IPV and Violent Physical Discipline Co-occurrence: a Longitudinal Study in Mwanza, Tanzania

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20.9.2022 SVRI Forum Cancun, Mexico
Corporal punishment is legal in Tanzania (Hecker et al., 2014)

90% Tanzanian students in a nationally representative sample reported exposure to violent discipline by a parent within the past year (Nkuba et al., 2018)

Corporal punishment promotes externalizing problems in children (Hecker et al., 2014)

The median prevalence estimate of lifetime IPV women in Tanzania is 38% and the past-year prevalence is 24% (Sardinha et al., 2022)

IPV negatively affects the health of women in Tanzania (e.g. poor mental health, pregnancy loss, and induced abortion) (Kapiga et al., 2017; Stöckl et al., 2012)

IPV is a major risk factor for violent discipline against children (Bott et al., 2021)
IPV and child maltreatment as distinct categories (Dixon et al., 2007; Fry & Elliot, 2017; Guedes et al., 2016)

Studies on the co-occurrence are often gender biased → see below

Limited evidence on risk factors for co-occurring IPV and physical violent discipline in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (Pearson et al. Trauma Violence & Abuse 2022)
Aim and Objectives

To understand the co-occurrence of adult IPV and physical discipline, specifically, whether an increase or decrease in IPV leads to an increase or decrease in the physical discipline (PD) of children in the home.

- To compare the prevalence of who (women vs. male partner) perpetrates the PD over time.
- To understand whether IPV may lead to PD by the mother over time.
- To understand whether IPV may lead to PD by the male partner over time.
- To understand whether IPV may lead to PD by both mother and male partner over time.
Conceptual Diagrams

IPV

Mother Mental Health
Mother Alcohol Use

Physical Discipline by Mother
Physical Discipline by Male Partner
Physical Discipline by Both

Mediators

Mother ACE
Male Partner ACE

Physical Discipline by Mother
Physical Discipline by Male Partner
Physical Discipline by Both

Moderators

IPV

Male Partner Alcohol Use
METHODS

Study design

- Longitudinal study (four waves) of women in the control groups of the MAISHA trials
- using three waves with comparable violent discipline measures

Setting and population

- Women of reproductive age (18 to 50 years)
- Mwanza, Tanzania (residence for at least 2 years)
- Fluent in Swahili

Recruitment and data collection

- Baseline MAISHA trial: household surveys in pre-defined areas
- Longitudinal follow-up: women asked if they could be contacted again for a follow-up survey one year later
- The sample size was n=844 in Wave-2, n=822 in Wave-3, and n=795 in Wave-4
Outcome (binary)

- Violent physical discipline by mother
- Violent physical discipline by male partner
- Violent physical discipline by both parents

Socio-demographic (categorical)

- Age (less than 30 years, 30-39 years, 40-49 years, greater than 50 years)
- Education (none, primary completed, secondary completed, college/university completed)
- SES (1st quintile, 2nd quintile, 3rd quintile, 4th quintile, 5th quintile)
- Relationship duration (less than 5 years, 5-15 years, 15-25 years, greater than 25 years)
- Number of children <18 years old (none, 1-2 children, 3-4 children, more than 5 children)

Exposure

- IPV – physical and/or sexual (binary)
- Women’s ACE (0, 1-2, 3+)
- Male partners’ ACE (0, 1-2, 3+)
- Women’s mental health – SRQ20 (binary)
- Women’s alcohol use – AUDIT (never drank, no problem drinking, probable problem drinking)
- Male partners’ alcohol use (binary)
Prevalence of PD was measured using the UNICEF (2011b) child discipline questionnaire. The following questions were asked and specified whether the mother, a partner, or both perpetrated:

