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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A MAN'S PERSPECTIVE

A Lebanese Study

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BY

MONA Mohammed MROUEH

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A thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Masters of Arts
to the Department of Psychology
of the division of Social and Behavioral Studies
at Haigazian University

June 27, 2000
Date

Beirut, Lebanon
June 28, 2000

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A MAN'S PERSPECTIVE

A Lebanese Study

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Acknowledgments

This work is the result of the effort of many individuals. The space is too narrow to mention all

of them. To my father, my mother, my sister and my fiancée whose love and concern helped make my life better.

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The research was conducted in order to investigate the male perspective on violence. The literature review showed the social, psychological, and biological causes of violence. Two studies were conducted to explore how men defined and justified violence, and how wives explained what instigated it. The survey showed a discrepancy between the male's and the couple's answers: Whereas men defined violence as physical act, women viewed it mainly as psychological one. Both, men and women, attributed violence to feelings of lack of control and facing financial problems. Two findings may be valuable for couple therapy: The first one was why men were afraid to discuss "violence". Was it because they were violent themselves? The second one was that both men and women considered violence as a means of teaching the wife a lesson. These two findings are worth investigating in future research.

Abstract

The research was conducted in order to investigate the male perspective on violence. The literature review showed the social, psychological, and biological causes of violence. Two studies were conducted to explore how men defined and justified violence, and how wives explained what instigated it. The survey showed a discrepancy between the male's and the couple's answers: Whereas men defined violence as physical act, women viewed it mainly as psychological one. Both, men and women, attributed violence to feelings of lack of control and facing financial problems. Two findings may be valuable for couple therapy: The first one was why men were afraid to discuss "violence". Was it because they were violent themselves? The second one was that both men and women considered violence as a means of teaching the wife a lesson. These two findings are worth investigating in future research.

Chapter I

Introduction

Domestic violence, the topic of this research, is an increasingly public health concern (Sorenson, Upchurch, & Shen, 1996), and "no more a family problem" as Chazen (1994) has said. Physicians, Public health experts and Political leaders have called it a "national epidemic" (Abbott, Johnson, Koziol-McLain, & Lowenstein, 1995). " It is a crime that is damaging to individuals and their families, as well as to productivity in the workplace" (Chazen, 1994). The reason this topic is chosen is because its damaging extensiveness is causing much alarm in the world.

A review of the literature has shown that much has been written on Domestic Violence from the female point of view (e.g., Burber, 1957; Flitcraft, 1995; Walker, 1989; etc.), but very little from the male point of view and when so, writings have mostly concerned the husbands' and wives' relationship and not the man alone and the

reasons for being violent (e.g., Alpert, 1995; Charney & Dresdner, 1996; Moffitt et al., 1997).

The large amount of research concerning women is most probably due to the fact that it is usually the female who is the victim of domestic violence (Carmen, Reiker, & Mills, 1984) and therefore, needs the most immediate help. Yet, counselors need to address the problem as a whole: both, man and woman in the relationship. The present study is designed to find some of the reasons behind man's violence.

The implication of the present research is that if one is aware of all the angles concerning the causes of domestic violence, one may be taking the first steps towards its resolution.

This paper begins by examining the various definitions of violence given by different authors. Then it uses these definitions to agree upon one that includes all the criteria. The paper then examines studies that show the incidence of domestic violence and reviews the causes of violence. Following the literature review, an exploratory study is done in Lebanon to

investigate the following questions: 1) what do men in general think of violence 2) do they think it exists? 3) how do they define it? 4) do they justify it? if so, how? 5) what are some of the causes they give that seem to trigger their violence? Then, a second study is carried out to compare men's and women's reactions to the subject.

This research will finally lead to a discussion concerning the occurrence, definition, justification, and reasons for violence from the male point of view compared to the findings of the literature. It will also discuss the couples' points of view concerning the definition and reasons of violence.

Definition of domestic violence

Domestic violence has been defined in more or less inclusive ways by various authors. A review of these definitions shows the following:

"An act or acts carried out with intention, or perceived intention, of causing physical pain

or injury" to a member of the same family (Sommer, 1992).

For Alpert (1995), domestic violence encompasses not only physical injury but also threats, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological torment, economic control, and progressive social isolation.

Majdalani (1996) agrees that domestic violence can be seen as "the use of intentional physical or psychological abuse to control or otherwise obtain through the use of force what the other partner does not want to give willingly" (p.39).

Hubbard (1991) defined domestic violence as the emotional, physical, psychological or sexual abuse perpetrated against a person by that person's spouse.

In the present study domestic violence will be defined as subjecting intentionally a person to forceful physical, social, and / or psychological abuse in order to obtain what the other partner does not want to give willingly irrespective of

the rights of that person (Browne, 1993; Jouriles & O'leary, 1985; Weaver & Clum, 1995).

Prevalence of domestic violence

A review of the literature shows that the number of women severely assaulted by their partners every year varies from one researcher to another. Mental health professionals have studied the frequency of domestic violence in a variety of clinical and community settings (Carmen et al., 1984).

Post and Associates (1980) found, in a preliminary survey on the prevalence of domestic violence among psychiatric inpatients at Colorado Hospital, that 48% of 60 psychiatric inpatients (38 women and 22 men) gave histories of a battering relationship: 50% of the women had been battered and 27% of the men reported having abused their partners.

Another survey sponsored by the American Medical Association (carried out in 1985 and published in 1992) on 3,676 married couples at Philadelphia Hospital, found that nearly one out of every eight husbands have carried out one or

more acts of physical aggression against their female partner during the survey year: Over one third of these assaults involved severe aggression such as punching, kicking, choking, or using a knife or a gun.

Another research done by McCauley and colleagues (1995) studied the prevalence of domestic violence among 1,952 women seen in four community-based primary care internal medicine practices in the Baltimore area. They found that 22% of these women have been physically or sexually abused before the age of 18 years and that 21% of them had been also abused during adulthood.

These high rates of domestic violence show that the battered persons are mostly women and the aggressors mostly men. In one study men themselves acknowledge that they are the violent ones in the couple (Post et al., 1980).

