

Gender, Power and Violence: Intimate Partner Violence among Married Women in India

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BACKGROUND

Violence against women is one of the most pervasive and devastating human rights abuses worldwide. In India, recent estimates found 39% of ever-married women experienced some form of intimate partner violence (IPV).

Traditionally, attention has focused on women's empowerment as a key determinant of women's health and development. There is no doubt that women's empowerment has significant benefits to women and families globally.

However, literature suggests that gender inequity manifested as unequal gender norms are the root cause of violence against women. From this perspective, increasing women's empowerment through increased education or work participation, for example, may have the potential to alter traditional gender norms and negatively affect women.

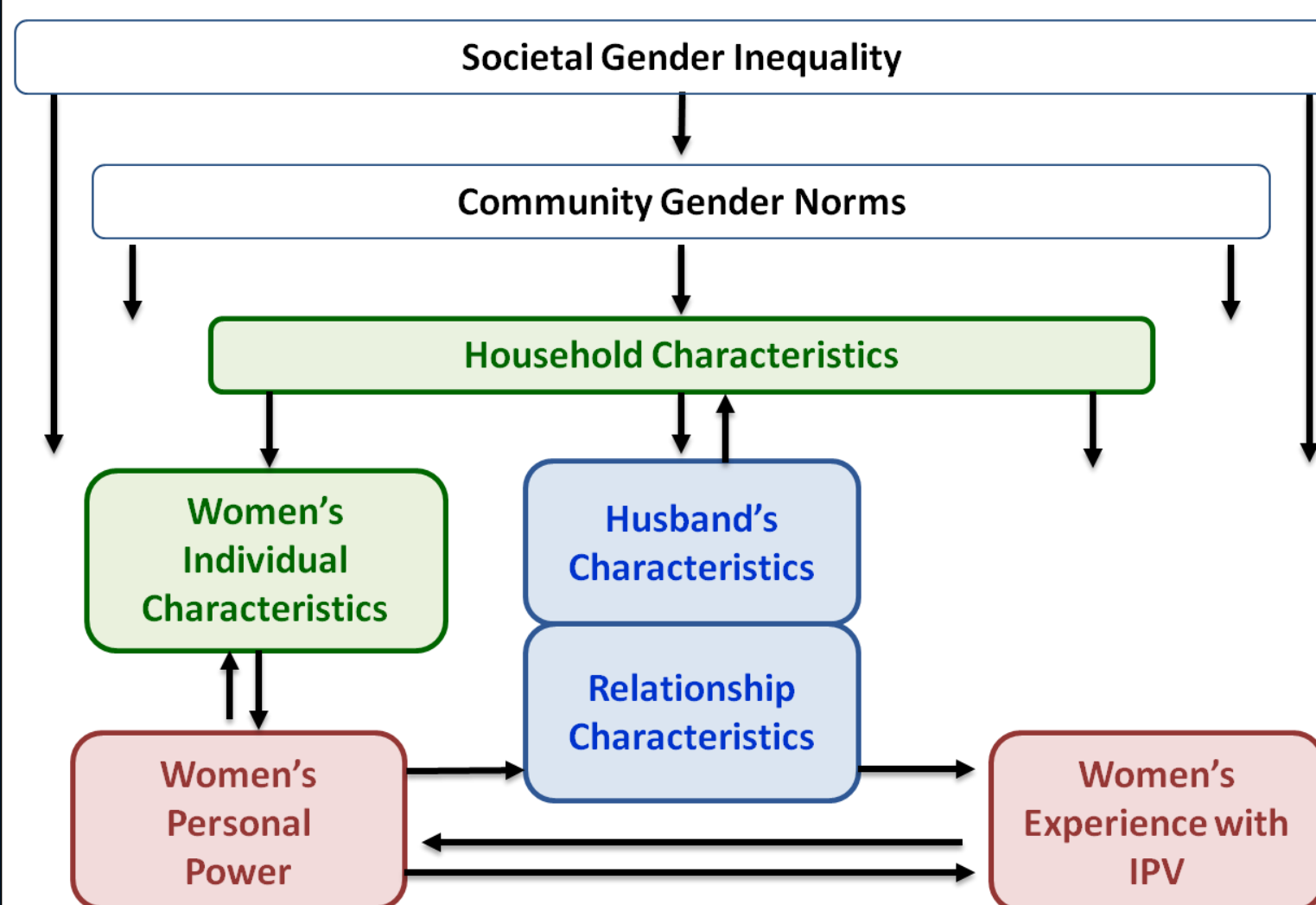
Furthermore, past studies have primarily focused on individual level factors associated with intimate partner violence in India. However, IPV occurs in the context of a relationship, between a husband and wife, and thus, warrants examination of a broader context of women's lives.

