DATING VIOLENCE ATTITUDES, EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF

WOMEN IN COLLEGE:

AN INDIAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the attitudes, perceptions and experiences of college women in modern India with regard to intimate partner violence, specifically dating violence. Surveys were collected from 489 undergraduate female participants. Only 99 participants (20%) were or had been in a dating relationship. The participants in this study self reported both perpetrating and receiving violence in these relationships. A significant positive relationship was found between dating violence perpetration and victimization and four risk factors: witnessing and experiencing abuse in one's family of origin, attitudes justifying wife beating, and problem behaviors associated with alcohol use. A significant negative relationship was found between anger management skills and the perpetration and victimization of violence in dating relationships. Finally, even though the rate of dating and alcohol use is low in India, the problem behaviors associated with these phenomena are very similar to those identified in the United States. Although much is known about domestic violence and wife assault in the Indian context, there is almost no information or effort in the direction of prevention and education in the realm of dating violence. While India is advancing technologically, creating new opportunities for its youth, there is no simultaneous effort being made to

protect its youth from risks of urbanization and cultural shifts. The young adults of India today are joining the global economy. However, there is no system put in place to educate and nurture their social and cultural evolution. Findings from this study suggest that as the youth open themselves up to the culture of dating and premarital courtship, there needs to be a parallel effort made to educate and train them about healthy relationships.

DEDICATED TO

My late Grandfather:

Mr. Amiya Bhushan Som

My Guru (Teacher).

You taught me the value, power and responsibility of Education.

and

My Grandmother:

Mrs. Srilekha Som

The strongest, kindest and smartest woman I known.

You helped me find my voice and be the woman I am today.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The Problem and Setting

Violence against women is a serious problem. Crimes against women are not a new phenomenon. More than half of the women killed in the U.S. die in the hands of their husbands or boyfriends (Bhattacharya, 2004, as cited in Puri, 1999). Prejudices towards women have been the cause of mistreatment, devaluation and transgression across cultures and social classes.

In India, the patriarchal society plays a very big role in maintaining crimes perpetrated against women. Several studies have looked at the cultural context in India that support crimes against women (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Baker, Gregware, & Cassidy, 1999; Johnson & Johnson, 2001; Puri, 1999). The patriarchal society in India functions within the framework of a legal and political system that is accepting of domestic violence under the pretext of traditions and family values (Ahmed-Ghosh, 2004; Johnson & Johnson, 2001). A study by Baker, Gregware, and Cassidy (1999) explores the family honor systems integral to the Indian society. According to the authors, violence against women is an acceptable tool to enforce the honor code that keeps a close watch on women's behavior in society while men are exempt from similar cultural laws. For example, there have been cases in the past where women were ostracized and even killed for getting pregnant before marriage while men faced far less severe consequences for fathering children out of wedlock.

The status of an Indian woman, even in modern India, is always understood in conjunction with the male figure responsible for her protection. She is always the property of her father, husband or son (Puri, 1999). Her identity lies in her ability to be a

chaste daughter, a good wife and a caring mother. Domestic violence committed against women in India has been aptly categorized by Puri (1999) into three stages of a woman's life- female child infanticide; dowry related torture of young brides and widow discrimination. Due to Hindu laws of inheritance, which propagate male inheritance of family wealth and property, the female child is considered undesirable. Such beliefs and traditions have been and continue to be the cause of many abortions and murders of the female child. The practice of gift giving or dowry, which is the responsibility of the bride's family, has added to the notion of girls being a burden on the family. This practice is the cause of numerous reports of torture and violence experienced by women as a result of their family's inability to meet the demands of their in-laws. According to Puri (1999), the final stage of a woman's life is that of widowhood. Violence against women at this stage has been practiced over centuries in India through the ritual of Sati. Though illegal and rarely in practice in India today this traditional ritual refers to burning a wife while she is still alive with the body of her dead husband (Narasimhan, 1994). Some forms of widow torture still in practice in India today include social isolation from religious and community celebrations, restrictions on what a widow can eat and/or wear and exclusion from decision making processes within the family. It is important to note however that, men are exempt from any such regulations on the demise of their wives.

In a society that places such stringent values and limitations on its women and where marriage is the only acceptable path, dating before marriage naturally is considered unacceptable by the majority society. However, the influences of globalization, media exposure and westernization are slowly leading to changes in attitudes about dating among the youth. Even though the young generation is more open

to exploring dating relationships, they face strong resistance and opposition from their parents and older generations who are still caught in the middle of the transition from traditional value systems and the demands of modern global life style (Gupta, 1991).

Significance and Rationale for the Study

There is a massive socioeconomic change taking place in India today. Many multinational companies are setting up offices with new economic and career opportunities for the youth. The traditional social norms are making way to a western lifestyle. Seabrook (2003) aptly summarizes some of the cultural changes taking shape in the India society in his article the "Outsourcing Culture". He states that "men and women can mix freely, with the gender apartheid breaking down". He further observes that the bars, clubs and restaurants in the larger cities across the country have become more westernized to meet the changing lifestyles of the population. From these observations one can easily conclude that it is likely that the youth in India today are changing their perceptions about dating.

In the midst of all these developments and changes there has been no support for healthy dating relationships among young people. There were no studies found that looked at the nature of dating relationships in India. The issue of dating violence in India is also relatively unexplored. Only two studies were found that included dating couples in India as part of their research. One of these studies focused on the prevalence of dating violence in India (Straus, 2004). Straus looked at dating violence in 31 universities across 16 countries and found a high rate of assault perpetrated by both male and female students in all countries. He also found that 25.8% of females and 12.5% of males who dated in a residential college in India reported perpetrating severe assault towards their

partners. The second study which also included dating couples explored the prevalence of sexual coercion among college students in India (Waldner, Vaden-Goad, & Sikka, 1999). This study found that even though the rate of sexual coercion in intimate relationships in India is lower than that in the USA, it does occur. Approximately 26% of the sample, 25 participants from a total of 99 participants, in this study reported experiencing sexual coercion in their relationships. Further, this study found that even though traditional ideologies frown upon premarital sexual activity, its prevalence is higher than expected indicating that attitudes do not necessarily translate into action. This finding lays the premise for my study which further explores dating violence in India. With sociocultural support for violence against women and the increasing rate of dating among youth in India today, it is important to learn more about attitudes and experiences of Indian college students with regard to dating violence. These changes in the social norms and values may call for devising violence prevention and intervention strategies catering to high school and college aged youth.