Further review of the literature examines the causes of violence. These causes can be grouped into eight. They range from social and learned

stereotyped to physiological factors governing behavior:

Child abuse and witnessing parental violence

Child abuse or past witnessing of parental spouse abuse seems to be a major cause for wife assault (Rosenbaum & O'leary, 1981). Ronfeldt, Kimerling, and Arias (1998) have found that experiencing child abuse or witnessing parental spouse abuse in the family of origin predisposes the husband to follow the role model that he has learned in childhood.

Sociologists and social learning theorists identify witnessing domestic violence as a child as the most common risk factor for becoming abusive towards a wife in adulthood: The perpetrator of the violence has learned as a child that violence solves problems and is therefore the best way to get what he wants. Abusive men saw abuse successfully used by a male authority figure in childhood and as a result have learned behaviors that lead to use of abuse in their own relationships as adults (Mccue, 1995).

Sexual stereotype, the need to control, and stress

In the review by Hotelling and Sugarman (1986), 94 percent of the studies have found a significant relationship between men who have witnessed parental violence and later abuse of partner: Boys who witness violence against their mothers are ten times more likely to abuse their female partners as adults than are boys raised in nonviolent homes.

Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980) have found that males who have observed their parents attacking each other are three times more likely to have assaulted their wives. These authors have found that 35 percent of men who have seen their parents attacking each other have hit their own wives in the year of the study compared to 10.7 percent of men who had not witnessed such an event.

Similarly, Ulbrich and Huber (1981) have reported that abusive men who have witnessed their fathers hitting their mothers are more likely to approve the idea of violence against women and specifically to abuse their own partners.

Sexual stereotype, the need to control, and stress

The feminist perspective says that "wife abuse can be understood only if one understands that our society is one traditionally structured along the lines of gender, with men as a class yielding power over women" (McCue, 1995, p.13). This attitude will take a long time to change because it is very "deeply-rooted in the collective, unconscious" of the society (Boustany, 1997). According to this perspective, the institutions of marriage and family encourage abusive men to use physical force to control and gain power over their wives. Men feel entitled to this position of authority and their position is reinforced by religious teachings and the social and legal systems (Mckenry, Julian, and Gavazzi, 1995).

Illustrating this point, Dutton (1995) cited a study by Dobash and Dobash which found that "men who assault their wives are actually living up to cultural prescriptions that are cherished in western society - aggressiveness-male dominance, and female subordination - and they are using

through the family structure, and thus the abuser

physical force as a means to enforce that dominance". his home" (McCue, 1995).

The same seems to be the case in eastern society, men are encouraged to have the position of authority; some of these men feel that they can't have this position unless they use physical force to control or gain power over their wives (McCue, 1995). that women with jobs that were higher

Feminists say that early sex-role socialization conditions girls to become submissive victims while boys are socialized to become perpetrators of violence. In the preschool setting during free play, one can observe the strong sex-role identification when "playing house"-usually the "mother" is serving the "father" coffee while he makes demands of both the wife and child before going off to work. This early process sets the stage for the male figure to dominate the passive female figure (Rose, 1979). gained through its use. These rewards are

"Men have had unrealistic sex-role expectations and perceptions of their dominance through the family structure, and thus the abuser

accepts the right to be abusive within the sanctity of his home" (Mccue, 1995).

This need for control increases when the man's job is low in status relative to his partner's occupation (Babcock, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1993): In a random survey of 1,553 Kentucky women, Hornung, McCullough, and Sugimoto (1981) found that women with jobs that were higher in status than their husband's, were much more likely to experience life - threatening violence than were wives who were occupationally similar to their husbands. If the wife has more education or a higher income than the husband does, the likelihood of husband-to-wife violence increases (Hotalling & Sugarman, 1986).

Husband-to-wife violence gives a positive consequence to the man to regain his control: The social learning theory emphasizes violence as a learned response to stress supported by immediate rewards gained through its use. These rewards are described as feelings of urgency and control for the male, cessation of aversion stimulation provided by losing a verbal conflict, and

cathartic expression of anger (Bandura, 1977). In other words, when husband and wife are arguing on a subject where the wife is the dominant, the man may lose his control and find no other way except beating his wife. The wife then may stop arguing and agrees with her husband on his point of view. By beating his wife, the man gets an immediate reward: he regains control and is encouraged to use the same mechanism again.

Gelles (1987) stated that a consistent finding in domestic violence research is that violence is highly related to social stress. Life event research has indicated that the occurrence of physical or psychological abuse between couples may be the result of the negative life events in the individual's life. It can also be related to life experiences that are threatening the status of the traditional male role (Mckenry et al., 1995; Rosenbaum & O'leary, 1981; Steinmetz, 1987). Grinker (1971) found that many social events would reveal a "confluence of multiple causes of violence where several factors come together at approximately the same time and exceed the

threshold of suppression through mutual reinforcement" (p.59).

Stets (1995) found that people have tendency to control their partner when they have experienced lack of control over their environment. He stated, "controlling the other retrieves a view of oneself as having mastery, that is, as being capable and competent" (p.498) of his environment. In other words when people feel they lack control over their environment, they will respond by controlling others to compensate for this feeling of lack of control.

Sexual stereotypes, the need to control and stress are factors that have common components. Sexual stereotypes and stress are not the direct trigger to violence. Men's violence is triggered via the need to control. Men are raised with the belief of their sex-role expectation, i.e., their dominance through the family structure. Any threat to this dominance is perceived by them as a lack of control. In order to regain their position, they abuse their wives. Further, if men are under stress, i.e, too many stressors at the same time,

they feel that they are losing control. To regain this control, men abuse their wives. So, violence for men is a way to cope with tension, stress and restore the family system's equilibrium.

Lack of communication and problem solving skills

Men who are unable to express their intentions through communication and negotiation and who find that non-physical coercion is insufficient to achieve their intentions resort to pushing, slapping, and beating (Scanzoni, 1979; Steinmetz, 1987).

