

Gender-based Violence and Masculinities Study in China

Preliminary Findings

Introduction

The study, Gender-based Violence and Masculinities study in China, was funded and led by UNFPA China with technical support from Partners for Prevention, a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV Asia-Pacific Regional Joint Programme for Gender-based Violence Prevention. The study is part of Partners for Prevention's Asia and the Pacific regional research project, UN Multi-country Study on Men and Violence, which is being conducted in seven countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

This survey was conducted in Eixian¹ county in May 2011, and included both small towns and a large rural area. Data was collected through a multi-stage random sampling strategy. With an 84 percent response rate, 1,103 women and 1,017 men aged 18-49 years completed the female and male questionnaires. About 90 percent of respondents were married or divorced when interviewed.

With the vital support of the local organizations at the study site, the Institute of Sexuality and Gender Studies at the Beijing Forestry University and the Anti-Domestic Violence Network/Beijing Fan Bao jointly conducted this research.

¹ The pseudonym Eixian is used to refer to the study site so as to protect the confidentiality and safety of the participating respondents.



Key Findings and Recommendations

Action	Findings	Recommended programme and policy steps
<i>Promote gender equality in practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While almost all respondents agree that women and men should be equal, the dominant notions of masculinity held by both women and men are linked to toughness, sexual prowess, control of decision-making and use of force in some occasions. When women's male partners dominated household decision making, they were more likely to experience IPV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote school-based and community-based programs for boys and young men, along with girls. Promote gender-equitable, non-violent masculinities in the mass media. Expand and promote government commitment to gender equality.
<i>End impunity for violence against women</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only a quarter of men who reported raping a woman were arrested or jailed. Only 7 percent of women who had experienced intimate partner violence reported it to the police and among them only one case was opened by the police. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and implement a clear legal framework for addressing gender-based violence Sensitize and build the capacity of law enforcement and judiciary personnel to effectively and appropriately deal with cases involving gender-based violence.
<i>Improve the health sector response</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violence against women has serious physical, mental and reproductive health consequences for women. 40 percent of all women who ever experienced physical IPV were injured. Women who experienced IPV were four times more likely to have had multiple sexually transmitted infections. Women who experienced violence were nearly three times more likely to have clinical depression and twice as likely to have thoughts of committing suicide. Women also experienced violence during pregnancy. Only 14 percent of women had ever had an HIV test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the capacity of mental health services personnel to effectively handle cases involving gender-based violence. Develop a comprehensive health sector response to the impacts of violence against women. Use sexual and reproductive health services as entry points for providing referral and support services to women experiencing violence.

<p><i>Address men's health and well-being</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three percent of men experienced rape by another man. • Twelve percent of men reported experiencing high depression and 17 percent reported considering or attempting suicide. • More than a third of men reported low life satisfaction. • Men's psychological and sexual ill health was associated with their perpetration of IPV. • Many men are involved in risky behaviours (transactional sex, multiple partners, low condom use, involvement in gangs, reluctance to seek medical help and alcohol abuse) that are linked to dominant notions of masculinity, and these types of behaviours increased men's likelihood of perpetrating both IPV and non-partner rape. • Condom usage was very low, with almost 50 percent of all men never using condoms in the last 12 months and 85 percent of men who had multiple partners in the last 12 months never using condoms during this time. • Twenty-two percent of men and 75 percent of women had experienced abnormal genital discharge or ulcers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity of law enforcement and medical personnel to sensitively and effectively support men who experience violence. • Conduct awareness-raising campaigns directed at men to encourage them to make use of health services. • Support the availability of counselling services specifically for men. • Address notions of masculinity associated with toughness and sexual prowess that encourage risky behaviours and prevent men from seeking help
<p><i>Support women experiencing violence</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only seven percent of women who experienced physical IPV and eight percent of women who experienced rape reported it to the police. • Only 10 percent of women who sustained injuries from physical IPV sought medical help. • Seventeen percent of women who experienced non-partner rape sought counselling or contacted a hotline. • Women were much more likely to seek support from informal services than formal ones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen formal support systems for women experiencing violence. • Strengthen informal support systems for women experiencing violence.
<p><i>Address ideologies of male sexual entitlement</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight-six percent of men who raped were motivated by sexual entitlement. • Fifteen percent of women reported experiencing sexual harassment at school or in the workplace. • Thirty-four percent of men had sex with multiple partners in the last 12 months. • Men who had sex beyond their main partners were two to almost six times as likely to perpetrate IPV. • About 25 percent of men who had ever had sex had engaged in sex with a sex worker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote safe and consensual sex through mass media, schools, workplaces and community centers. • Institute gender equality and anti-harassment policies in all workplaces. • Address notions of masculinity associated with sexual prowess and sexual entitlement.

<p>End violence against children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seventy-five percent of male respondents and 57 percent of females experienced some form of abuse or neglect during childhood. • More than 13 percent of boys and almost 9 percent of girls were sexually abused before the age of 18. • Experiences of childhood trauma was the only common risk factor for both perpetration and victimization of IPV and non-partner rape. • Twenty-five percent of men reported being bullied during childhood and 22 percent reported bullying others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support positive parenting interventions. • Implement non-violence programmes and policies in schools that address abuse, harassment and bullying. • Work with at-risk children to try to prevent the cycle of violence.
<p>Support further research and evaluations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the first research of its kind in China on masculinities and violence but it is not nationally representative. • This research provides a baseline on men's and women's attitudes and behaviours in relation to gender equality and violence. • There have been no enough rigorous evaluations of the effectiveness of GBV programmes in China on reducing rates of violence or changing gender norms . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance capacities for further collection and analysis of data on gender-based violence and masculinities to monitor changes. • Support and conduct rigorous evaluations of promising programmes.

Institute of Sexuality and Gender Studies at Beijing Forestry University (ISGS) devotes to education, research, and social work in the field of sex and gender.

Anti-Domestic Violence Network/Beijing Fan-Bao is a NGO and nationwide network in China that devotes to eliminate gender-based violence and create a gender-equal society.

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that delivers a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

Partners for Prevention, is a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional joint programme for gender-based violence prevention in Asia and the Pacific.

The views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of UNFPA.

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