This quantitative study aims to begin to understand the nature of dating violence, both perpetration and victimization, experienced by young women attending college in Hyderabad, India. In addition, this study will explore attitudes about violence against women that these young participants develop as a result of their personal, social and cultural experiences. Because so little research has addressed dating violence in India, it seems important to begin to get a clearer look at the overall phenomenon and factors related to dating violence in India. An anonymous survey method was used for this study to protect the identities of the participants who might have been uncomfortable discussing their thoughts and experiences related dating violence.

As its theoretical framework, this study used the Feminist Theory and the Ecological Model. The literature on women's rights in the west has suggested that "the sociocultural parameters of the ideology of patriarchy serve to constrain and control the thoughts, movements, and lives of women" (Johnson & Johnson, 2001, p.1051). These theoretical frameworks are appropriate for the current study because they will help us examine and understand the numerous sociocultural parameters (attitudes, religion, culture, education, family income, anger management, substance abuse, childhood maltreatment etc.) explored in this study.

Purpose of the Study

The youth in India today comprise the segment of the Indian society that is most vulnerable to experiencing domestic violence in the future. It is important to explore and identify attitudes and experiences of dating violence in the lives of young couples. This may aid in the early exposure and prevention of future domestic violence in the society. Furthermore, this study aims at giving future research in the area a more defined direction, enabling educators to devise undergraduate and community based programs for young women and aiding policy makers in devising public policies related to the rights of young women. Implications for culturally sensitive interventions to prevent and treat dating violence among college students in India will also be presented. It is very important for government agencies to be aware of the prevalence of intimate partner violence among unmarried couples in India for them to allocate resources for further research in the field. Such research would in turn be very useful for the development and implementation of community level awareness and intervention programs. An awareness

of such issues would also be useful in empowering young women against their future assault.

Research Questions

Specific research questions that this study attempts to answer includes:

1. What are the characteristics of the sample and how do they differ between the dating and non-dating samples?

   (i.e. age, religion, parents' education level, family income, prevalence of problem behaviors associated with alcohol abuse)

2. What attitudes exist among the participants about wife beating and how do they differ between the dating and non-dating samples?

3. What is the prevalence, perpetration and victimization, of particular types of violence in dating relationships?

4. What demographic and risk factors are associated with dating violence, perpetration and victimization, among the participants?

   (i.e. family income, parents' education level, childhood history of witnessing violence, childhood experience of violence, anger management skills, attitudes about wife beating and problems with alcohol.)

5. What culture based perceptions do the dating and non dating samples have about intimate partner violence in India?

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

The oppression of women and violence against them is an age old phenomenon in India. Banerji states that, "the life of a woman according to the *Dharmasastras*, has three stages, that of an unmarried girl, a married girl, and as a widow" (quoted in Puri, 1999, p.6). Women in India experience oppression and violence in all the abovementioned stages of their life. In this chapter, the researcher will introduce the Feminist Theory and the Ecological Model as they apply to the phenomenon of dating violence against women, focusing on the phenomenon of dating violence in India in particular. The researcher will further examine the issue of attitudes and experiences of domestic violence and dating violence as it relates to the Indian culture. This will be followed by a review of literature on dating violence, most of which has been done in the U.S. This section will include a review of the demographic and risk factors associated with dating violence. Literature on demographic factors such as age, religion, family income, and parents' level of education will be examined. Further, literature on risk factors such as history of experiencing or witnessing violence, problems with alcohol and anger management skills will be reviewed.

Theoretical Framework

The two theoretical frameworks that form the basis of this study are the Feminist Theory and the Ecological Theory. Feminist theory is founded on the premise of unequal distribution of power and control between men and women with men commanding more authority in the sociocultural setting (Hamby, 2000; Smith, 1990). The Ecological Theory

posits that individuals are influenced by factors related to their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The Feminist Theory

Feminist scholars believe that the patriarchal nature of society, through its emphasis on traditional gender role socialization, plays an important role in the prevalence of intimate partner violence both in the present world and historically speaking (Smith, 1990). According to Hamby (2000), one of the most important contributions of feminism in the field of domestic violence has been its emphasis on the gendered nature of distribution of power and control in intimate relationships.

In the Indian context, the feminist theory plays out in the form of age old traditions and rituals that emphasize male dominance. The plight of Indian women and the violence perpetrated against them have been categorized across three stages of a woman's lifespan, starting from the stage of the unmarried child through that of the married woman and finally the stage of widowhood (Johnson & Johnson, 2001; Puri, 1999). In the unmarried stage, violence against women includes the practice of female infanticide where the girl child is considered a burden in the Indian family system because of unequal laws of inheritance and lineage. The male child is given sole responsibility to carry the family name through future generations. Further, it is the sole privilege of the male child to perform the death rights within the family (Puri, 1999). Such cultural norms count against the birth of the female child leading to their abortion or murder right after birth (Johnson & Johnson, 2001). Joshi (1992) in his article describing the unfortunate plight of the Indian woman, illustrates this phenomenon by describing a police reported case of a poor couple that drowns their six year old daughter in the banks

of the Yamuna River in the capital city of the county, New Delhi. The parent's reason for the murder was their poverty and inability to provide for her dowry. A dowry refers to material wealth gifted by the bride's family to a newlywed couple (Puri, 1999).

The next stage in a woman's life in India is that of a wife. Traditionally, marriages in India are arranged by religious or community leaders within a given caste, class, religion or regional network. Inter-caste marriages are still not sanctioned by the majority of Indian communities. People across the country also primarily socialize within their specific caste or class designations (Gupta, 1991). The ideal match for marriage is determined by the educational qualifications of the groom and the ability of the bride's family to provide for dowry. Even though the practice of dowry has its benefits, it has been used since times immemorial as a tool to torture women in the Indian society. The inability to meet the monitory demands of the groom's family has led to horrible crimes like burning of brides by their husband and his family. Violence in such situations is culturally justified under the pretext of preserving one's family honor.

The final stage of a woman's life is that of widowhood (Johnson & Johnson, 2001, Puri, 1999). Traditionally, the barbaric ritual of Sati marked the end of a woman's purpose in society after the death of her husband. According to this practice a woman was burned to death in the funeral pyre of her dead husband. The rationale for such a savage practice being that there would be nobody to protect her after the death of her husband. Even though the physical practice of Sati is not prevalent today, it exists in spirit where a widowed woman is shunned from society as an outcast and considered a bad omen. Widows are excluded from social celebrations because their presence could cast an evil spell on the fortunes of others in the community. It is interesting to note however, that

these norms don't apply to men. A widower in the Indian society is encouraged to remarry. With remarriage, the man is able to receive dowry again and also gets a second chance to have a male child who could carry forward the family lineage.