An increased risk of husband-to-wife violence is when both husband and wife are low on communication skills or have few communication resources (Babcock et al., 1993). Inability to communicate and negotiate conflict have been found to be highly related to physical violence between spouses (Mckenry et al., 1995): Bograd found that most husbands feel that there is no other way to handle conflicts unless they use physical violence. This, as we will see through our research, is one of the most common justifications

Lebanese men gave for battering their wives (as cited in Babcock et al., 1993).

Distance-regulation mechanism

Violence in intimate couple relationships has also been explained as a distance-regulation mechanism that maintains a balance between separateness and connectedness in the relationship. According to Buber (1957), healthy intimate relationships involve the struggle for the man to have a sense of an "I" within a "we". Given current socialization of practices, men and women have difficulty balancing a sense of self as connected and a sense of self as separate.

Bartle and Rosen (1994) stated that "men have difficulty connecting and in the extreme, have difficulty saying that they have difficulty connecting. Women have difficulty being separate, and may even wonder if it is all right for them to desire a sense of 'I'", because of the traditional method they are raised by. Women are raised with the belief that they should be dependent, while men are raised with the belief that they should be independent: When men and women get married, the

woman seeks closeness with her husband. The moment the husband feels this strong connection he becomes violent in order to get back the sense of "I". Men feel uncomfortable with increasing closeness in adult relationships. But, because women are oriented toward connection, they start to seek it again. And again men became violent seeking for individuation. This cycle of distance-regulation mechanism repeats itself through the whole life (Bartle & Rosen, 1994; Ronfeldt et al., 1998).

Alcohol-violence relationships

Alcohol has been found to encourage the expression of violence, though it has not been found to be a direct reason of violence. The co-occurrence of alcohol and abuse has led some people to relate violence to alcoholism. Perpetrators may use alcohol as an excuse for the battering. But research shows that complex pattern of behavior comprising domestic violence is not caused by any particular chemical substance (Gustafson, 1994). However, alcohol may loosen inhibitions, giving the abuser "permission" to do

things he normally would not do (Ganley & Harris, 1978).

Alcohol can facilitate the expression of aggressive behavior. However, subjects rarely increased their aggression unless they felt threatened or provoked (Gustafson, 1994; Gustafson, 1993).

Another reason for the person to drink alcohol is to bolster his courage or in hope of evading punishment or censure (Collins, 1989; Fagan, 1990). The motive of drinking to avoid censure is encouraged by the popular view of intoxication as a "time-out", during which one is not subjected to the same rules of conduct as when sober (MacAndrew & Edgerton, 1969; Zack, 1997).

Other reasons for alcohol use is that alcohol consumption can promote aggression because people expect it to (Gustafson, 1994). Research using real and mock alcoholic beverages shows that people who believe they have consumed alcohol begin to act more aggressively, regardless of which beverage they actually consumed (Bushman, 1997).

Mckenry and colleagues (1995) found that alcohol abuse has been associated with 25 percent to 85 percent of cases of wife assaults. Fojtik (as cited in Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981) observed that " alcohol use has been reported to be associated with an attack in approximately 65 percent of abuse instances" (p.64).

Testosterone

Testosterone is a biological indicator of violent behavior. A review of the literature has indicated that high testosterone levels tend to covary with high probability of aggressive behaviors, dominance status, and pathologic forms of aggression (Archer, 1991). For example, Mckenry et al. (1995) cited a study by Rada, who found significantly elevated plasma testosterone levels in participants in a study of rapists, child molesters, and normal controls, judged as most violent.

In a normative sample of over 4,000 male united states military veterans, Dabbs and Morris (1990) have found that individuals higher in testosterone more often have reported the

following: having trouble with parents, teachers, and classmates, being assaultive toward other adults, using hard drugs and alcohol, and having more sexual partners. Because testosterone has strong links with aggression, dominance, and antisocial behaviors, it would appear that high level of testosterone has the potential to affect marriage adversely (Booth & Dabbs, 1993). This could mean that men with very high testosterone levels tend to carry hostile behaviors more often than others into interpersonal relationships (Mckenry et al., 1995). Julian and Mckenry (1989) have found a negative relationship between testosterone and marital happiness in a study of middle-aged males.

In conclusion, domestic violence has been associated with biological, social and psychological causes. As the literature review shows, abusive men who assault female partners are frequently characterized as: victims of abuse in their childhood, influenced by sexual stereotypes, lacking control, being stressed, lacking communication skills, using violence as distance-

regulation mechanism, subject to alcoholism, and having high level of testosterone.

The literature review has given many causes of why men abuse their wives. The studies also show that domestic violence definitely occurs in the world. Do Lebanese men think that it occurs in Lebanon? How do they define violence? The literature review doesn't show if men justify violence, however, one study has showed that some men acknowledge the fact that they are violent (Post et al., 1980). The present research will find out if Lebanese men justify violence and how do they justify it, and who is more likely to initiate violent behavior. Further, a comparison will be made between the husbands and wives regarding the definition and causes for violence to find out if men and women share the same outlook on violence as women do. This comparison will be of great help in marital therapy because it is very important to know both points of view.

Chapter II

Method

The survey is divided into three parts.

Part one: a first questionnaire was given to a group of Lebanese men. The way it was written threatened the participants. They rejected it and showed signs of abuse towards the interviewer and towards their wives. This aborted questionnaire was considered a "trial study" and a significant indicator of men's attitude towards violence.

Part two: a second questionnaire was developed where the questions were rephrased in an indirect manner: for example the question which was asked in the first questionnaire as "why do you think husbands beat the wives they promised to love? a) jealousy b) past battering c) male supremacy d) alcohol, etc." was changed to "certain theories say that man is violent by nature because of the hormone testosterone, this makes them violent with other men and in general. Would you

agree that this hormone is the cause of more violence in men than in women or are there other causes?"

In this questionnaire subjects were informed that the study was a part of a worldwide U.N survey about violence. This second revised part was called the "main study".

Part three: in this part the survey consisted of 25 wives of 25 men taken from the "main study". The subjects were from Saida. The purpose for collecting data from this sample was to compare husbands' and wives' definition and reasons of violence, and to find out if they view domestic violence in the same manner. In other words, to see if men who said that they are not violent are indeed not violent i.e judged not violent by their wives.

