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Exposure to Childhood Violence and Men's Attitudes about Intimate Partner Violence in
Vietnam

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Abstract

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By Huyen Tran Pham

Background: This study investigated the association between men's childhood exposure to violence and their attitudes about intimate partner violence against women as an adult. In addition, we also assessed whether perpetration of IPV as an adult would mediate this relationship. We examined two forms of violence exposure, whether they have witnessed inter-parental violence and whether they have experienced being hit as a child.

Methods: This cross-sectional study used a questionnaire to interview 522 married men between the ages 18-49 in Vietnam. Bi- and multivariate ordinal logistic analyses are presented.

Results: The prevalence of exposure to both witnessing inter-parental violence and physically maltreated as a child was 25.6% while exposure to only one of the forms of violence was 50.8%. Only 23.6% had been exposed to neither form of childhood violence. In a model that adjusts for all covariates except for perpetration of IPV, we found that men exposed to one form of violence but not both had higher odds of more often reporting that there is a good reason to hit their wife (OR 1.64, 95% CI 1.11 to 2.41) compared to men who were exposed to neither form. Men who were exposed to both forms of violence also had higher odds of more often finding good reason to hit their wife relative to men exposed to neither form (OR 1.86, 95% CI 1.19 to 2.92). Controlling for adult perpetration of IPV slightly attenuated this association (OR 1.34, 95% CI 0.90 to 2.00 and OR 1.46, 95% CI 0.95 to 2.27, respectively)

Conclusion: We found that exposure to violence in childhood is associated with attitudes about IPV as an adult. Findings highlight the need for early prevention and intervention in order to address attitudes condoning violence against women.

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BACKGROUND

Intimate partner violence (IPV), defined as “victim/perpetrator relationships among current or former intimate partners, "is an important public health issue (1). Globally, 15%-71% of women report lifetime exposure to physical or sexual IPV (2). Moreover, women often justify this type of violence with the range of women's acceptance of IPV varying globally from 4% to 90% (3).

Exposure to IPV has been linked with serious consequences including poor health, depression, and suicide attempts (2, 4). Given these negative consequences, in recent years, IPV has been recognized as an international public health priority, and there have been numerous legislative and policy efforts to reduce IPV globally (5-7).

Attitudes about IPV represent an important point of intervention in reducing the prevalence of IPV, as the justification of IPV has been linked with both IPV perpetration and victimization (8). Prior research suggests that socioeconomic status, age, education, income disparity between husband wife, and urban/rural residence are associated with men and women's justification of IPV against women (9-11). In addition, experiences of violence in childhood, both witnessing IPV and experiencing physical maltreatment, are thought to be instrumental in the shaping of attitudes toward IPV in adulthood (12-14). Most of this research has focused on women's attitudes, although men's attitudes also are salient for understanding the high prevalence of IPV globally.

In this study, we explore the relationship between childhood experiences of violence, specifically the experience of physical maltreatment and witnessing one's father perpetrate physical IPV against one's mother, and men's justification of IPV in Vietnam. We also explored the link between men's attitudes and their prior perpetration of IPV

against women as an adult. We focus on IPV against women throughout this paper and will refer to it as "IPV" for brevity. Vietnam is a particularly relevant setting for this research, since up to a third of women (31.5%) have experienced physical IPV in their lifetime (15). In addition, there has been rapid economic, social, and legal change in recent years, which may be shifting attitudes to be less accepting of IPV against women (16).

Childhood Exposure to Violence

Witnessing Inter-parental Violence

Children may be exposed to domestic violence at many points during their lives, even prenatally (17). Children may witness violence directly and might become involved in the incident themselves if they intervene on behalf of the victimized parent. Children could also be exposed indirectly if they hear about the event after it occurs or if they observe the effects of violence (e.g. bruising).

According to UNICEF estimates, about 133-175 million children witness IPV every year (18). Witnessing parental violence has been linked with deleterious outcomes, including higher likelihoods of experiencing IPV and having suicidal thoughts (19).

More generally, maternal exposure to IPV has been linked to a number of poor health outcomes for children, including inhibition of growth, higher odds of infection, and poorer general health through biological and behavioral pathways (20). In a US longitudinal study, researchers found that boys who were exposed to IPV were more likely to be obese, after adjusting for confounders (21).

Physical Maltreatment

Maternal exposure to IPV increases the risk that children themselves will experience physical and sexual violence (17). Some of this exposure may be attributable

to children being harmed during an incidence of IPV. More likely, children themselves will be subject to corporal punishment—a form of physical maltreatment. In high-income countries annually, about 4%-16% of children experience physical maltreatment by their parents (22). In East Asia and the Pacific, the lifetime prevalence of moderate physical abuse of children ranges from 39.5-66.3% (23).

