decision making
  - Sole decision making
  - Joint or having some say
  - Level of participation
- Individual items - gendered domains
  - Gender norms/attitudes in the context of IPV
  - Gender equitable men (GEM) Scale
    (Pulerwitz & Barker, 2007)
  - Sexual Relationship Power Scale (SRPS)
    (Pulerwitz, et al, 2000)

To address IPV and all gender-based violence
- Transform rigid gender roles and norms
- Promote interventions
  - Improve the position of women, especially women's access to resources
  - Encourage critical awareness of gender roles

Involving men
- Engage men and boys to address gender norms
- Gender equity not a 'zero-sum game'

(Pulerwitz, et al., 2012; Barker, 2006; Verma, et al., 2006)

THANK YOU
Questions or comments: asharma@csudh.edu