The "main study":

The questionnaire:

The questionnaire was written in English and Arabic.

The reason it was written in the two languages is because Arabic is the native language of the Lebanese people. It was also written in English because some people prefer to write in English. Demographic information about the sample such as age, educational

level, and work status was included. Many questions were used as decoy in order to avoid what happened in the first "trial study". For example questions like: In your opinion has violence and aggression in the world a) increased b) decreased c) the same as before. Another question is what would you consider as violent acts? a) among nations b) among employers c) among people. The questions that were chosen for analysis, were questions number 15,16,17,19,20,21 and 22.

Question number 15 was used to find out how do men define violent acts.

Question number 16 was used to view if men find violent acts justifiable.

Question number 17 was used to find out in what manner do men justify violence.

Question number 19 was used to find out if men think that violence exists.

Question number 20 was used to view who is the violent person in the house according to men themselves.

Questions number 21 and 22 were used to find out what are the reasons of violence. Item number 22 was divided into three parts only part three, the item

husband/wife, was chosen. The others were used as decoy.

The questionnaire is found in Appendix I p.62.

Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed to 200 married men. Twenty of the 200 men refused to take the questionnaire, while the other 180 agreed to fill it. Ninety-five of the 180 refused to continue filling the questionnaire when they knew that it is about violence. Twenty of them said: "it is not your business", another 20 answered: "there is no time", 30 reported: "not my problem", and the last 25 stated: "I do not want". Only 85 agreed to continue filling the questionnaire.

The entire sample was recruited randomly through door-to-door contacts. The sample covered all Lebanon. The subjects ranged in age from 22 to 65 years with a mean age of 39.

The "couple survey":

Questionnaire:

A fourteen-item questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was also written in English and Arabic because some people prefer to write in English and because Arabic is the native language in Lebanon.

Demographic information about the sample such as age, educational level, and occupational status was included. As mentioned before, these women were the wives of the men recruited in the "main study".

All the women preferred to take the questionnaire as a person-to-person interview rather than fill it on their own.

The questions, that were chosen for the survey, were question number 15 from the "main study" compared with question number 4 from the women questionnaire, and questions number 21 and 22 from the "main study" compared with question number 11 from the women questionnaire. Item 15 from the "main study" and item 4 from the women questionnaire were used to compare the answers between husbands and wives in defining domestic violence. Questions 21 and 22 from the men survey were compared with question number 11 in the wives questionnaire in order to know the different reasons of domestic violence that were given by the husbands and their wives.

Procedure:

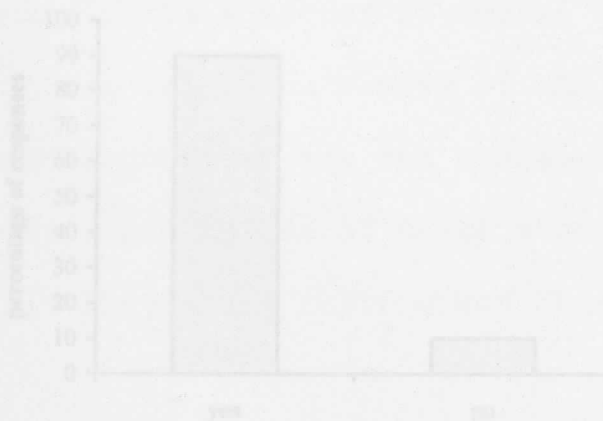
The wives in this survey were informed that the purpose of the study was to learn about how different

couples handle conflicts within their relationships. They were assured that their responses would be confidential. They didn't know before the interview day that they would be asked questions about partner abuse. This eliminated the possibility that participants would plan their responses prior to the interview.

The results are presented in two sections: the result of the "main study" then those of the "couple study".

The main study:

According to the answers of the participants, violence does occur in Lebanon (figure 1)



Answers to the question: "Do you know households where violence occurs?"

Figure 1. Reported acknowledgement of the occurrence of violence

Chapter III

Results and Discussion

The results are presented in two sections: the result of the "main study" then those of the "couple study".

The main study:

According to the answers of the participants, violence does occur in Lebanon (figure 1)

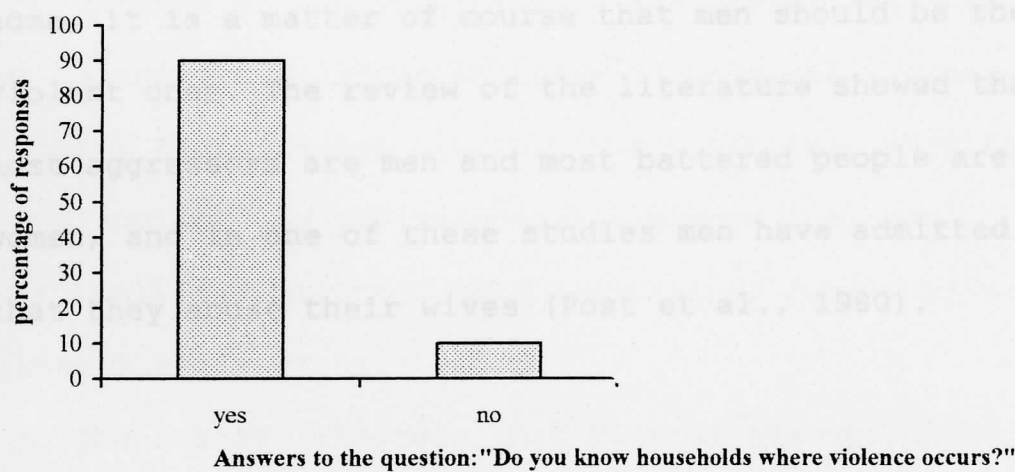


Figure 1 Reported acknowledgement of the occurrence of violence

Eighty participants (about 90%) said "yes" they knew households where violence occurred. Is it possible that these men who have said "yes" are referring to themselves, to their homes? This idea will be developed later in the comment section.

- Who is the violent person?

Figure 2 indicates an acknowledgement by the men themselves that they are the violent member in the family. This could be considered as one step toward a solution for men to recognize this. On the other hand, it could also be an indication that men endorse domestic violence: That is if violence occurs in the home, it is a matter of course that men should be the violent ones. The review of the literature showed that most aggressors are men and most battered people are women, and in one of these studies men have admitted that they abuse their wives (Post et al., 1980).