It is important to understand the damaging role such misogynistic traditions play in shaping the attitudes, values, perceptions and lives of the people in India today. Social practices such as these make for a male dominated society in which women do not have a voice. As this study aims to look at the attitudes and experiences of domestic violence among college women in Hyderabad, India, the feminist theory will be helpful to understand the influence of the patriarchal culture informing these attitudes and experiences. This study will test how patriarchal values influence violent experiences, both perpetration and victimization, in dating relationships among the participants. Specifically, the feminist theory will help us understand the relationship between culture specific perceptions and attitudes about wife beating and the experience of victimization among the participants.

The Ecological Model

According to the Ecological model developed by Bronfenbrenner, various internal and external factors influence people's behavior (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This model examines human behaviors in relation to environmental factors like one's social structure, family, economic and political environment etc. Stith and colleagues (2003) in their meta-analytic review of risk factors associated with intimate partner physical abuse perpetration and victimization, purport that there is a theoretical shift among researchers in their perspectives about intimate partner violence from single factor to multifactor frameworks. According to them, "these multifactor frameworks suggest that partner

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violence is not simply caused by an individual's patriarchal belief system or psychological dysfunction but rather result from the interaction between various characteristics of the individual and their environment" (Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward & Tritt, 2003, p.67). Dutton (1995) used the ecological model to study partner violence by examining the phenomenon across four levels of factors involving individual offenders and their environment. The four levels examined by him, which were also used by Stith and colleagues to study factors influencing victims and perpetrators of intimate violence, include the *macrosystem*, comprising factors such as cultural beliefs and values, the *exosystem*, comprising the social networks, education and income, the *microsystem,* comprising family and interpersonal dynamics, and finally the *ontogentic level,* comprising the individuals developmental history, cognitions and emotional responses (Dutton, 1995; Stith, et al., 2003).

This study will use the four levels of the ecological model mentioned above to look at the risk factors associated with victimization and perpetration of dating violence among college women in Hyderabad, India. At the *macrosystemic* level the researcher will be examining factors such as cultural perceptions and attitudes about domestic violence among the participants. The researcher predicts that the more tolerant the participants are towards domestic violence the higher the chances of their victimization. At the *exosystemic* level the researcher will examine factors such as age, religion, parent's education level and their family income. At the *microsystemic* level the researcher will focus on the participant's childhood experiences of witnessing or being abused and the nature of their dating experiences. Finally, at the *ontogentic level* the researcher will look at the participants' anger management skills and problems with

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alcohol in relation to their experiences of victimization and perpetration of dating violence.

Background on Culture, Domestic Violence and Dating Violence in India

Domestic violence research in India supports the idea that the cultural position of women in India places them at a high risk of violence (Go et al., 2003). The present day culture is marked by its male dominated hierarchal structure within which people's lives are influenced in the domestic, social and economic spheres (Jejeebhoy, 1998; Rao, 1997). A qualitative study conducted by Go and colleagues (2003) in a southern city called Chennai in India looked at the social acceptability of domestic violence in contemporary Indian society. Twenty three women, eighteen of which were married, and twenty five men, thirteen of which were married, were interviewed for this qualitative study. Seven female focus groups were also conducted to examine the range of types of physical violence perpetrated against women from "face slapping to burning the skin with cigarette stubs" (Go et al., 2003, p.403). The researchers found that rigid gender norms and expectations along with financial and work related stressors triggered domestic violence in communities in Chennai. However, they also found that both men and women, reported having a "baseline" for "socially acceptable violence" (2003, p.403). Some factors that defined these level of acceptability among the participants were "intensity, justification and frequency" of violence (2003, p.403). Being hit with a fist but not very hard represented an acceptable level of intensity while being tortured and threatened to be burned by pouring kerosene on the victim was not acceptable among the participants. Further, the participants reported that acts of violence associated with suspected infidelity by the husband were justifiable, but violence as a result of drunken

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behavior was not acceptable among the participants, both men and women. This study further found that violence within marriages among the participants were unidirectional, i.e. male to female, with occasional exceptions when women retaliated in an act of self defense. The unidirectional nature of violence in marriages and the attitudes of social acceptability and justification of male violence have been echoed in previous literature studying the phenomenon of domestic violence in India (Ahmed- Ghosh, 2004; Mehrotra, 1999; Nayak, Byrne, Martin, & Abraham, 2003; Rao, 1997).

In the current study the researcher proposes to look at the cultural perceptions about domestic violence and attitudes about wife beating among college women to clarify whether some of the abovementioned attitudes about domestic violence factor into the way the modern generations perceive intimate partner relationships in India. The social culture among the Indian youth has seen a drastic shift in the past decade with the outsourcing of large multinational customer support call centers in different parts of India. The young work force at these businesses are exposed to the consumer culture of the west and have become increasingly aware of cultural and social trends of the developed western nations. Kalita (2005) in her article titled the "Hope and toil of India's call centers" aptly describes the changing youth culture in India by stating: "The Indian twenty-somethings laboring in these call centers not only work together - they also drink together, dance together, date one another and, most important, understand one another"(p. A01). This is an indicator that the youth today, unlike in the past, are more open about dating relationships. Further, the culture of drinking and partying is also a new development in the Indian society which both men and women participate in today. The author further observes that while the parents of these young call center employees

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"might have dated or consumed alcohol, younger Indians say they can do so overtly now" (p.A02). This could be an indicator of a shift in perceptions and attitudes about dating among the youth in modern India from a traditional conservative framework to a more modern and open outlook. It is important to understand the influence of such a shift in attitudes and culture on the experiences of dating violence in contemporary India. With the technological advancement and modernization in India, it is likely that the attitudes about intimate partner violence are also changing. With more and more women joining the workforce at these multinational corporations, there is a large shift of economic, political and social power into the hands of women. However, since domestic violence has been an age old problem in India, it is likely that the new dating population is at risk of experiencing, both perpetration and victimization, violence in dating relationships. Because the practice of dating among the Indian youth is fairly new, there is not much research available that has examined the nature and experiences of dating relationships in India.

