Disability and intimate partner violence: a cross-sectional study from Mwanza, Tanzania

Sarah Meyer, Neema Mosha, Tom Shakespeare, Hannah Kuper, Sheila Harvey, Saidi Kapiga, Gerry Mshana and Heidi Stöckl
• Women with disability face higher levels of intimate partner violence than women without disabilities

• Potential mechanisms are unclear
  • Social exclusion
  • Reliance on partners as carers
  • Higher levels of economic dependence of women with disabilities

• Gaps in evidence
  • Focus on high-income settings;
  • Primary focus on one type of disability or binary measure;
  • Primary focus on physical and/or sexual IPV, other forms of IPV addressed less
OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

• Objectives:
  i) describe the prevalence of disability within a representative sample of women in Mwanza, Tanzania,
  ii) assess the association between level and type of disability and different forms of IPV in this sample

• Study design: **Cross-sectional survey** in Mwanza, Tanzania; analysis of Wave 3 within a longitudinal study; participants in control group arm of two randomized controlled trials

• Study population: 867 ever-partnered women, aged 15 years and above
• Data collection: Structured questionnaire
• Data analysis: Descriptive statistics, binary and multivariate logistic regression models
• Washington Group Short Set Questions:
  • Six questions, asked on the scale of 1 to 4
    (no difficulty, some difficulty, a lot of difficulty or cannot do at all)
  • Includes vision, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-caring and communication
  • Categorised into: no disability, mild disability and severe disability

• IPV measurement: WHO instrument, 12-month recall
  ➢ controlling behaviors
  ➢ emotional IPV
  ➢ economic IPV
  ➢ physical IPV
  ➢ sexual IPV
  ➢ sexual and/or physical IPV
  ➢ severe IPV
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

- Mean age: 38.1 (8.8)
- Marital status: Married or living with man as if married = 84.9%
- Women's education: Primary level and below = 74.8%

- Significant associations with disability level:
  - **Age** – women in severe disability group are significantly older
  - **Education level** – women in severe disability group are more likely to only have primary level education and below
  - **Household stress** – women in severe disability group are more likely to report household stress
  - **Partner’s age** – partners of women in severe disability group are significantly older
DISABILITY FORMS (N=867)

Disability categories: 54% reported no disability, 38% reported mild disability and 8% reported severe disability.
PREVALENCE OF IPV IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (N=867)

- Severe violence: 19.8%
- Sexual and/or physical violence: 24.4%
- Sexual violence: 15%
- Physical violence: 17.3%
- Emotional violence: 39.1%
- Economic violence: 48%
- Controlling behavior: 66.8%

% prevalence of different forms of IPV
RESULTS – ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MOBILITY AND IPV

Mobility

- Sexual and/or physical IPV
- Emotional IPV
- Economic IPV
- Controlling Behavior

Physical IPV

- Sexual IPV
- Severe IPV

- aOR: 1.59 (1.01 – 2.51)*
- aOR: 2.64 (1.58 – 4.39)*
- aOR=1.90 (1.18 – 3.07)**
- aOR=1.60 (1.05 – 2.43)**

All models adjusted for:
- Women's age,
- Marital status,
- Women’s education level,
- Women worked in the past 12 months,
- Household stress,
- Household socio-economic quintile
- Partner’s age,
- Partner’s education level,
- Partner worked in the past 12 months,
- Women’s micro-finance participation
RESULTS – ASSOCIATION BETWEEN COGNITION AND IPV

- Physical IPV
  - Sexual and/or physical IPV: aOR: 1.71 (1.15 – 2.55)**
- Sexual IPV
- Economic IPV
  - Emotional IPV: aOR: 1.62 (1.12 – 2.35)**
- Controlling Behavior
- Severe IPV
  - aOR: 1.99 (1.26 – 3.15)**
  - aOR: 2.01 (1.32 – 3.06)**
  - aOR: 1.70 (1.13 – 2.56)**
  - aOR: 1.70 (1.13 – 2.56)**
RESULTS – ASSOCIATION BETWEEN HEARING AND IPV

- Sexual and/or physical IPV
- Emotional IPV
- Economic IPV
- Physical IPV
- Controlling Behavior
- Severe IPV

Hearing

Sexual IPV

Physical IPV

aOR: 2.50 (1.03 – 6.05)**
ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DISABILITY LEVEL AND IPV – MILD DISABILITY

Mild vs. no disability

- Sexual and/or physical IPV: aOR: 1.47 (1.01 – 2.16)*
- Physical IPV:
- Sexual IPV: aOR: 1.92 (1.21 – 3.05)*
- Economic IPV: aOR: 1.43 (1.01 – 2.04)*
- Emotional IPV
- Controlling Behavior
- Severe IPV: aOR: 1.60 (1.06 – 2.42)*
ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DISABILITY LEVEL AND IPV – SEVERE DISABILITY

Severe disability vs. no disability

- Sexual and/or physical IPV: aOR 1.98 (1.01 – 3.86)*
- Physical IPV: aOR 2.70 (1.25 – 5.81)*
- Sexual IPV: aOR 2.10 (1.02, 4.30)*
- Emotional IPV
- Economic IPV: aOR 2.70 (1.44 – 5.02)*
- Controlling IPV: aOR 2.28 (1.14 – 4.55)*
- Severe IPV: aOR 2.10 (1.02, 4.30)*
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

• Out of the types of disability, **cognition** and **mobility disabilities** show the strongest associations with IPV
  • These forms of disability may violate social norms and community expectations
  • Cognition and mobility disabilities may increase patterns of reliance on partners

• **Economic IPV** and **sexual IPV** most consistently associated
  • Disability may increase economic dependence and economic IPV reinforces socio-economic exclusion
  • Disability may reduce opportunities to escape from coercive sexual contexts
RECOMMENDATIONS

RESEARCH

➔ Future studies need to differentiate between different forms of disability and include multiple forms of disability

➔ Future research should include of multiple types of IPV, as this provides insight into patterns, dynamics and potential mechanisms

➔ Consider issues with study design and ethical procedures for inclusion of some women with disabilities

PROGRAMMING AND POLICY

➔ Attention to accessibility of interventions and programming for women with disabilities is needed

➔ Give consideration to economic violence and patterns of economic dependence in the context of women with disabilities and household relationships