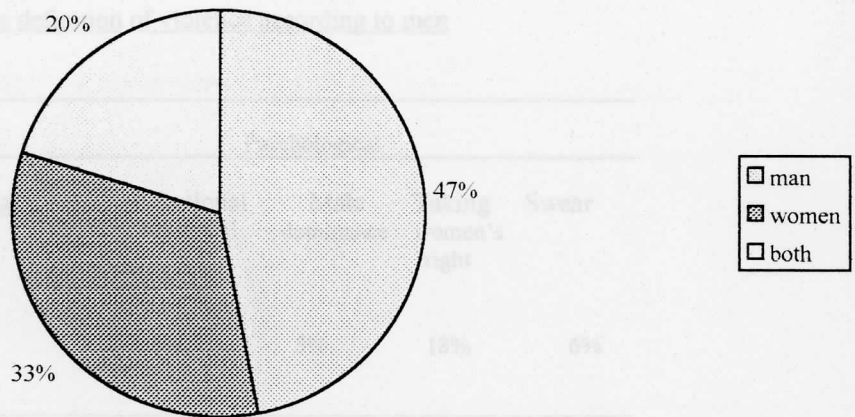


Figure 2 Answers to the question “ who is the most violent person in the family?”

-Definition of violence:

The men in this sample think of violence mostly as physical abuse rather than psychological one (table 1).

Answers of the participants are classified into two categories as shown in table 1: physical violence includes breaking and hitting (i.e., hitting, shoving, and slapping) and psychological violence includes emotional blackmailing, male dominating, swearing, and taking women's right.

The results indicate that 65 % of the men consider violence to be physical and 35% consider it as

psychological: Controlling or cursing the women is not

Table 1
Reported answers concerning the definition of violence according to men

Physical		Psychological			
Hitting	Breaking	Emotional blackmail	Male dominance	Taking women's right	Swear
49%	16%	6%	5%	18%	6%
Total		35%			

a violent action for 55 men (65%). This may mean that when men abuse their wives psychologically they probably do not know that they are hurting them deeply. These results are in accordance with the definition of Sommer (1992) who considers that domestic violence is the action that causes physical pain to others.

Is there any difference between those men who think of violence mostly as physical acts and those who think of it as psychological ones? An analysis of the demographic data indicates a clear tendency for those of white collar occupation to recognize the psychological aspect of violence (see table 2). This may be related to the level of education involved in

the white collar and the blue collar since all of the white collar respondents have a college degree.

Table 2
Definition of violence according to the occupation of the males

	Physical	Psychological
Blue collar N= 45	78%	22%
White collar N= 40	50%	50%

- Justification of violence:

Sixty-five men (about 76%) out of the 85 say that violence can be justified.

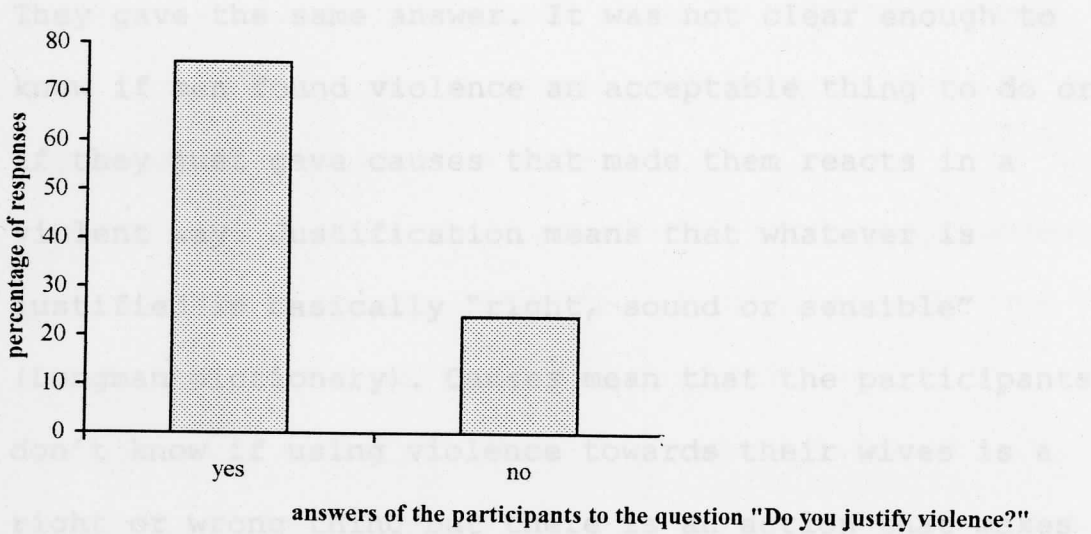


Figure 3 Frequency of participants justifying violence

- Justification and causes of violence: the following:

The study was supposed to differentiate between justification of violence as seen by men and the actual immediate cause that triggers their violence. However, the interviewer was not clear enough in explaining to them the above difference. Upon close scrutiny of the answers one realizes that the answers for justification and causes are very similar and sometimes the same. For example, when participants were asked about the reasons that justify violence, they answered: "facing financial problems". Later, these same participants were asked to give the causes that trigger violence. They gave the same answer. It was not clear enough to know if men found violence an acceptable thing to do or if they just gave causes that made them react in a violent way. Justification means that whatever is justified is basically "right, sound or sensible" (Longman dictionary). Causes mean that the participants don't know if using violence towards their wives is a right or wrong thing but there is an action that makes this violence happen. It was decided then for the sake of clarity to put justification and causes under the same heading.

The combination of the answers leads to the following:

Financial problems: about 23.5 % mentioned facing financial problems as a triggering cause for violence. Financial problems include being unemployed or lacking financial resources: Participant's comment: "when I am unable to support my family financially there is no other way to express my anger except by using violence" (translation). Mckenry et al. (1995) and Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980) mention that the effect of one being unemployed is great on the level of violence in the house. Stets (1995) also confirms that when men lack control over the environment, i.e., facing economic problems, they make it up by trying to have more control at home. This need for control could be expressed by abusing the wife.