There were only two studies found that included college going dating couples from India when examining intimate partner violence (Straus, 2004; Walden, Vaden-Goad & Sikka, 1999). The study by Straus looked at the prevalence of violence against dating partners across 31 universities in 16 countries (2004). This study was conducted under the auspices of the 'International Dating Violence Study', a research consortium of major universities studying the phenomenon of dating violence across nations. The major focus of this consortium is to investigate the interrelationship between crime and social context, focusing on international differences between cultural norms that aid beliefs accepting or approving intimate partner violence (Straus, 2004). Overall, 29% of all

participants reporting having physically assaulted their dating partner in the previous 12 months. Furthermore, the nature of most of the assaults was found to be minor and included acts such as shoving or slapping a partner. Some of the more severe acts of violence perpetrated among the participants included choking, punching and using a weapons to attack a partner. Though a relatively small percentage (i.e.10%) reported participating in such severe acts, the percentage is disturbingly high (Straus, 2004). Another interesting finding of this study was that the proportion of men and women perpetration of violence, both minor and severe acts, towards their partners was at about the same rate.

The Indian sample for the study conducted by Straus was acquired from a northern university town, Pune, and comprised of 229 participants of which 58.1% were female. The mean age of the Indian sample was 22 years and the average length of their relationship was 13.9 months. Only one third of this sample reported being in a dating relationship, the probable reason for this low rate of dating being the cultural taboo associated with dating in India. The rate of overall physical assault perpetration among the Indian participants was found to be 39%. Overall, 33.3% of men and 41.2% of women report perpetrating abuse against their partner. Furthermore, 22.2% of the participants in the Indian sample reported severe assault perpetration, with 12.5% of men and 25.8% of women reporting having perpetrated severe acts of violence against their partners. The high level of female perpetration of violence is a very surprising outcome, especially considering the cultural and social status of women in India. The current study will further investigate this phenomenon.

The second study which included college aged dating partners entailed the exploration of the issue related to sexual coercion in intimate partner relationships in India (Walden, Vaden-Goad & Sikka, 1999). This study is based on the premise that Indian women experience higher levels of sexual coercion compared to men because of the male privileges supported by the culture. It was also observed by the authors that, because of the system of *arranged marriages,* premarital interaction between heterosexual couples is limited. This could imply that most cases of sexual coercion between intimate partners take place after marriage. This study was conducted within a western Indian university sample of 98 participants of which 44 were male and 54 were female. The majority of the participants in this study were single. Results of the study indicate that 26% of the sample reported any coercion, with specific acts of coercion ranging from kissing to intercourse. A total of 160 acts of coercion were reported by the participants of which the most common outcome was intercourse (70 instances- 44%), followed by kissing (48 instances- 30%) and fondling (22 instances- 26%). It is interesting to note that the percentages for these acts were relatively similar after splitting the sample by gender. Some of the most commonly used tactics by men to sexually coerce their partner in order of frequency reported by the female participants were- use of guilt, encouraged intoxication, begging, use of restrain, lying, threat to leave the relationship, use of weapons, blackmail, being held down, making false promises, using physical force, threatening to use force and threatening to tell lies. Those used by women as reported by the male participants were- use of guilt, persistent touching, threatening to lie, use of restrain, use of weapon, use of blackmail, lying, use of physical force, making false promises, threatening to use force, encouraging intoxication and threatening to end

the relationship. According to the authors the instances of sexual coercion in the sample is higher among married couples when compared to those in dating relationships. One reason for this could be the notion of duty and obligation associated with sex in a marital relationship (Walden, et al., 1999). Furthermore, because of the practice of arranged marriages, opposite sex interaction are limited outside of marriages. The authors purport however that, with the increasing westernization in mate selection practices in contemporary India such differences could get less pronounced in the future. The current study will examine the perpetration and victimization of sexual coercion among these participants to further understand this phenomenon.

Dating Violence

Dating violence comprises of acts of verbal abuse, physical aggression, sexual coercion and threatening communication between partners in dating relationships (Lewis & Fremouw, 2001; Monson & Langhinrichsen- Rohling, 2002). Despite the methodological problems related to determining its prevalence accurately, researchers believe that approximately 12% to 65% of college students experience physical aggression in dating relationships (Billigman, 1987; Bookwala, Frieze, Smith, & Ryan, 1992; Henton, Cate, Koval, Lloyd, & Christopher, 1983; Makepeace, 1981; Riggs, & O'Leary, 1996). According to O'Keefe, the rates are higher when verbal abuse is included in the definition of dating violence (2005). Research further indicates that close to half of all college women experience some form of sexual abuse (Koss, 1998).

Some predictors for violence in dating relationships suggested in the literature include attitudes about violence, demographic variables, history of domestic violence and alcohol/drug abuse (Avery-Leaf & Cascardi, 2002; Lewis & Fremouw, 2001; Malik,

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Sorenson, & Aneshensel, 1997; O'Keefe, 2005; Pittman, Wolfe, & Wekerle, 2000). The current study will examines predictors such as attitudes about wife beating, culture specific attitudes about intimate partner violence, problems with alcohol, anger management, childhood experience of witnessing violence and childhood experience of violence. Some demographic variables such as age, family income and parents' education level will also be examined.

Demographic variables

Some of the demographic variables that contribute to the risk of dating violence outlined in studies done in the US include gender, socioeconomic status and age (Lewis & Fremouw, 2001; O'Keefe, 2005). It is interesting to note that unlike the literature on spouse abuse which purports that the majority of the victims are females, the literature on dating violence has mixed findings (Lewis & Fremouw, 2001). There is literature which suggests that rate of violence perpetration and victimization in dating relationships is relatively similar across gender (Follette, 1992; O'Keefe, Brockopp, & Chew, 1986; Straus, 2004). For instance, White and Koss (1991) in their study of courtship violence found that, 37% of men inflicted violence against their partner and 39% experienced violence from their partners while 35% and 32% of women reported that they perpetrated and experienced violence respectively. On the other hand, there is research that suggests that while girls inflict more physical violence than boys (Foshee, 1996; Malik, et al., 1997), they sustain higher rates of sexual abuse than their male counterparts (Foshee, 1996; Molidor & Tolman, 1998). The current study will look at self reported experiences of physical, psychological and sexual violence, both perpetration and victimization, experienced by college women in dating relationships. It is expected that there will be a

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higher percentage of victimization among the participants than among their male partners because of the patriarchal nature of the Indian society.

Hypothesis 1: Rate of victimization among participants will be higher than the rate of perpetration of abuse.

Low socioeconomic status was found to be related to both victimization and perpetration of violence in dating relationships for both men and women (O' Keefe, 1986; Sigelman, Berry, & Wiles, 1984), while age was not found to be a significant predictor for dating violence (Reuterman & Burcky, 1989). Participant age and parents' level of education will be looked at in the current study.

Hypothesis 2: Family income will be negatively related to dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 3: Parents' level of education will be negatively related to dating violence among the participants.