Consequences of Childhood Violence

The repercussions of witnessing inter-parental violence and physical maltreatment as a child extend beyond childhood. A review of studies in higher-income countries suggests that physically abused children tend to have lower educational achievement (22). In the US, adults who had been physically abused as children were more likely to have income below the federal poverty level and to be unemployed (24). Studies from East Asia and the Pacific link childhood maltreatment to poor mental health outcomes as an adult, poor physical health, and increased likelihood of engaging in risky behavior (19).

Childhood Experiences Shape Attitudes

According to social learning theory, children acquire behaviors by modeling the behavior of others (25). Children who grow up witnessing violence between their parents may believe that using violence in intimate relationships is a normal and acceptable behavior (26, 27). The process of “learning” that violence is normal may occur for men and women. In Northern Vietnam, women who had witnessed their father physically beating their mother were more likely to have favorable attitudes towards IPV (28). Exposure to physical maltreatment in childhood also may lead to acceptance of the use of violence in adult intimate relationships (13). Among Chinese immigrants in the U.S.,

having a history of child abuse was correlated with justifying IPV among men who were batterers (29).

Childhood Experiences Influence IPV Perpetration

Witnessing parental violence and experiencing corporal punishment or physical abuse during childhood may lead to IPV perpetration in adulthood (19, 30). In India, men who were exposed to parental violence in childhood were more likely to perpetrate IPV in adulthood (26). A multi-site study also found consistently strong associations between women's husbands' history of childhood physical abuse and their risk for recent IPV perpetration (31).

Other Factors Associated with IPV Perpetration

Prior research indicates other factors associated with likelihood of men's perpetration of IPV against women in addition to childhood experiences. In Vietnam, husbands who were four or more years older than their wives were less likely to perpetrate IPV than men who were one to three years older than their wives (32). In a study conducted in Uganda, men with five or more children were more likely to perpetrate IPV than men with fewer children (33). In Bangladesh, researchers found that women who lived with their extended family had lower odds of every being hit by their husband (34).

IPV and physical maltreatment in Vietnam

According to the 2010 *National Study on Domestic Violence Against Women in Vietnam*, 58% of women have experienced physical, sexual, or emotional IPV by their husband (15). Among women exposed to IPV, more than half state that their children

have witnessed it at least once (15). Additionally, 23.7% of children in Vietnam experienced violence perpetrated by their mother's partner in their lifetime (15).

Confucianism wields great influence over Vietnamese family structure and acceptable practices (35). Men are considered superior to women, father superior to children, older superior to younger. Thus, wives are expected to defer to their husbands and children to their fathers. Men's use of violence against their wives and corporal punishment of sons reinforces their masculinity and superiority (35). The Taoist concept of men as hot (nong) and women as cool (lanh) is used to justify violence against women since men are thought to be unable to control themselves and women expected to endure adversity (35).

Present Study

Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationship between witnessing parental violence and physical maltreatment in childhood and attitudes toward IPV as an adult. We anticipate that men who have witnessed their father beat their mother and who have been physically maltreated in childhood are more likely as adults to justify physical IPV against a wife. Additionally, we investigate whether this relationship remains significant after controlling for perpetration of IPV in adulthood to assess whether experiences of violence in childhood influence attitudes about IPV in adulthood, beyond what is observed in men's likelihood of IPV perpetration in adulthood.

METHODS

Study Population and Sample

This population-based survey was conducted in the My Hao district in Hung Yen province in Vietnam, with a population of about 97,733 individuals (See Yount et al., nd for a detailed description of the survey). Married men and women aged 18-49 years living in 74 villages across 13 communes in the district were eligible for the study. Using a cluster-sampling design, villages were paired by the size of the married population, and 20 pairs of villages were selected with probability of selection proportional to the total married population in the pair (relative to the total married population in all 74 villages). For privacy reasons, one village in the selected pair was designated randomly to the men's sample and the other to the women's sample. The 40 selected villages were located in 12 of the 13 communes. In each village, 27 households with at least one eligible respondent were randomly selected, and one eligible individual selected from each household. For this analysis, only the responses from men were analyzed. In total, 540 men were selected into the sample, of whom 522 completed interviews, for a response rate of 98.1%. Our final sample consisted of 441 men after excluding 81 men with missing or "don't know" responses for questions related to our main outcome, exposure, and control variables.