Educating the wife/ patriarchal society: Fourteen participants used the word "the right to educate the wife", and twelve participants used the word "patriarchal society". These two causes interact with each other. The right to educate the wife probably has derived directly from the belief of the patriarchal society where the man considers that he is always right: Participant's comment "if the wife doesn't

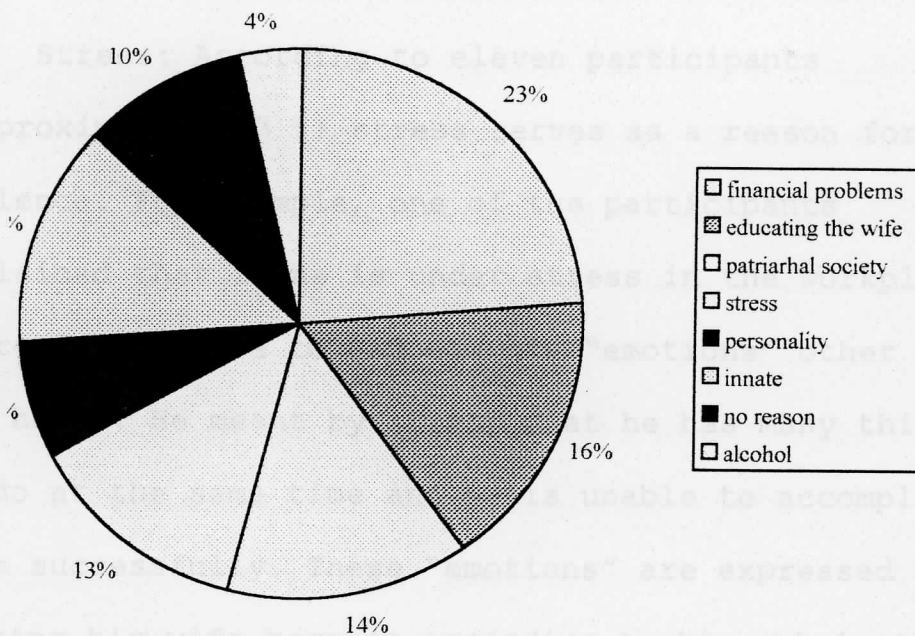


Figure 4 justifications and causes of violence according to the participants

respond or accept what the man says, then there is no other way for the man but to use violence; by using violence he is educating the wife to protect her" (translation). Using battering, punishing and threatening are means of educating according to men. The participants explain that if their wives "dare" to disagree with them, they "absolutely" have the right to educate her, "to return her back to the right way" (translation). Mason and Blankership (1987), Rose (1979), Walker (1979) mention that the patriarchal society we are living in plays a great role in the

level of violence in the house.

Stress: According to eleven participants (approximately 13 %) stress serves as a reason for violence. For example, one of the participants explained that if he is under stress in the workplace, there is no place to express his "emotions" other than the house. He meant by stress that he has many things to do at the same time and he is unable to accomplish them successfully. These "emotions" are expressed by hitting his wife because according to him, she's the "weakest" person who will not rebel.

Personality: three of the participants in figure 4 used the word "complicated personality" (translation) and four of them used the word "weak personality" (translation). According to these participants, these men abuse their wives because they have "incomplete personality" (translation), which probably means immature. When those men were asked to explain what they meant by weak personality, they didn't know how to explain it. However if one refers to an explanation by Mckenry et al. (1995), one can see that these men are afraid to lose the superior status in the interpersonal relationship.

Innate reasons: innate includes both, those who said "testosterone" and "innate". Seven participants used the word "testosterone" and four of them used the word "innate". If testosterone is a cause that triggers violence then these men should be violent with all people; however, one can assume that the man who abuses his wife is not an aggressor in the surrounding.

No reason: It is surprising that eight participants (9.5%) have used the same words: "we don't need a reason to justify violence, we can always justify it" (translation). According to them a man doesn't need justification to explain why he abuses his wife. For these participants, violence is a normal thing, it is a matter of course to abuse the wife.

To summarize, the "main study" shows that men view violence more as physical acts than as psychological ones. The most important causes that trigger violence for men are facing financial problems and the right to educate their wives.

Do men and women view violence in the same way? What are the motives that trigger men to use violence according to women? Do they give the same causes for violence? The answers to these questions are found in

the "couple study".

The couple study

The couple study compares the results of 25 of the men with those of their wives. The comparison yields the following:

Definition of domestic violence:

The men in this sample define violence more as physical acts, while the women define it more as a psychological one (table 3,4).

Table 3
Definition of Violence according to the 25 husbands

Men			
Physical		Psychological	
Hitting	Breaking	Swear	
60%	13%	27%	
Total	73%	27%	

Table 4
Definition of Domestic Violence according to the wives

Women						
Physical			Psychological			
Hitting	Threatening	Putting others down	Curse	Don't listen to the wife opinion	Criticizing	Physical abandonment
24%	16%	8%	20%	16%	8%	8%
Total	24%	76%				

The results show that approximately 73 % of the

men view violence as physical abuse i.e., hitting and breaking; while 24% of the women view it as such. The rest 76 % of the sample see it as psychological abuse i.e., threatening, putting others down, swearing, not listening to the wives opinion, criticizing and physical abandonment. For example, three women

(approximately 8%) have said " when men abandon us physically, we feel treated as if like animals. It is more harmful, men insult our dignity and soul"

(translation). Also according to four women

(approximately 20 %) cursing is very harmful: They have stated by using these exact words " men curse us at any time and for whatever we do. Cursing is very bad. You get very afraid to say anything" (translation).

Rosenbaum and O'leary (1981) confirm that they have seen many wives who reported that physical abuse is not as harmful as psychological abuse.

Is there any difference between those men who think of violence mostly as physical acts and those women who think of it mostly as psychological ones. Looking at the demographic data, it seems that the effect of level of education is to increase the tendency to recognize the psychological dimension of

violence in both males and females. However, the sample size is too small for any solid conclusion on that matter and therefore this issue needs further investigation (see table 5).