Attitudes about violence in intimate partner relationships

Some theorists believe that partners are aggressive in relationships because they feel that violence is an acceptable way of conflict resolution (Avery-Leaf & Cascardi, 2002). Further, Riggs and Caulfield (1997) found that men who use violence in dating relationships expect positive consequences for their behavior. It was also found that men who have witnessed parental violence develop attitudes of acceptance towards violence in their dating relationships (O'Keefe, 1997). O'Keefe further found that justification of dating violence is a strong predictor for dating violence perpetration between both men and women (1997). It is also believed that women who have traditional attitudes about their roles in society are more likely to be victims of dating violence (Sigelman, Berry, &

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Wiles, 1984). The current study aims at examining attitudes of women about wife beating and their experiences of victimization in dating relationships. It is expected that the higher the level of tolerance towards wife beating the higher will be the chances of their victimization in dating relationships.

Hypothesis 4: *The greater the tolerance towards wife beating among the participants the higher will be the chances of their victimization.*

History of Witnessing or Experiencing Abuse

According to Downs and colleagues (1992), children become party to the cycle of violence when they learn from their family of origin that violence between intimate partners is acceptable and that the stronger family members are allowed to perpetrate violence as a means to control behaviors of the physically weaker members in the family. This cycle manifests in the lives of children when they witness abuse between their caretakers or experience abuse in the hands of those who are expected to protect them and take care of them. Once these children grow up in violent environments they internalize such behaviors as being normal or acceptable and either perpetrate abuse or become victims to abuse in intimate relationships (Downs, Miller, Testa, & Panek, 1992).

Research looking at the relationship between perpetration of relationship violence and childhood experience of abuse is ambiguous (Lewis & Fremouw, 2001). While some studies found a significant relationship between the two variables (e.g., Laner & Thompson, 1982; Marshall & Rose, 1988; O'Leary & Arias, 1990), a meta-analysis of 40 studies conducted by Stith and colleagues (2003) found that there was a weak relationship between early exposure to marital violence and intimate partner violence. Furthermore, a study conducted by McCloskey and Lichter (2003), found that there was

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no direct relationship between family violence in early childhood and dating aggression. However, the authors suggest that there could be a relationship between family violence in childhood and risk of psychopathology which in turn could cause dating aggression among girls. Another study conducted by Carr and Vandeusen (2002) looked at the association between "witnessing interpersonal violence as a child, being victim of parental physical violence, and perpetrating violence in dating relationships" by college men (p.630). This study was conducted with 99 undergraduate men at a Midwestern university. The results of this study suggested that witnessing interpersonal violence as a child was a significant predictor of dating violence among the sample. This study also found that the attitudes supporting intimate partner violence were significant predictors of sexual aggression among the participants. However, the study found no significant relationship between the experience of childhood abuse and perpetration of abuse in dating relationships. The current study will look at both witnessing and experiencing violence as a child when analyzing violence perpetration and victimization among the participants in dating relationships. It is expected that there will be a significant relationship between childhood experiences of witnessing and/or experiencing abuse and experiences of perpetration and/or victimization among the participants.

Hypothesis 5: Experiencing or witnessing violence in childhood will be positively related to perpetration and victimization of dating violence among the participants.

Problems with Alcohol

Studies have found that smoking, binge drinking and drug abuse are common problems faced by adolescent and adult females who experience physical and /or sexual abuse in dating relationships (Cunningham, Stiffman, Dore, & Earls, 1994; Silverman,

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Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway, 2001). Further, it is found that, between 6% to 85% of male perpetrated domestic violence occurs when either or both partners are under the influence of alcohol (Kaufman Kantor & Jasinski, 1999). A study by Makepeace (1987) found that one-third of all incidents of dating violence reported also involved alcohol abuse.

Many researchers emphasize the need to understand the function of aggression in dating relationships in relation to substance abuse (Lewis & Fremouw, 2001). Literature on aggression and violence suggest that while female aggression is often a response in self defense, men use aggression as a tool to solve problems, manipulate or coerce others (Bookwala, Frieze, Smith, & Ryan, 1992, as cited in Lewis & Fremouw, 2001). Therefore, the authors suggest that for men, unlike women, alcohol use may trigger violence. Contrary to this suggestion, some researchers state that alcohol consumption may decrease the rate of physical violence perpetrated by men (Bard & Zacker, 1974; Coleman & Straus, 1983; Flanzer, 1982; Leonard & Jacob, 1988, as cited in Bennett, 1996). Furthermore, research findings suggest that female alcoholics are more prone to experiencing physical abuse compared to women who are not alcoholics (Miller, 1990, as cited in Johnson, 1996).

The current study aims to look at problem behaviors associated with alcohol abuse among the participants. Further, the study also hopes to understand the relationship between problems with alcohol and dating violence, both perpetration and victimization, among college women in Hyderabad, India.

Hypothesis 6: It is predicted that there will be a significant positive relationship between problems with alcohol and experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.

Anger Management Skills

"Anger management has been a central component of most partner violence intervention and prevention programs for at least 10 years" (Hamby, 1998, as cited in Stith & Hamby, 2002, p.397). Therefore it is appropriate to emphasize the role anger expression styles play in experiences related to dating violence. A study by Wolf and Foshee (2003) that looked at family violence, anger expression styles and adolescent dating violence, found a positive relationship between anger expression style and dating violence perpetration among adolescent boys and girls. Specifically, the study found that there was a positive relationship between outward and inward anger expression styles of females and their perpetration of dating violence. For the male participants, it was found that there was a positive relationship between only the outward anger expression style and dating violence perpetration. Parrott and Zeichner (2003) further examined the effects of trait anger and negative attitudes towards women on physical violence in dating relationships among college aged men. The researchers found that trait anger was a significant predictor of physical assault in dating relationships. Further, they report that hostile attitudes towards women provide a moderating effect between trait anger and the frequency of physical assaults. Furthermore, a study by Dye and Eckhardt (2000) found that college students, both male and female, that expressed violence in dating relationships reported expressing greater anger associated behaviors compared to nonviolent participants. Thus, it can be concluded that, thought there is limited literature available looking at the relationship between anger and dating violence, it is apparent that a significant relationship does exist and needs to be examined further. Research also

needs to focus on the anger management skills and techniques used by dating partners that either aid or prevent violence in intimate relationships.

The current study will use the Anger Management Scale (Stith & Hamby, 2002) to assess for anger management skills used by the participants. It is predicted that the higher the levels of anger management skills among the participants the lower will be the experience of violence, both perpetration and victimization, among the participants.

Hypothesis 7: It is predicted that there will be a significant negative relationship between participants' anger management skills and their experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.