We administered a questionnaire consisting of three modules covering socio-demographic and economic background information, attitudinal questions on physical IPV against women and their recourse after exposure to IPV, and men's perpetration of IPV and experiences of violence in childhood. The attitudinal module on physical IPV consists of a 10-item sequence asking "[i]n your opinion, does a man have a good reason

to hit his wife” if she engages in the following behaviors: (1) does not complete her household work to his satisfaction, (2) disobeys him, (3) refuses to have sexual relations with him, (4) asks him whether he has other girlfriends, (5) he finds out that she has been unfaithful, (6) goes out without telling him, (7) burns the food, (8) neglects the children, (9) rudely argues with him, and (10) argues with her parents-in-law. Possible answer choices to all ten items were "yes", "no", and "don't know."

In the module containing questions relating to childhood exposure, participants were asked "[w]hen you were a child, did you ever see or hear your mother being hit by your father (or her husband or boyfriend)?" and "[w]hen you were a child, were you ever hit or beaten by your mother, father, or another adult relative?" Answer choices for both questions were "yes", "no", and "don't know."

Perpetration of physical IPV in adulthood was assessed through a series of 6 questions asking men whether they had ever engaged in any of the following behaviors with their current wife: (1) slapped her or thrown something at her that could hurt (2) pushed her, shoved her, or pulled her hair, (3) hit her with your fist or something that could hurt her, (4) kicked her, dragged her, or beat her up, (5) choked or burnt her on purpose, and (6) threatened to use or used a gun, knife, or other weapon against her." Answer choices to all six questions were either "yes" or "no".

Ethical considerations

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Emory University and the Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population. Verbal informed consent was taken before initiating the survey. Interviewers were gender-matched with participants and the survey was administered in separate rooms to maintain privacy.

Variables

Outcome

The outcome of interest was a composite measure of men's attitudes about IPV against women. A count variable was constructed for 7 of the 10 items for which more than 5% of the study population answered "yes," so that these items would not mask the overall count. The count variable was further categorized into 3 levels: (1) respondents answered "no" to all seven items (find no good reason to hit a wife), (2) respondents answered "yes" to one or two items, (find good reason in 1-2 instances), and (3) respondents answered "yes" to three or more items (find good reason in 3 or more instances).

Exposure

The main exposures of interest was childhood witness of respondent's father, mother's boyfriend, or mother's husband perpetrating IPV against respondent's mother and being hit as a child by parents or adult relative. We refer to the former as "inter-parental" violence and the latter as "physical maltreatment" for brevity. The two types of exposures were combined to form a single exposure variable with three levels: (1) respondents were not exposed to witnessing any form of violence or being hit as a child (neither), (2) respondents exposed to either witnessing parental violence or being hit as a child but not both (one), and (3) respondents exposed to both witnessing parental violence and being hit as a child (both). Almost all men (93.7%) who either witnessed parental violence or were hit as a child experienced the latter alone. Missing responses to either question were coded as missing overall for the trichotomized exposure variable

except when the response to one of the questions was "yes" and the other "don't know." In such situations, the exposure was categorized into the "one" group.

Covariates

Covariates considered in the analysis were those that captured childhood experiences, adult socioeconomic status, and perpetration of IPV in adulthood.

Confounders. Respondents' age in years controlled for unmeasured period and life course exposures and childhood residence before age 12 (comparing men who grew up in another town to men who lived in the same commune as a child) controlled for other childhood experiences.

Mediators. Adult socioeconomic mediators included the age difference between husband and spouse, living situation, number of children ever fathered, education (completed grades), partner's education (completed grades), household wealth index, and income compared to wife. Living situation was divided into two categories: living with neither in-laws nor the natal family [the reference group] and living with natal family, in-laws, or both. We refer to the latter category as "other". The variable capturing husband's income relative to wife's income compared to wife consisted of three categories: husband has higher income, same income [the reference group], or less income. The household wealth index was constructed from a principle components analysis of household assets and amenities. Assets include household ownership of the following items: CD/DVD player, table telephone, mobile phone, refrigerator, computer, washing machine, motorbike, car, air conditioner, and tractor/milling machine. Household amenities included a flush toilet, concrete roof, household's own water source, and the number of beds per person.

The husband's perpetration of physical IPV against his current wife was a yes/no variable, with no perpetration as the reference category.

Statistical Analysis

Analyses were conducted in SAS 9.3 (SAS Institute, Cary, NC) and SAS-callable SUDAAN 11.0 (RTI, Research Triangle, NC) to account for the complex survey design. Univariate statistics for all exposures, outcome, and covariates were estimated. Bivariate relationships between attitudes toward violence in adulthood and childhood exposure to violence (exposed to both forms of violence, exposed to just one form of violence, and exposed to neither) were estimated using Rao-Scott chi-square tests. These tests were also used to estimate the relationships between childhood exposure to violence and the covariates, which were categorical variables, while T-tests were used for continuous variables.