OBJECTIVES

This study investigates how women's individual, household, partner and relationship characteristics influence their experience with IPV. *[This poster is part of a larger study in which specific pathways (i.e. moderated mediation) and regional variations across India are also examined].*

The focal relationships examined are the associations between women's personal power and experience with IPV.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



The pathways tested in this study are represented by colored boxes.

METHODS

DATA SOURCE

India's National Family Health Survey 3 (NFHS-3), 2005-2006.

ANALYTICAL SAMPLE

- Survey data using sample weights and stratification
- Matched-couples sample
- Unweighted (raw) N=23,318 couples and weighted N=219,223
- This sample combines responses of three questionnaires: (1) household; (2) women's; and (3) men's questionnaires.
- Questions include: those asked of both men and women; those asked only of men; and those asked only of women.

VARIABLES

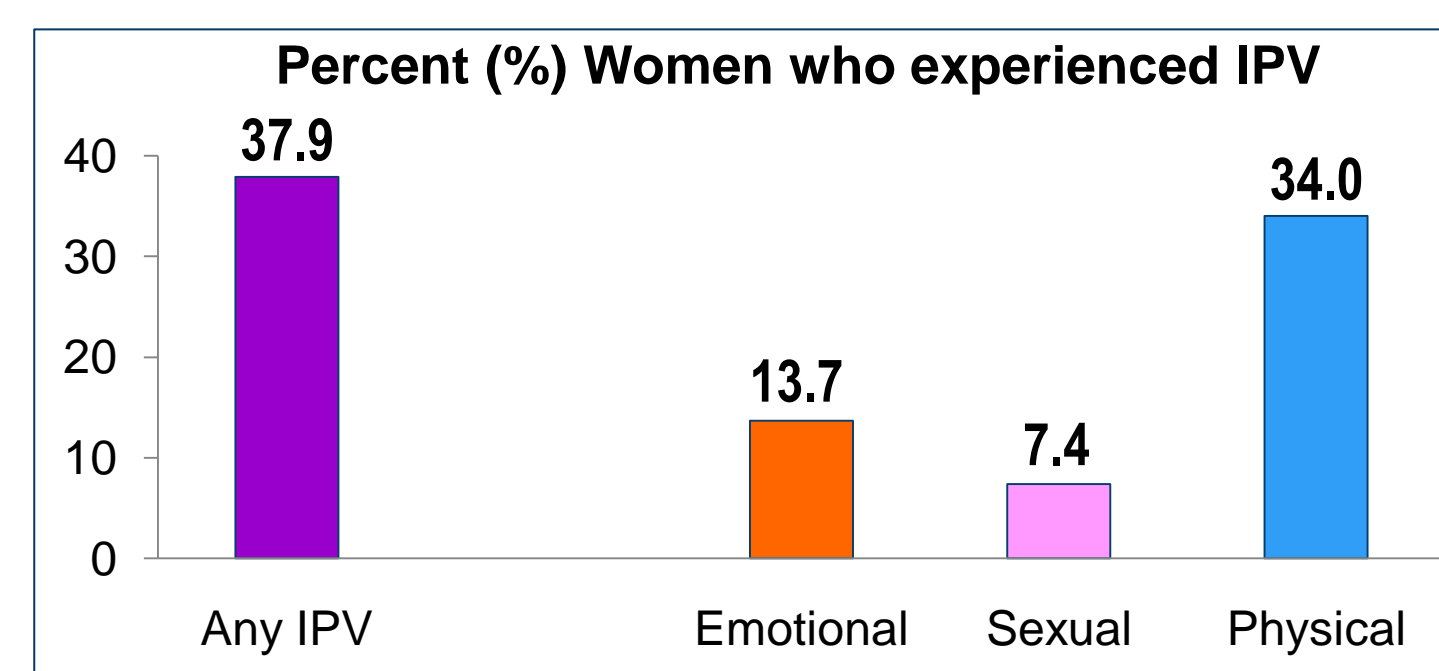
Outcome: Experience with any IPV (emotional, sexual, physical)