<div align="center">*Hypothesis*</div>

The hypotheses being tested in this study include:

Hypothesis 1: Rate of victimization among participants will be higher than the rate of perpetration of abuse.

Hypothesis 2: Family income will be negatively related to dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 3: Parents' level of education will be positively related to dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 4: *The greater the tolerance towards wife beating among the participants the higher will be the chances of their victimization.*

Hypothesis 5: Experiencing or witnessing violence in childhood will be positively related to perpetration and victimization of dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 6: It is predicted that there will be a significant positive relationship between problems with alcohol and experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.

Hypothesis 7: It is predicted that there will be a significant negative relationship between participants' anger management skills and their experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.

CHAPTER III

Methods

This study sought to understand the nature of dating violence experienced by young women attending college in India. Since this is one of the first studies looking at the phenomenon of dating violence among female college students in India, I collected data from a convenience sample of undergraduate women in an urban city in Southern India (Hyderabad). I distributed a questionnaire to these students to learn about their dating experiences and about factors which I hypothesized to be related to their likelihood of being involved in violent dating relationships.

Participants and Selection Process

The sample for this study comprised 500 female undergraduate students above the age of eighteen studying in a commuter college in Hyderabad, India. Though a Catholic institution, the majority of the students at this college are Hindu. Christian students form the next largest segment followed by students from other religions like Islam, Sikhism, and Buddhism. The participants at the time of the study were working on their undergraduate degree in one of the following three academic departments: Arts, Commerce or Science. The sample was a convenience sample of students who voluntarily agreed to complete the survey packet distributed by the researcher. Fifty to a hundred students were asked to complete the survey at a time over three consecutive days to reach the desired sample size of 500 students.

Procedure

Before conducting the study the researcher met with the Principal of the college to discuss the nature and purpose of the study. After receiving permission to conduct the

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study, the researcher met with professors and lecturers from the different departments to discuss the requirements to administer the study. All professors agreed to have the survey distributed during their class time for which the students would be given attendance credit. The answers for the survey were filled in scantron sheets.

All participants were given an orientation before the questionnaires were handed out to them. The orientation included a brief description of the nature, scope, purpose and importance of the study, role of the participants, their choice not to participate, issues related to participant confidentiality and the resources to contact in any case where the participants felt the need to talk to someone about their thoughts or feelings as a result of answering questions in the survey. They were also informed about the importance of this study to both, young women in general (public policy formulation, development of interventions and educational programs) and to them in particular (increase their awareness). IRB approved this study with an "IRB Exempt Approval" status therefore the use of an informed consent form was not required.

Next, the questionnaire (see Appendix A) along with the scantron sheets were handed to students willing to participate. Once completed, the questionnaires were collected and placed in envelopes that were sealed to preserve confidentiality. Each set of questionnaires were reviewed to make sure all information was correctly completed.

The scantron sheets were brought back to Virginia Tech, Northern Virginia Center and sent to the Test Scoring Services at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg for data entry. The surveys were scanned and the data saved electronically. The data was sent back to the researcher for data cleansing and analysis through email.

Approximately 500 surveys were distributed, of which, all students completed and returned the surveys to the researcher. Only 454 of these surveys were used in this study because 46 surveys had large sections missing and could not be included in the study.

Measures

The measures used in this study include the following: demographic questions; questions related to whether the participant witnessed and/or experienced violence in her family of origin; questions designed for this study looking at culture based perceptions and attitudes related to intimate partner violence, The Rutgers Alcohol Problem Index (RAPI) (White & Labouvie, 1989); The Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996), The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) and the Anger Management Scale (Stith & Hamby, 2002).

Demographics

The researcher asked eleven demographic questions related to the participant's year of undergraduate study, age, religion, parents' education levels, family income level, participant dating relationship status and other questions related to the nature of their dating relationship (see Appendix A, Q.1-6; p.2 and Q.89-94-47; p.8-9). Questions related to the participant's dating relationship status ranged between "I am currently with a boyfriend/ partner that has lasted at least one month" to "I have never been in a relationship with a boyfriend". Questions in the survey that related to the nature of dating relationship of participants included: "Are you living with your boyfriend/ partner?" (the response choices were "Yes" or "No"); "What is your relationship with your boyfriend/ Partner?" (the response choices included "Dating", "Engaged", "Married") "How long

have you been in this relationship? How long did the most recent relationship last?" (the response choices ranged from "less than one month" to "four years or more"); "How long ago did this relationship end?" (the response choices ranged from "it has not ended" to "more than 2 years ago") and "Is (was) sexual intercourse a part of your relationship?" (the response choices were "Yes" or "No").

Witnessing or experiencing violence in childhood

Two questions related to the participants' experience of being disciplined as children (i.e. mild verbal abuse; severe verbal abuse; mild physical abuse and severe physical abuse), and their experience of witnessing abuse between their parents or caregivers was asked (see Appendix A, Q. 48-49; p.6).

Experiencing abuse in the family of origin was scored dichotomously as either "yes" if they reported that they experienced severe physical discipline (i.e., hitting; punching; slapping or beating), or "no" if they reported experiencing mild verbal abuse (i.e., grounding), mild physical abuse (i.e., spanking) or severe verbal abuse (i.e., insulting, humiliating or swearing). Witnessing abuse in the family of origin was dichotomously scored as "yes" if participants self reported that they had witnessed any type of violence (i.e., mother to father; father to mother or mutual violence) or "no" if they reported they had not witnessed any type of violence.

Culture based attitudes and perceptions about violence against women (see Appendix A, Q.38-47; p.5-6).

Ten questions were designed for this study to better understand some of the cultural specific attitudes and perceptions related to the nature and prevalence of intimate partner violence in India. Questions included in this section were:

- "Do you think it is abusive for a husband to pinch his wife?" (the response choices were "Yes" and "No").

- "Do you think it is abusive for a husband to push his wife?" (the response choices were "Yes" and "No").

- "Do you think it is abusive for a husband to slap his wife?" (the response choices were "Yes" and "No").

- "Do you think it is abusive for a husband to beat his wife?" (the response choices were "Yes" and "No").

- "How common is it for a college woman to go on a date alone in India?" (the response choices ranged from "it never happens" to "it happens all the time").

- "How common is dating in India?" (the response choices ranged from "it never happens" to "it happens all the time").

- "How common is it for a husband to assault a wife in India?" (the response choices ranged from "it never happens" to "it happens all the time").

- "How common is it for a boyfriend to assault a girlfriend in India?" (the response choices ranged from "it never happens" to "it happens all the time").