Ordinal logistic regression analyses were conducted to estimate the association between childhood exposure to violence and men's attitudes about IPV against a wife (never found good reason [reference], found good reason in 1-2 instances, found good reason in 3 or more instances). The score test showed that the proportional odds assumption of ordinal logistic regression was met (36). We assessed the role of adult socioeconomic mediators and adult perpetration of IPV by using a hierarchical modeling strategy. In Model 1, we estimated the unadjusted association between exposure to violence in childhood and attitudes about IPV. In Model 2, we added controls designed to capture childhood and life course experiences (i.e. childhood residence and age). In Model 3, we added adult socioeconomic mediators. In Model 4, we included the childhood exposure variables, controls for life course and childhood experiences, and

adult perpetration of IPV as a possible mediator. In Model 5, we included the full set of covariates including childhood and life course experiences, adult socioeconomic mediators, and adult perpetration of IPV again as a possible mediator. A test for multicollinearity indicated that our there was no collinearity between variables in our full model (37). We presented odds ratios with their respective 95 percent confidence intervals.

RESULTS

Characteristics of the Sample

Of the 441 men in our final sample, 23.6% (n=102) were neither exposed to inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment as a child, 50.8% (n=233) either witnessed inter-parental violence or were hit as a child, and 25.6% (n=106) both witnessed inter-parental violence and were hit as a child (Table 1). Compared to men who were not exposed to inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment, those exposed to one form were younger (average age 36.5 versus 38.1 years), had a greater age difference with their spouse (2.3 versus 1.8 years), lived in other living arrangements (35.2% versus 27.3%), had more schooling (9.7 versus 8.6 completed grades), had spouses with more schooling (9.8 versus 8.5 completed grades), and lived in wealthier households (average household wealth index of 0.2 versus -0.3). Men who were exposed to one form of violence as a child were more likely to perpetrate IPV as an adult than men who neither witnessed inter-parental violence nor experienced maltreatment as a child (30.3% versus 12.9%). Likewise, compared to men who were exposed to neither form of violence in childhood, men who were exposed to both forms were younger (average age 31.6 years), had a greater age difference with their spouse (2.3 years older), lived in other living arrangements (47.6%), had fewer children (average 1.5), had more schooling (10.5 completed grades), had spouses with more schooling (10.1 completed grades), and lived in wealthier households (0.1). Men who were exposed to both forms of violence as a child also were more likely to perpetrate IPV as an adult (34.3%) than men who were exposed to neither form of violence in childhood. Compared to men who were exposed to one form of violence, men exposed to both forms were also younger (average age 31.6

years), lived in other living arrangements (47.6%), had fewer children (average 1.5), and had more schooling (10.5 grades).

(Table 1)

Men's Attitudes about Physical IPV against Wives

In total, 40.3% agreed that a husband had good reason to hit his wife in three or more situations (Table 2). Compared to men who neither witnessed inter-parental violence nor experienced physical maltreatment as a child (32.6%), men exposed to one form of such violence reported similarly often (38.7%) and men exposed to both forms of violence reported more often (50.4%) that a husband had good reason to hit his wife in three or more situations. Similarly, compared to men who were exposed to only one form of violence (38.7%), men exposed to both forms of violence reported more often (50.4%) that a husband had good reason to hit his wife in three or more situations.

(Table 2)

Overall, a high percentage of men agreed that a husband had a good reason to hit his wife if she argues with parents-in-law (66.0%), rudely argues with him (48.8%), or is sexually unfaithful (45.4%) (Table 3). The individual attitudinal items did not differ significantly between men exposed to one form of violence in childhood and men exposed to neither form of violence in childhood. Compared to men exposed to neither form of violence in childhood, those exposed to both forms of violence more often found good reason for a husband to hit his wife if she "has been unfaithful" (56.6% versus 37.9%) and less often found that a husband had good reason to hit his wife if she "does not complete household work to his satisfaction" (3.5% compared to 9.9%). Men exposed to both forms of violence more often found good reason for a husband to hit his wife if

she "has been unfaithful" than men who have been exposed to one form of violence (56.6% versus 43.3%). Otherwise, men's responses on the individual attitudinal items did not differ.