- Shook him/her.
- Spanked, hit or slapped him/her on the bottom with bare hand.
- Hit him/her on the bottom or elsewhere on the body with something like a belt.
- Hit or slapped him/her on the face, head or ears.
- Hit or slapped him/her on the hand, arm or leg.
- Beat him/her up, that is hit him/her over and over as hard as one could.
IPV was measured using the WHO domestic violence instrument (García-Moreno et al., 2005). Physical and/or sexual IPV is present if the participant answered ‘yes’ to any of the following question occurring in the past 12 months:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Sexual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant answered yes to any of the following questions:</td>
<td>Participant answered yes to any of the following questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➔ Slapped you or thrown something at you that could hurt you?</td>
<td>➔ Forced you to have sexual intercourse by threatening you, holding you down, or hurting you in some way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➔ Pushed you or shoved you or pulled your hair?</td>
<td>➔ Had sexual intercourse when you did not want to because you were afraid that your partner would hurt you or someone you cared about if you refused?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➔ Hit you with his fist or with something else that could hurt you?</td>
<td>➔ Had sexual intercourse when you did not want to because you were afraid that your partner would leave you or take another girlfriend if you refused?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➔ Kicked you, dragged you, or beaten you up?</td>
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<tr>
<td>➔ Choked or burnt you on purpose?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>➔ Threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife, or other weapon against you?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>➔ Has hit you or beaten you with (hard) objects such as belts, hairbrush, or canes?</td>
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Data analysis

- STATA 17
- Descriptive statistics
- Pearson's chi-squared independence test for proportion and trends
- Random effects logistic regression to account for time changing covariates and longitudinal format of the outcome
Most women were between 40-49 years (35%), mean age 37.5 (8.7) with their partners aged 47.2 (16.3).

59% of women and 52% of male partners completed primary school.

74% of women were currently married or living with a man as if married and 13% have been in a relationship in the past 12 months.

45% of women had been in the relationship for 5-15 years,

43% of women had 1-2 children under the age of 18 living with them in the household.
PAST YEAR PHYSICAL AND/OR SEXUAL INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Wave 2 (N=844): 33.2
Wave 3 (N=822): 24.5
Wave 4 (N=795): 21.4
PREVALENCE OF VIOLENT PHYSICAL DISCIPLINE

- PD by a mother:
  - Wave 2 (N=844): 73%
  - Wave 3 (N=822): 82%
  - Wave 4 (N=795): 84%

- PD by a partner:
  - Wave 2 (N=844): 45%
  - Wave 3 (N=822): 58%
  - Wave 4 (N=795): 57%

- PD by both:
  - Wave 2 (N=844): 43%
  - Wave 3 (N=822): 57%
  - Wave 4 (N=795): 56%
Bivariate results between IPV and violent physical discipline

Wave 2 (n=280)  Wave 3 (n=201)  Wave 4 (n=170)
### Multivariable logistic regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical discipline by mother</th>
<th>Physical discipline by partner</th>
<th>Physical discipline by both</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOR (95% CI)</td>
<td>AOR (95% CI)</td>
<td>AOR (95% CI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Past year physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.57** (1.14, 2.15)</td>
<td>1.89*** (1.45, 2.48)</td>
<td>1.70*** (1.30, 2.22)</td>
</tr>
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Adjusted for: Women's Age, SES, Education, Alcohol use, Mental Health, ACE Score, No of children in the HH, Duration in the relationship, Partners age, education, Ace, Working, and Alcohol use.
Discussion

- IPV increased the odds of violent physical discipline use by the mother, male partner, and both

- Mothers used more physical discipline practices than male partners
  - More time spent with the children
  - Stress and anxiety (Chiesa et al., 2018)

- Physical and/or sexual IPV perpetration by male partners was very strongly associated with their use of violent discipline against children in the household
Strengths and Limitations

**Strengths**

- One of the only studies on the co-occurrence of IPV and violent discipline conducted solely in a sub-Saharan African country
- Large-scale longitudinal study

**Limitations**

- Only women as participants, therefore any male partner characteristics are based on second-hand knowledge
- Main outcome variable violent discipline is a binary variable, hence there are no frequencies for how often a particular discipline practice occurred
- Severity of violent physical discipline was not captured, neither emotional IPV
Recommendations

- Integrated and multi-pronged services for survivors of IPV and children in the household (Guedes et al., 2016)

- Components on violent discipline in programs targeting violent men

- Focus on gender equity in community-based parenting programs (Falb et al., 2022; Guedes et al., 2016)

- Policies that promote the screening of co-occurring IPV and violent discipline in health-care settings
Thank you!