Independent variables

- Household characteristics (e.g. wealth, family structure)
- Women's individual (e.g. age, education, number of children)
- Women's personal power (e.g. decision making, resources)
- Husband's individual (e.g. demographics, decision making)
- Relationship (e.g. age difference, agreement on attitudes)

RESULTS

Women's Experience with IPV



LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS (Unadjusted)

Significant Unadjusted Associations (p<0.001): Women's personal power with IPV experience

Protective effects

- Bank account ownership (58.5% less likely to experience IPV)
- Not justifying IPV (45.5% less likely to experience IPV)
- Supporting women's ability to refuse marital sex (21.3% less likely to experience IPV)
- Perceiving joint (with husband) financial decision making (24.6% less likely than if husband alone decides)

Negative effects

- Women's household decision making (for each decision made alone, they're 19.2% more likely to experience IPV)

LOGISTIC REGRESSION RESULTS (Adjusted)

Significant Adjusted Associations (p<0.001):

Effects of Sociodemographic Traits

- Not witnessing parental IPV as a child (93.7% less likely)
- Education, 13 or more years (60.1% less likely to experience IPV than women with no education)
- Wealth, middle, richer and richest quintiles (30.2%, 35%, 70.5% respectively, less likely than poorest women)
- Age at marriage, over 18 years (4.3% less likely to experience IPV than those married at <18 years old)
- Number of children (With increasing number of children, women are 9.6% more likely to experience IPV)

Effects of Women's Personal Power

- Not justifying IPV (23.9% less likely to experience IPV)
- Supporting women's ability to refuse marital sex (30.0% less likely to experience IPV)
- Perceiving joint (with husband) financial decision making (25.7% less likely to experience IPV than if husband alone decides)