(Table 3)

Multivariate Results

In Model 1, exposure to violence in childhood was positively associated with reporting that a husband had good reason to hit his wife (Table 4). Specifically, compared to men exposed to no violence in childhood, men exposed to one form in childhood had 1.42 [1.01, 2.00] times the proportional odds of reporting such attitudes, and men exposed to both forms in childhood had 1.98 [1.32, 2.95] times the proportional odds of reporting such attitudes. Adjustment for age and childhood residence only modestly attenuated these associations (Model 2: ORs 1.37 [0.96, 1.97], 1.64 [1.12, 2.43]), and the association of exposure to both forms of violence in childhood with finding good reason to hit a wife remained significant. After adding socioeconomic mediators in adulthood (Model 3), men exposed to one form of violence in childhood had 1.64 [1.01, 2.00] times the proportional odds of reporting that a husband had good reason to hit his wife, and men exposed to both forms of violence in childhood had 1.86 [1.32, 2.95] times the proportional odds of reporting such attitudes. Both odds ratios were significantly greater than 1.00.

(Table 4)

Models 4 and 5 investigated the hypothesis that IPV perpetration as an adult may mediate the association between exposure to violence in childhood and subsequent attitudes about IPV as an adult. In Model 4, which also adjusted for age and childhood

residence, the perpetration of physical IPV was associated with 2.79 [2.15, 3.61] times the proportional odds of finding good reason to hit a wife, and neither category of exposure to violence in childhood was significantly associated with attitudes about IPV. In the fully adjusted model, the association of IPV perpetration with attitudes about IPV was slightly attenuated but remained significant (OR: 2.57 [1.97, 3.36]), and exposure to both inter-parental violence and physical maltreatment in childhood was associated with marginally higher proportional odds of finding that a husband had good reason to hit his wife (OR: 1.46 [0.95, 2.27]). The odds ratio for exposure to one form of violence in childhood was not significant.

Covariates

Age was inversely associated with a husband finding a good reason to hit his wife, and the association was statistically significant in all models that controlled for age (Table 4). In all models controlling for living situation of respondents, a similar relationship emerged where men who did not live with their in-laws or natal family had lower odds of finding a good reason to hit their wife. In all models that adjusted for schooling, men's own schooling attainment was consistently significantly negatively associated with finding a good reason to hit their wife (Models 3 and 5). Household wealth was consistently significantly negatively associated with finding a good reason to hit a wife (Models 3 and 5). Men who earned less than their wife had consistently higher proportional odds of finding a good reason to hit a wife (Models 3 and 5). There were no significant associations between men's attitudes about IPV and childhood residence, age difference, number of children, and partner's education.

DISCUSSION

Our study explored the relationship between childhood exposure to violence and attitudes about IPV as an adult in Vietnam, a country that has been through rapid legal, economic, and social shifts in recent years (7). Despite such changes, men remain highly tolerant of IPV against wives, with 40.3% agreeing in three or more situations that a husband has good reason to hit his wife. There was also a high prevalence of men's exposure to violence in childhood, where 50.8% have either witnessed inter-parental violence or been hit as a child, and 25.6% have been exposed to both forms of violence. A high percentage (50.%) of men who were exposed to both forms of violence found a good reason to hit their wife in three or more situations. In multivariate models, exposure to both inter-parental violence as a child and childhood physical maltreatment as well as exposure to only one form of violence were associated with higher proportional odds of a husband finding good reason to hit his wife. We also found that this relationship may be mediated by men's IPV perpetration as an adult.

Attitudes and exposure to violence

Men who had witnessed inter-parental violence and were hit as a child justified IPV against a wife more often after adjusting for childhood experiences and adult socioeconomic variables in Model 3. We also found a positive association between justification of violence and men who have either witnessed violence or were hit as a child, but not both. In Model 2, we found that exposure to either witnessing IPV or being hit as a child was not significantly associated with justification of IPV violence but that it gained significance after adjusting for socioeconomic factors in Model 3. One explanation for this result could be that men who were exposed to only one form of

violence were more educated and lived in richer households than men who were exposed to neither form of violence. Given that higher income and education are associated with lower justification of IPV, adjustment for these socioeconomic factors in Model 3 revealed the association between experience of violence in childhood and justification of IPV.

Our study supports earlier work suggesting that witnessing violence in childhood is associated with greater justification of IPV as an adult among both men and women. In a sample of 730 women in Vietnam, Vung and Krantz found a similar relationship in which women who had witnessed violence as a child more often justified husband's perpetration of violence against wives (28). However, they did not adjust for other possible confounders in their analysis.

In the individual attitudinal items, we found that men who were exposed to neither witnessing violence or being hit as a child were more likely to believe that violence is justified if a wife "does not complete her household work" compared to men who have been exposed to both forms of violence.

IPV Perpetration as mediator

The results from our study suggests that a history of IPV perpetration as an adult partially mediates the association between exposure to violence as a child and current attitudes about IPV as an adult. Compared to the unadjusted model, the odds ratio for the exposure in the model that adjusts for IPV perpetration in Model 5 does not become null. The odds ratio comparing men who have been exposed to both forms of violence relative to men who have been exposed to neither is marginally significant in Model 5 (p-value

0.09). This supports our hypothesis of perpetration of IPV as a partial mediator as shown in Figure 1.

