



Women and Domestic Violence

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Abstract

The 1970s saw a shift of focus by professions responding to domestic violence cases perpetrated by men towards women within Australia. Their focus was targeted at the factors that surround male perpetrators' violent behaviour. As a result, a number of alternative interventions were established based on a new understanding of domestic violence. Wider explanations have therefore led professional groups to form different angles of approach. Consequently researchers have found that perceptions towards domestic violence and the effective reness of relevant in terventions remain controversial across professions (Laing, 2002).

Based on the literature supporting the importance of consistent professional perceptions and responses towards domestic violence, the current qualitative research aimed to measure the consistency of perceptions across five Perth professional groups: Police, community-based, women's refuge, justice and health professionals (N: 39). Participant responses (from survey and interview questions) about the causal explanations of domestic violence were measured in terms of their relationship with views on effective interventions.

Consistent attitudes towards domestic violence were identified on a number of levels. All participants agreed that domestic violence is a community problem, a criminal offence and should not be tolerated. A perpetrator's socio economic status or the degree of alcohol consumption was notfound to be causal explanations of domestically violent behaviour. Participants acknowledged that they are significant factors in cases, and hence conclude that these factors are a stimulus behind the violence. The majority of participants supportedpsychological/feminist/sociological 3) recently suggested reliable theories, specifically the 'Interactive Systems and Individual' theory of domestic violence. Also, with recommendations and explanations from the Best Practice.

INTRODUCTION

1

Violence Against Women (VAW) is, collectively, violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women. Sometimes considered a hate crime, this type of violence targets a specific group with the victim's gender as a primary motive. This type of violence is gender-based, meaning that the acts of violence are committed against women expressly because they are women. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women states that:

"violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women" and that "violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men."

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, declared in a 2006 report posted on the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) website that:

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Violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her.

2

Violence against women can fit into several broad categories. These include violence carried out by "individuals" as well as "states". Some of the forms of violence perpetrated by individuals are rape; domestic violence; sexual harassment; coercive use of contraceptives; female infanticide; prenatal sex selection; obstetric violence and mob violence;

As well as harmful customary or traditional practices such as honor killings, dowry violence, female genital mutilation, marriage by abduction and forced marriage. Some forms of violence are perpetrated or condoned by the state such as war rape; sexual violence and sexual slavery during conflict; forced sterilization; forced abortion; violence by the police and authoritative personnel; stoning and flogging. Many forms of VAW, such as trafficking in women and forced prostitution are often perpetrated by organized criminal networks.

The World Health Organization (WHO), in its research on VAW, categorized it as occurring through five stages of the life cycle: "1) pre-birth, 2) infancy, 3) girlhood, 4) adolescence and adulthood and 5) elderly"

Definitions

3

These terms are listed in order of increasing scope.

Domestic violence

Traditionally, domestic violence (DV) was mostly associated with physical violence. For instance, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition, domestic violence is: "the inflicting of physical injury by one family or household member on another; also: a repeated / habitual pattern of such behavior. Domestic violence is now more broadly defined, often but not always including "all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that may be committed by a person who is a family member or a person that has been an intimate partner or spouse, irrespective of whether they lived together.

In 1993, The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women identified domestic violence as one of three contexts in which violence against women occurs. The Declaration defines domestic violence as:

Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation In 2013, the UK government released a new definition regarding domestic violence. They defined it as "any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This can

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encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: - psychological - physical - sexual - financial - and emotional."

Family violence

Family violence is a broader term, often used to include child abuse, elder abuse, and other violent acts between family members. Child abuse is defined by the WHO as: Child maltreatment, sometimes referred to as child abuse and neglect, includes all forms of physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, development or dignity. Within this broad definition, five subtypes can be distinguished – physical abuse; sexual abuse; neglect and negligent treatment; emotional abuse; and exploitation. Elder abuse is, according to the WHO: "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person"

Forms

See also: Outline of domestic violence § Forms

An acid attack victim in Cambodia

Domestic violence can take many forms, including physical aggression or assault (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects, battery), or threats thereof; sexual abuse; controlling or domineering; intimidation; stalking; passive/covert abuse (e.g., neglect); and economic deprivation. It can also mean endangerment, criminal coercion, kidnapping, unlawful imprisonment, trespassing, and harassment

Main article: Physical abuse

Physical abuse is abuse involving contact intended to cause pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm. It includes hitting, slapping, punching, choking, pushing, throwing objects, burning and other types of contact that result in physical injury to the victim. The victim may be abused by several perpetrators: for instance the victim may be held down by a person so that someone else can assault the victim. The victim may be locked in a room or tied down.

Acid attacks, also seen in domestic violence, occur when acid is thrown in anger or vengeance at the victims, usually at their faces, burning them, and damaging skin tissue, often exposing and sometimes dissolving the bones. This can result in long-term blindness and permanent scarring of the face and body.

Denying the victim needed medical care, depriving them of sleep or other necessary functions, forcing the victim to engage in drug or alcohol use against their will, or creating any physical harm are all forms of physical abuse. It can also include inflicting physical injury onto other targets, such as children or pets, in order to cause emotional harm to the victim.

In recent years, strangulation in the context of DV has received significant attention. It is now recognized as one of the most lethal forms of DV; yet, because of the lack of external injuries, and the lack of social awareness and medical training in regard to it, strangulation has often been a rather hidden problem. As a result, in recent years, many US states have enacted specific laws against strangulation.

Physical 5

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Both women and men have been killed as the result of domestic violence. IPV homicide, however, makes up a greater proportion of all female homicides than it does male homicides. For instance, in the United Kingdom, 37 percent of murdered women were killed by an intimate partner and for men, 6 percent were killed by an intimate partner. From 40 to 70 percent of the women murdered in Canada, Australia, South Africa, Israel and the United States were killed by an intimate partner. The World Health Organization states that globally, about 38% of murders of women are committed by an intimate partner.

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changing world, Routledge, pp. 780–781, ISBN 9781136688638, Intimate male partners are most often the main perpetrators of violence against women, a form of violence known as intimate partner violence, 'domestic' violence or 'spousal (or wife) abuse.' Intimate partner violence and sexual violence, whether by partners, acquaintances or strangers, are common worldwide and disproportionately

affect women, although are not exclusive to them.

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