- "Do you know anyone your age who is in a violent (hitting, pushing, slapping, pinching) relationship?" (the response choices were "Yes" and "No").

- "How many friends do you have in your age group that get hit by their partner/ boyfriend?" (the response choices ranged from "None" to "Six or more").

The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating (see Appendix A, Q. 7-37; p.3-5).

The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) was used to understand the participant's attitudes about domestic violence (see Appendix A, Q. 7-37; p.3-5). This measure contains 31 items in five subscales: wife beating is justified; wives gain from beatings; help should be given; offender should be punished and offender is responsible.

This measure was used a gauge to understand the prevalent attitudes about violence against women among the participants irrespective of their status of being in a dating relationship. Some examples of the items under each subscale are "occasional violence by a husband towards his wife can help maintain the marriage" (wife beating is justified- subscale WJ); "wives try to get beaten by their husbands to get sympathy from others" (wives gain from beating- subscale WG); "social agencies should do more to help battered women" (help should be given- subscale HG); "a wife should move out of her house if her husband beats her" (offender should be punished- OP); "cases of wife beating are the fault of the husband" (offender is responsible- subscale OR). Respondents are asked to answer the questions based on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" (coded as "1") to "Strongly Disagree" (coded as "5"). For this analysis only the Wife Beating Is Justified subscale was used.

The Revised Conflicts Tactics Scale (CTS2) (omitted from the appendix because the instrument is copywritten).

The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2), (Straus, Hamby, Boney- McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) was used to assess the prevalence of victimization and perpetration of different kinds of abuse among the study participants. The respondents were asked to specify how often in the past year they perpetrated or experienced the behaviors described in the instrument. The response choices range from "No", this has never happened ("1"), in increasing order frequency, to "More than 20 times in the past year" ("7"). The respondents also have an option to respond with "Not in the past year, but it did happen before" ("8"). Three subscales from this instrument will be used in this study- Psychological Aggression, Physical Assault and Sexual Coercion. Some examples for questions in these subscales include "Insulted or swore at my partner" (Psychological Aggression); "I threw something at my partner that could hurt" (Physical Assault); "I made my partner have sex without a condom" (Sexual Coercion). The subscales are further divided into two levels of severity minor and severe victimization and perpetration of the different kinds of abuse.

The original CTS (Straus, 1990) has been used widely by researchers to assess for prevalence of violence in relationships. The CTS2 is a modified version of the CTS developed by Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy and Sugarman in 1996. The scales have been found to have improved measures for physical assault, psychological aggression and sexual coercion. The internal consistency of the CTS2 ranges from an alpha coefficient of .79 to .95 (Straus, et al., 1996). Furthermore, there is evidence for construct validity and

discriminant validity. Straus and colleagues assert that there is evidence that the validity

and reliability of the original CTS apply to CTS2 (1996).

The Rutgers Alcohol Problem Index (RAPI) (see Appendix A, Q. 65-88, p.7-8).

The RAPI scale is used to assess for prevalence of alcohol problems among

adolescents and young adults (White & Labouvie, 1989). In this study this measure will

be used to assess if there is a relationship between alcohol use and the experience of

different kinds of violence: physical, emotional, sexual etc. The authors of the RAPI

attempt to make a distinction between "problem drinking" and "alcoholism" in the

adolescent and young adult populations. Though young people tend to drink less

frequently than adults, when they do drink, it is usually in large quantities resulting in

severe consequences (Harford & Mill, 1978 as cited in Raskin, White & Labouvie, 1989).

The RAPI attempts to measure the consequences of drinking.

The instructions in the RAPI ask "How many times in the past six months did the

following things happen to you while you were drinking alcohol or because of your

alcohol use over the last six months". The responses ranged from "Never" to "More than

ten times". An example of an item in the instrument is "how many times did suddenly

find yourself in a place that you could not remember getting to?"

A longitudinal study based on a non clinical random sample of 1,308 males and

females in the age range of 12 to 21 year in New Jersey was conducted to study the

psychometric properties of the RAPI (White & Labouvie, 1989). This study found the

RAPI to have an internal consistence of .92.

Anger Management Scale (see Appendix A, Q.50-62; p.7).

The Anger Management Scale (Stith & Hamby, 2002) in this study was used to assess anger management skills among participants (see Appendix A). This instrument aids in assessing specific cognitions and behaviors that increase or decrease anger in relationships which in turn influences respondent's degree of partner violence (Stith & Hamby, 2002). The tool includes four subscales: Escalating Strategies, Negative Attributions, Self Awareness and Calming Strategies. The Cronbach reliability for these subscales are .78, .85, .72 and .67 respectively.

Organization of the Survey

The self- administered questionnaire was designed to provide the most convenient and comprehensible format for the participants. There were 188 questions in the survey. The first 89 questions comprise instruments measuring attitudes about domestic violence, culture based perceptions about intimate partner violence, substance abuse, and demographic information were placed in the beginning to facilitate data collection related to these variables from all participants. Because dating is socially unacceptable by many in India, there might arise some hesitation by the participants to self report their personal dating experiences. It is also not uncommon for college women in India not to date or to never have been in dating relationships. Because of these reason all questions related to participant's experience of dating and/ or violence in relationships experienced by them were placed in the second half of the questionnaire. This gave the participants an opportunity to get comfortable with the process of completing the survey and even reevaluate their decision to answer the questions. Furthermore, this format allowed them to leave after they finished the first half of the questionnaire instead of having to read

through the entire booklet (part of which would not be applicable to them). Most surveys were completed within the given class period. However, some participants took longer to finish as English was not their primary language, even though the medium of instruction in the college was English.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the SPSS- 14 software package. Emphasis was given to the descriptive analysis of attitudes and experience of dating violence within the sample. In the preliminary stage, the researcher undertook frequency analysis to screen out-of-range responses. The researcher also used descriptive statistics to understand the general trends in the data such as, the percentage of participants in dating relationships, their socio economic status, the level of their parents' education, and effects of problem drinking.

Research Question 1:

What are the characteristics of the sample and how do they differ between the dating and non-dating samples (i.e. age, religion, parents' education level, family income, prevalence of problem behaviors associated with alcohol abuse)

The researcher used frequency analysis to answer the first research question about the demographic characteristics of the sample (i.e. age, religion, length of relationship, parents' education level, and family income). T- Tests and Chi Squares were also used to look at the differences in demographic characteristics between the dating and non dating samples.

- T-Tests: age; parents' level of education; family income

- Chi Square: religion

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Research Question 2:

What attitudes exist among the participants about wife beating and how do they differ between the dating and non-dating samples?