Previous studies suggest that attitudes influence the likelihood of perpetration of physical IPV against women (31, 38). However, it is also possible that perpetration may reinforce attitudes. In this way, there could be a reciprocal association between positive attitudes about IPV and adult perpetration of IPV. Attitudes mediated the effect of early exposure to violence and IPV perpetration in the past year in a study among Chinese immigrant men in the US (29). Another study conducted in Nigeria suggested that among women, attitudes tolerant of IPV are an intermediate between witnessing violence and IPV perpetration (39). However, both studies are cross-sectional in design and it is difficult to assign directionality. This underscores the need for longitudinal research among young boys to delineate the relationship between exposure to violence, attitudes, and later IPV perpetration as an adult.

Limitations

This study was based on cross sectional, retrospective design. Thus, it might be prone to recall bias. Responses could also be prone to underreporting bias given the sensitive nature of the topic. Results might represent a conservative estimate of attitudes about IPV.

In addition, we were unable to assess the severity and frequency of childhood exposure to violence. It might be possible that the effects of exposure to violence may be greater for children who witness more severe incidents between their parents and who witness it often. We were also unable to distinguish the severity of physical maltreatment.

However, other research has suggested that corporal punishment was associated with adult aggression and risk of child and spousal abuse (40).

Questions on attitudes in the survey might be limited in capturing respondent's justification of IPV. The questions themselves did not allow for varying degrees of justification and did not provide context of the situation. Qualitative research in Bangladesh among men and women showed that respondents interpreted and answered attitudinal questions differently according to situational context provided by the researchers (41). Respondents changed answers to questions about justifying violence against women when presented with scenarios when women are at fault and not at fault according to culturally sanctioned behaviors.

Strengths/Contributions

Our study is one of the few examining men's justification of IPV using a population-based sample in a low-income setting. Past studies have been based on convenience samples or focused on women only. In addition, we also looked at multiple forms of violence exposure in childhood. Examination of witnessing violence alone without consideration of the others would conflate physical maltreatment during childhood with witnessing violence since these two forms of violence often co-occur (42). Attitudinal questions focused in this study capture more situations where violence might be justified compared to other studies, such as whether men believe there is a good reason to hit their wife if she argues with parents-in-law.

Future Directions

Our study investigated the association between childhood exposure to violence and subsequent attitudes about IPV in adulthood. Results supported social learning theory by indicating that men who were exposed to witnessing inter-parental violence and physical maltreatment as a child were more likely to report attitudes condoning violence against a wife. The same relationship exists for men who were exposed to one form of violence as a child but not both. Findings highlight the importance of IPV prevention and prevention of violence against children within the family to reduce adult attitudes condoning violence. Early prevention is of utmost importance, especially during formative childhood years when attitudes about violence are beginning to develop. There is a need for expanding counseling and support to not just women who are victims of violence but also their children as well. Future research should address the direction of the association between exposure to violence as a child, attitudes about IPV, and perpetration of IPV in a longitudinal study. In addition, further investigation is needed to examine why more men condone violence against their wife in certain situations but less often in others.

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TABLES

Table 1

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics, overall and by type of exposure to violence in childhood, N = 441 married men 18-49 Years in My Hao district, Vietnam

	Total (N=441)	Both ^a (N=106)	One ^b (N=233)	Neither ^c (N=102)	P-Value (both vs. neither)	P-Value (one vs. neither)	P-Value (one vs. both)
Percent of population (%)		25.6	50.8	23.6			
Childhood Experiences							
Childhood residence (%)							
Same residence	96.6	95.1	96.1	97.7	0.20	0.40	0.66
Other residence	3.8	4.9	3.9	2.3			
Age, years	35.6	31.6	36.5	38.1	<0.001	0.0108	<0.001
Adult socioeconomic mediators							
Age difference	2.2	2.3	2.3	1.8	0.0072	0.0126	0.87
Living situation (%)					0.0019	0.0496	0.01
Other†	36.5	47.6	35.2	27.3			
Neither in-laws or natal family	63.5	52.5	64.8	72.7			
Number of children ever born	1.9	1.5	2.0	2.1	<0.001	0.19	<0.001
Education (completed grades)	9.7	10.5	9.7	8.6	<0.001	0.0007	0.006
Spouse's education (completed grades)	9.6	10.1	9.8	8.5	<0.001	<0.001	0.19
Household Economic Index	0.1	0.1	0.2	-0.3	0.0175	0.0004	0.63
Proportion Income compared to wife (%)					0.06	0.07	0.50
More	44.7	46.9	45.1	41.7			
Less	12.0	15.4	12.3	7.6			
Same	43.3	37.8	42.6	50.8			
Adult violence indicators (%)							
Perpetrated physical IPV as an adult					<0.001	<0.001	0.22
Yes	27.2	34.3	30.3	12.9			
No	72.8	65.7	69.7	87.1			