Table 5
Definition of violence according to the level of education of husbands and wives

	Secondary		College	
	Physical	Psychological	Physical	Psychological
Male* N= 16	85%	14%	75%	25%
Female N= 25	33%	67%	20%	80%

* Nine of the husbands refused to answer the questionnaire.

Reasons of violence:

Do men give the same reasons of violence as women do? Is there any difference between their answers? A comparison of the answers of men and women shows two common reasons. The first one is financial problems - a word mentioned in the answers by the participants. According to both men and women "males who are facing financial problems are aggressive towards their female partners; to face a financial problem, this can lead to

abuse wife" (translation).

Table 6
Answers concerning the reasons of violence according to the 25 husbands and their wives

Men				Women					
Innate	Financial problems	Educating the wife	No reason	Educating the wife	Witness paternal abuse	Satisfy his instinct	Jealousy	Dominance	Alcohol use
18%	43%	31%	6%	18%	18%	12%	12%	12%	12%

Both, the men and the women, agree that because men can't be the masters of their environment, they abuse their wives: Stets (1995) stated that

the compensation to control others serves to maintain a sense of mastery. Applying the compensatory process to intimate relationships means that when situations occur where control over the environment is threatened, as it does when an individual experiences financial problems, he will react by controlling the partner in order to regain some control over the environment, including a sense of mastery (p.497).

The second common reason of violence is the right

given to men to educate their wives. Both men and women have given this reason. Three Women out of 16 (about 18.75 %) have reported: " my husband has the right to hit and punish me" (translation). So these women think that it is the men's right to educate them even if it is by aggressing them. These women are in their late twenties to late thirties, have just reached a secondary level of education, and are totally dependent on their husbands for livelihood as compared to other women who did not feel that men had the right to educate them: Those women have either a higher level of education or have an occupation. It seems that housewives who are typically dependent upon their husbands will give their husbands the right to educate them even if it is by aggressive behavior. These women, who are the recipient of violence blame themselves for the battering of their husbands and relieve the husbands of the responsibility of their violent behavior.

Alcohol abuse was not a reason common for these 25 men and their wives. However, very few men in the "main study" mentioned it before. Women report that their partners drink too much alcohol. In drinking alcohol,

men became out of control and they abused their wives. This means that women tend to blame alcohol for an intoxicated man's beating of his wife, rather than holding the man fully responsible (Rosen and O'leary 1981). So, according to these women, men are not responsible for their violent behaviors towards their wives when they are drunk.

Women explain men's violence in a different and more analytical way: witnessing paternal abuse and men's jealousy are two causes invoked by women alone.

Witnessing parental abuse: " my husband has witnessed his father abusing his mother. He has grown up in a violent environment where he learned to resort to violence in the face of the slightest conflict" (translation). These words were used by the women themselves. According to Hotelling and Sugarman (1986), Stets (1990), and Straus et al. (1980) exposure to fathers hitting mothers increases the likelihood of husband-wife aggression in the next generation and sons who witness paternal hitting are more likely to be perpetrators of violence against their own female partners.

Children in these households learn that by using

violence they can get what they want. They may believe that it is normal for men to be aggressive and domineering. Women may be viewed as powerless and deserving of abuse. Thus, these males who have witnessed violence in the home as children have expressed approval of wife abuse and have been less able to resolve conflict constructively (Rosenbaum and O'Leary, 1981; Dutton, 1995).

Men's jealousy: Women using these words have said "my husband is jealous for nothing, for example, if he and I are walking in the street and a man looks at me, directly I expect a violent act from him when we return home" (translation). Researchers who have conducted extensive research on batterers say that jealousy/rejection is a key to why men abuse their wives (Mccue 1995). This jealousy is generally unfounded, but the jealous abuser, according to women, believes his wife is having an affair. His wife's perceived behavior signifies rejection of him, which is threatening to his manhood. Since he believes that the man must "wear the pants" in the relationship and that violence will restore order and balance, he becomes violent and blames it on his wife's behavior with other

men.

To summarize, the "couple study" shows that men and women have different views concerning the definition of violence: Men view it as physical acts while women view it as psychological ones. Men and women share two causes for violence: Both of them consider that facing financial problems and the right to educate the wife are causes for violence. In addition to these two reasons women have others: witnessing paternal abuse, jealousy, male need for dominance, and alcohol abuse.

Their reactions to the questionnaire have reflected how violent they are: Men tore up the questionnaire where questions on violence were asked in a direct fashion, shouted, and abused both the interviewer and their wives. The fact that 25 out of the 200 men refused to answer in the "main study" indicates again that men prefer to avoid the subject of violence, especially when they give irrelevant reasons like "not your problem", "I have no time" and "not your business" after agreeing to take the questionnaire.

It might be suggested to ask a question like: Are men afraid because they are violent themselves? The

Chapter IV

Comments and Conclusion

All through the study, one can realize men's attitude toward violence. A major point that can be inferred from the "trial study" is how threatened men are by the topic "violence". They have refused to talk about this subject as if it is "taboo". Their reactions to the questionnaire have reflected how violent they are: Men tore up the questionnaire where questions on violence were asked in a direct fashion, shouted, and abused both the interviewer and their wives. The fact that 95 out of the 200 men refused to answer in the "main study, indicates again that men prefer to avoid the subject of violence, especially when they give irrelevant reasons like "not your problem", "I have no time" and "not your business" after agreeing to take the questionnaire.

It might be suggested to ask a question like: Are men afraid because they are violent themselves? The

answer can be inferred from the answers of the wives whose husbands refused to answer the main questionnaire: The results showed that 6 of the wives out of the 9 husbands who refused to answer, have experienced violence. Could it be, then, that those who refused to answer in the "main survey" are violent themselves?

Another idea supporting the assumption that these men could be violent themselves is the answer of men who admit that they have known households where violence occurs and at the same time confess that they are the most violent ones at home. Is it also possible that these men are referring to themselves? Based on the couple study, 9 of the wives of the 15 husbands who have said that they know households where violence exists, have experienced violence. Can it be assumed based on this evidence, that these men don't want to approach the subject "violence" because they are violent themselves?