Effects of Husband's Characteristics

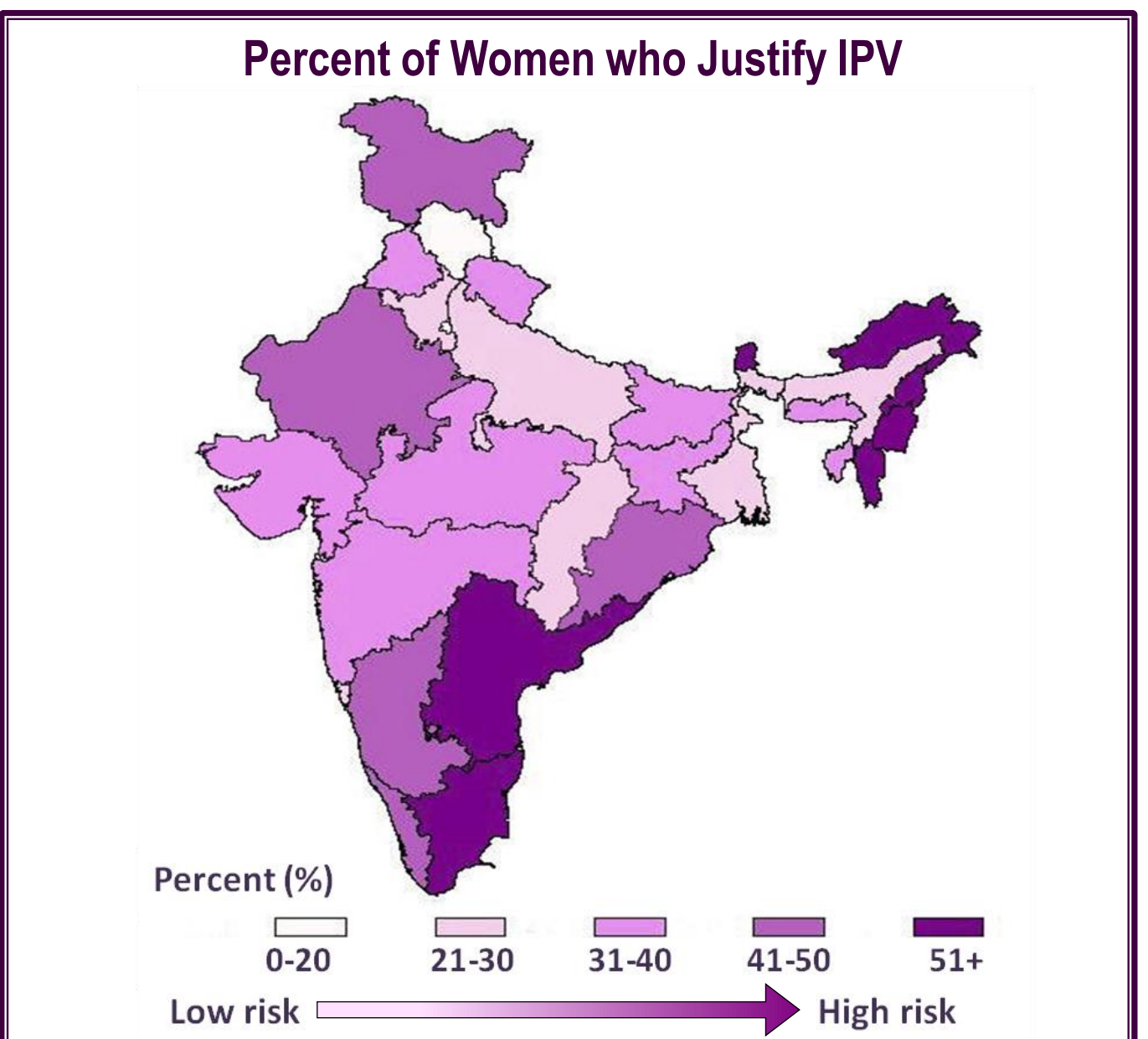
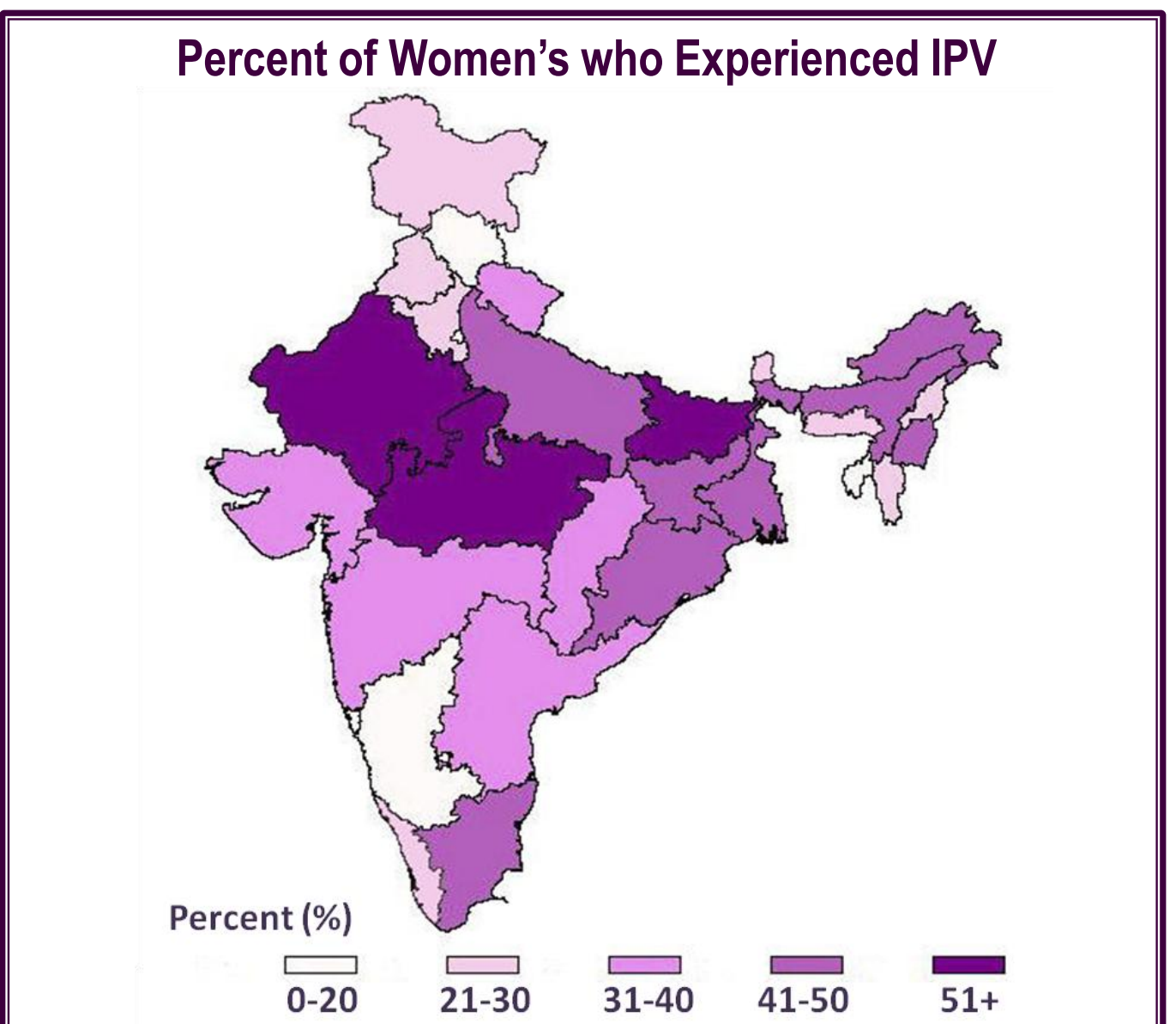
- Husband's age (With increasing partner age, women were 2.4% less likely to experience IPV)
- Husband witnessing parental IPV (Women whose partner did not witness parental IPV were 19.8% less likely to experience IPV)
- Husband's alcohol use (Women whose partner did not drink any alcohol were 38.0% less likely to experience IPV than those whose partners consumed alcohol daily)
- Husband's controlling behavior (Women with partner's who did not exhibit controlling behaviors were over 98% less likely to experience IPV)

Effects of Relationship Characteristics

(Individual husband/wife characteristics are excluded in the logistic regression analyses to avoid nesting)

- Relative age difference (Women with 0-5 years age gap with their husbands are 17.2% more likely to experience IPV than women with 6 or more years age gap)
- Couple witnessing parental IPV (When both spouses did not witness parental IPV, women were 87.4% less likely to experience IPV)
- Couple agreement on IPV justification (When both spouses did not justify IPV, women were 39.5% less likely to experience IPV)
- Couple agreement on women's ability to refuse marital sex (When both spouses agreed, women were 19.2% less likely to experience IPV)

GEOGRAPHIC VARIATIONS THROUGHOUT INDIA



DISCUSSION

Several key concepts of women's empowerment (i.e. access to financial resources, sole decision making) were not significantly related to IPV when controlling for other aspects of women's lives—especially, partner and relationship characteristics.

In fact, cultural gender norms, partner traits and joint decision making were strong predictors of IPV.

Future IPV research and programs should:

- (1) Address deeply entrenched gender norms;
- (2) Engage men in the dialogue; and
- (3) Be specific to the local culture of the region.