^a Exposed to both witnessing inter-parental violence and physical maltreatment

^b Exposed to either witnessing inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment, but not both

^c Exposed to neither witnessing inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment

†Other refers to living with in-laws, natal family, or both

Table 2

Table 2. Number of situations where men find a good reason to hit their wife, overall and by type of exposure to violence in childhood, N = 441 married men 18- 49 Years in My Hao district, Vietnam

	by exposure to violence in Childhood:										
	Total (N=441)		Both ^a (N=106)		One ^b (N=233)		Neither ^c (N=102)		P-Value (both vs. neither)	P-Value (one vs. neither)	P-Value (one vs. both)
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	0.0021	0.10	0.0028
Agree with none	23.3	(19.88, 27.02)	21.0	(15.60, 27.60)	21.1	(16.68, 26.38)	30.3	(22.85, 38.96)			
Agree with 1-2 items	36.5	(32.71, 40.45)	28.7	(23.95, 33.91)	40.1	(34.60, 45.95)	37.1	(30.68, 44.06)			
Agree with 3 or more items	40.3	(34.92, 45.82)	50.4	(42.18, 58.50)	38.7	(32.34, 45.54)	32.6	(25.87, 40.08)			

^a Exposed to both witnessing inter-parental violence and physical maltreatment

^b Exposed to either witnessing inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment, but not both

^c Exposed to neither witnessing inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment

Table 3**Table 3. Individual items* where men find good reason to hit their wife, overall and by type of exposure to violence in childhood, N = 441 married men 18- 49 Years in My Hao district, Vietnam**

	by exposure to violence in Childhood:										
	Total (N=411)		Both ^a (N=106)		One ^b (N=233)		Neither ^c (N=102)		P-Value (both vs. neither)	P-Value (one vs. neither)	P-Value (one vs. both)
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI			
She does not complete her household work to his satisfaction	7.2	(4.9, 10.4)	3.5	(1.8, 6.7)	7.8	(4.7, 12.6)	9.9	(5.8, 16.3)	0.04	0.42	0.0948
She disobeys him	13.1	(10.3, 16.5)	16.8	(12.0, 22.9)	12.3	(8.8, 17.0)	10.6	(7.1, 15.6)	0.06	0.53	0.1382
He finds out that she has been unfaithful	45.4	(40.6, 50.3)	56.6	(48.1, 64.8)	43.3	(37.6, 49.2)	37.9	(30.7, 45.7)	0.0024	0.26	0.0017
She goes out without telling him	7.7	(5.3, 10.0)	10.5	(5.9, 17.9)	6.0	(4.1, 8.6)	8.3	(5.5, 12.5)	0.51	0.15	0.0791
She neglects the children	27.7	(22.9, 33.2)	29.4	(21.6, 38.6)	28.2	(21.9, 35.5)	25.0	(19.9, 30.9)	0.38	0.4	0.7955
She rudely argues with him	48.8	(43.6, 54.1)	51.1	(44.0, 58.1)	50.0	(42.6, 57.4)	43.9	(35.7, 52.5)	0.19	0.26	0.7901
She argues with her parents-in-law	66.0	(62.0, 69.8)	69.9	(62.4, 76.5)	66.6	(61.6, 71.2)	60.6	(52.1, 68.5)	0.07	0.21	0.3802

*Items refer to agreement with the statement "Does a man have a good reason to hit his wife " in the situations detailed above

^a Exposed to both witnessing inter-parental violence and physical maltreatment

^b Exposed to either witnessing inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment, but not both

^c Exposed to neither witnessing inter-parental violence or physical maltreatment

Table 4**Table 4. Odds ratios from ordered Logistic models of the relationship between childhood experiences of violence and attitudes about IPV against women, N=441 married men 18 - 49 years in My Hao district, Vietnam**