Another interesting finding is that these men have thought of violence as implying domestic violence without being led by any question to think along this line. Only the last question has mentioned domestic

violence. For example, the answers of question number nine which asks, "how can you explain these violent acts?" has been oriented toward implying domestic violence. 10 out of the 85 men have reported "hitting", 40 out of the 85 men have reported "natural", and 10 have said "no respect". These answers lead us to ask ourselves: Why do these men mix the word violence with domestic violence although the questions deal with violence in general? Again the same question raises itself: can it be because they are themselves violent at home? Are men violent towards their wives and could it be possible that the home is the only place where men are not afraid to show their violence? Is this the reason why they combine the two topics together?

Another comment that should be highlighted is the right given to men by men and sometimes by women themselves, to educate the wife. There could be a relation between this reason and the patriarchal society we are living in. There are cultural generalizations affecting all women, and that have far-reaching implications in their status and role in society, and how women are perceived. The belief that men are superior and that women are inferior is

strongly based on the traditional view of women as subordinates.

As such, gender-based violence and abusive conduct is acceptable as "normal" and man is given the right to discipline his wife into obedience. Dobash and Dobash (1979) confirm that our social system has defined the husband as the dominant, strong, authoritarian, aggressive, and rational provider for the family while the wife has traditionally been assigned to a dependent, passive, and submissive role. Our society has flourished under this model by dividing the labor force in half and encouraging women to remain at home and care for their husbands and children while husbands leave the home to provide a living for their families. These social rules, that women are raised by, could make them think that it is the men's right to educate their wives.

To summarize, this study shows that this sample of Lebanese men admit to the occurrence of violence and define it more as physical acts than as psychological ones. The causes and justification of violence were similar due to the lack of clarity in the difference between causes and justifications to the participants.

Therefore, what was mentioned as triggering were: facing financial problems, educating the wife, kinds of personality, innate reasons, no reason, stress and alcohol abuse. These causes have been in agreement with the literature.

On the other hand, looking at the results of the "couple study" one can see the difference in opinions between husbands and their wives about the definition of violence. While men define violence more as physical acts, women define it more as psychological ones.

Concerning the reasons of violence given by the couples, they share two common things. The first is the economic problems that the family might face, and the second is the right to educate the wife. The important thing is the finding discovered while conducting the study: these men prefer to avoid the topic violence, and they give themselves the right to educate the wife.

The current study is the first one designed in Lebanon to find out about men's attitude, definition, justification, and reason for violence. Thus, some recommendations might be used for future research. First, it is important to enlarge the sample in order to make safer generalization. Second, the interviewer

has to be clearer and to insist more in order to get the best answer from the participants. Finally, the present research can't claim with certainty that men are afraid of the subject domestic violence or why they mix violence and domestic violence. However, to investigate these ideas, the subjects should be considered for future research.

General clinical suggestions might be relevant here: The findings suggest that it may be useful for improved treatment to assess men's reasons for violence in order to decrease abuse in the relationship.

In addition, the findings suggest that clinicians might attempt to increase violent men's awareness of their learned models of aggression and to challenge the belief that violence is an effective means of handling conflict in relationships. With these cognitive strategies, treatment also may focus on teaching behavioral skills to enable a violent man to gain power over his environment and to negotiate power within his relationship in more appropriate ways. Anger control and communication training may help violent men learn to manage their emotions and express their frustrations more appropriately in response to conflict or the other

events that they may experience as threats to their need to be in control. Couple therapy may be another option to allow the couple to work together on sharing and cooperation in their relationship.

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Appendix I

A) The questionnaire of the “main study”

- 1) Age:
- 2) Educational level: a) elementary b) secondary c) college
- 3) Occupation :
.....
- 4) Are you willing to take a questionnaire about a certain situation that seems to be prevalent in the world ?

YesNo
- 5) This situation concerns violence. Are you still willing to go on?

YesNo
- 6) Please feel free to stop whenever you feel ill at ease. It would be helpful if you could tell me why you chose not to answer anymore?
.....
.....
.....
- 7) In your opinion has violence and aggression in the world
 - a) increased
 - b) decreased
 - c) the same as before
- 8) What would you consider as violent acts?
 - a) among nations
.....
 - b) among employers
.....
 - c) among people
.....
- 9) How can you explain these violent acts?
 - a) among nations
.....
 - b) in the work situations

c) among people.

10) Do you consider that some people are more prone to violence than others?

11) Do you consider that some people provoke a violent reaction from others?

12) How do you react to violent people?

13) What is your opinion of them?

14) How would you expect others to react to violent action?

15) In fact what would you define as violent action?

16) Do you find violent action justified?

Yes

No

17) In which manners do you justify it?

18) Some people say that violence starts in the home. Do you agree with that?

Yes No

19) Do you know, without naming, households where violence exist?
.....
.....

20) Is it usually the man, the woman or the children that are the most violent?
.....
.....

21) Certain theories say that man is violent by nature because of the hormone testosterone, this makes them violent with other men and in general. Would you agree that this hormone is the cause of more violence in men than in women or are there other reasons?
.....
.....
.....

22) Can you find other causes for violence and their justifications?
a) among nation
.....
b) the work situation
.....
c) among people
1) friends
2) parents/children
3) husband/wife

B) The questionnaire of the “couple study”

- 1) Age
- 2) Educational level: a) elementary b) secondary c) college
- 3) Occupation:
- 4) People talk a lot about domestic violence , can you define it ?
.....
.....
.....
- 5) In you opinion , how widespread is it ?
.....
.....
.....
- 6)What do you consider as violent acts?
.....
.....
.....
- 7) Have you personally experienced violence from your husband?
.....
.....
.....
- 8) In what way was that violence expressed?
.....
.....
.....
- 9) What did you do about it?
.....
.....
.....
- 10) What would you advise other women to do about it?
.....
.....
.....
- 11) In your opinion ,why is your husband violent towards you?

.....

.....

.....

- 12) Is he violent towards the others as well ?
- a) children
 - b) family
 - c) friends

13) If you could say anything, what would you tell him?

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14) What will happen if you told him?

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