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)	
	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)	OR	(95% CI)
Childhood Experiences										
Experienced or witnessed violence (ref: neither)	1.42	(1.01, 2.00) *	1.37	(0.96, 1.97)	1.64	(1.11, 2.41) *	1.13	(0.78, 1.63)	1.34	(0.90, 2.00)
Experienced and witnessed violence (ref:neither)	1.98	(1.32, 2.95) **	1.64	(1.12, 2.43) *	1.86	(1.19, 2.92) *	1.27	(0.86, 1.87)	1.46	(0.95, 2.27)
Childhood residence										
Other town (ref: same town)			0.84	(0.46, 1.54)	0.91	(0.57, 1.46)	0.91	(0.55, 1.51)	0.98	(0.62, 1.55)
Age, years			0.97	(0.95, 0.98) *	0.95	(0.93, 0.97) **	0.96	(0.95, 0.98) **	0.95	(0.92, 0.97) **
Adult socioeconomic mediators										
Age Difference					1.03	(0.98, 1.09)			1.03	(0.99, 1.09)
Living situation										
Other† (ref: neither in-laws or natal family)					0.66	(0.50, 0.87) *			0.7	(0.53, 0.94) *
Number of children ever born					0.93	(0.78, 1.10)			0.93	(0.77, 1.12)
Education (completed grades)					0.91	(0.85, 0.97) *			0.91	(0.85, 0.97) *
Partner's education (completed grades)					1	(0.93, 1.07)			1.01	(0.94, 1.07)
Household Wealth Index					0.87	(0.79, 0.97) *			0.87	(0.78, 0.96) *
Proportion Income compared to wife (%)										
More (ref: same)					1.35	(0.88, 2.07)			1.28	(0.83, 1.97)
Less (ref: same)					1.86	(1.06, 3.27) *			1.79	(1.03, 3.13) *
Adult violence indicators										
Perpetrated physical IPV as an adult (ref: no perpetration)							2.79	(2.15, 3.61) **	2.57	(1.97, 3.36) **

†Other refers to living with in-laws, natal family, or both

*p ≤ 0.05

**p ≤ 0.001

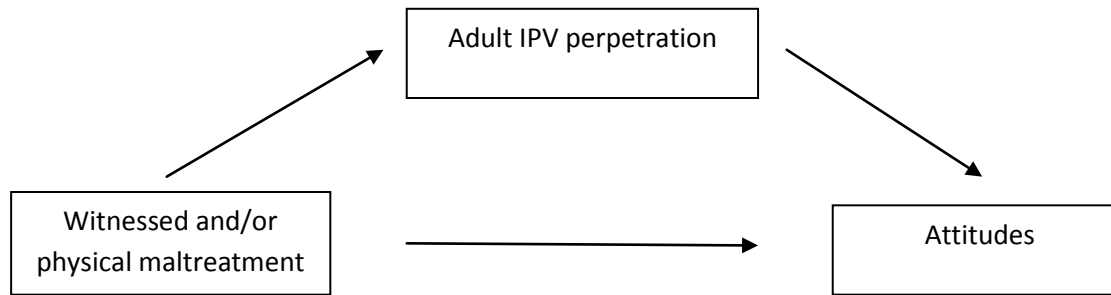
FIGURES

Figure 1. Hypothesis for the association between witnessing IPV and physical maltreatment in childhood and positive attitudes toward IPV as an adult, which is partially mediated by adult IPV perpetration.

APPENDIX

IRB Approval



EMORY
UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board

TO: Kathryn Yount
Principal Investigator
Global Health

DATE: May 10, 2011

RE: **Expedited Approval**
IRB00049820
Understanding Attitudes Toward Intimate Partner Violence in Vietnam

Thank you for submitting a new application for this protocol. This research is eligible for expedited review under 45 CFR.46.110 category f(7) because it poses minimal risk and fits the regulatory category[ies] F[1-9] as set forth in the Federal Register. The Emory IRB reviewed it by expedited process on DATE and granted approval effective from **5/10/2011** through **5/9/2012**. Thereafter, continuation of human subjects research activities requires the submission of a renewal application, which must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to the expiration date noted above. Please note carefully the following items with respect to this approval: The following documents were reviewed and approved with this submission:

- Qualitative Consent; Version dated 5/5/2011
- Qualitative Vietnamese Consent; Version dated 5/5/2011
- Survey Consent; Version dated 5/5/2011
- Survey Vietnamese Consent; Version dated 5/5/2011

Any reportable events (e.g., unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or others, noncompliance, breaches of confidentiality, HIPAA violations, protocol deviations) must be reported to the IRB according to our Policies & Procedures at www.irb.emory.edu, immediately, promptly, or periodically. Be sure to check the reporting guidance and contact us if you have questions. Terms and conditions of sponsors, if any, also apply to reporting.

Before implementing any change to this protocol (including but not limited to sample size, informed consent, study design, you must submit an amendment request and secure IRB approval.

In future correspondence about this matter, please refer to the IRB file ID, name of the Principal Investigator, and study title. Thank you

Andrea Goosen, MPH
Research Protocol Analyst

This letter has been digitally signed

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