The second research question about attitudes about wife beating among the participants was analyzed using frequency analysis. Further, T-Tests and Chi Square statistics was used to examine the differences between the dating and non dating samples.

- Frequency Analysis: prevalent attitudes about wife beating among the participants.

- T-Tests: Attitudes about wife beating

Research Question 3:

What is the prevalence, perpetration and victimization, of particular types of violence in dating relationships?

Frequency analysis were used to examine the third research question about prevalence of perpetration and victimization of particular types of violence.

Research Question 4:

What demographic and risk factors are associated with dating violence, perpetration and victimization, among the participants? (i.e. family income, parents' education level, childhood history of witnessing violence, childhood experience of violence, anger management skills, attitudes about wife beating and problems with alcohol.)

The fourth research question about the relationship between demographic (i.e. family income, parents' education level) and risk factors (attitudes about wife beating, childhood history of witnessing violence, childhood history of violence, anger

management skills and problems with alcohol) and dating violence, perpetration and victimization, were examined using correlations.

Hypothesis 1: Rate of victimization among participants will be higher than the rate of perpetration of abuse.

Hypothesis 2: Family income will be negatively related to dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 3: Parents' level of education will be positively related to dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 4: The greater the tolerance towards wife beating among the participants the higher will be the chances of their victimization.

Hypothesis 5: Experiencing or witnessing violence in childhood will be positively related to perpetration and victimization of dating violence among the participants.

Hypothesis 6: It is predicted that there will be a significant positive relationship between problems with alcohol and experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.

Hypothesis 7: It is predicted that there will be a significant negative relationship between participants' anger management skills and their experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.

Research Question 5:

What culture based perceptions do the dating and non dating samples have about intimate partner violence in India?

The difference between the dating and non dating samples with regard to culture based perceptions about intimate partner violence was examined using Chi Square analysis.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to understand the attitudes, perceptions and experiences of college women with regard to intimate partner violence, specifically dating violence in modern India. First, demographic data are presented to answer the research question related to characteristics of the dating and non dating sample. There were significant differences found between the two samples with regard to participant religion and fathers' level of education. This section was followed by an analysis of the attitudes about wife beating among the dating and non dating samples. The two samples were found to be significantly different in their attitudes towards wife beating. Next, frequency analyses were used to examine the prevalence of different types of violence (physical assault, psychological aggression, sexual coercion and injury) received and perpetrated by the participants. A relatively high percentage of participants self reported perpetrating psychological aggression and being victims of sexual coercion. The intercorrelation between demographic and risk factors and dating violence were examined next. While no significant relationship was found between the demographic factors and dating violence perpetration and victimization, there was a significant relationship found between the different risk factors (witnessing and experiencing violence in one's family of origin, anger management skills, attitudes about wife beating and, problem behaviors associated with alcohol use) and dating violence. Finally, culture based perceptions about intimate partner violence were examined. A significantly larger

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percentage of participants in the dating sample considered a husband pushing his wife as abusive compared to the participants in the non dating sample.

Demographics

Demographic data and comparisons between the dating and non dating samples are in Table 1. There were 489 undergraduate female participants in the present study. Of these, 99 participants (20%) reported that they were presently in or had been in a relationship that lasted a month or more. The remaining 390 (80%) participants were single at the time of the study and had never been in a relationship. The majority (94.5%) of the participants fell between18 years and 20 years of age, 47.8% of the students being 19 years old. There were no significant age differences between the dating and no dating samples.

The sample represented fairly closely the religious diversity of the Indian population with Hindu students representing the majority (65%) of the participants which makes sense since India is a predominantly Hindu country. Since the study was conducted at a Christian Minority college, the number of Christian students represented in the study (21%) was relatively higher than the national norm. The rest of the sample comprised of approximately 9% Muslim, 2% Sikh, and 3% participants from other religions. There was a significant difference between the dating and non dating participants in terms of their religious background ($X^2 = 10.341$, df = 4, p = .03). Among the Muslim (16.7% of the daters versus 7.4% of the non daters) and Christian (24.4% of the daters versus 20.7% of the non daters) participants, there was a higher representation of daters compared to non daters. Among all other religions the non dating sample had a higher representation.

With regard to the participants' parents' level of education, it was found that the majority of the fathers (82%) of the participants in dating relationship had a bachelors degree or other higher level of education when compared to a smaller, yet high percentage of fathers (69%) of participants who were not dating or had never dated. There was a significant difference between the dating and non dating participants with regard to their father's level of education (X^2 = 13.930, df = 6, p = .03). A larger percentage of fathers of the dating sample were more educated when compared to fathers of the non dating participants. Overall mothers of all participants were less educated than the fathers. However, 62% of the mothers of the dating sample had bachelors or higher degree compared to only 50% of the mothers of participants who had never dated before. There was no significant difference found between the dating and non dating participants with regard to their mothers' level of education (X^2 = 10.062, df = 7, p = .18).

The overall income distribution among the dating and non dating samples was fairly even with the majority (60%) of the families making more than INR. 50,000 annually (see Table 1). There were no significant differences in income found between the dating and non dating samples (X^2 = 15.316, df = 9, p = .08).

Wife Beating is Justified

Close to 450 participants (92%) responded to questions related to the justification of wife beating, of which approximately 90 participants were in dating relationships while the rest had never been in a relationship before. Table 2 lists only the positive and negative responses given by participants while excluding participants who responded that they "neither agree nor disagree". There was a significant difference found between the dating and non dating sample (t = -2.92, p<.005) on justification of wife beating (see

Table 5). The non dating participants (m = 2.98) believed that wife beating is more justified than the dating sample (m = 2.66). For example, 40% of the non dating sample compared to 73% of the dating sample agreed that "even when women lie to their husbands they do not deserve to get a beating".

Experience of Violence

The dating sample experienced and perpetrated an array of physically, psychologically and sexually abusive acts. Psychologically abusive behaviors (both perpetration- 70% and victimization- 57%) were most frequent among all the behaviors being measured (physical assault, psychological aggression, sexual coercion and injury) (see Table 3). As illustrated in Table 3, participants self reported perpetrating a higher percentage of physical (30%) and psychological (70%) abuse than they reported receiving from their partners. Further, high percentage of participants also reported experiencing sexual coercion (42%). Some of the items reported by the participants included "I was made to have sex without a condom" (20%), "my partner used force (like hitting, holding down, using a weapon) to make me have oral or anal sex" (10%) and "my partner used force (like hitting, holding down, using a weapon) to have sex" (12%).

Problem Behaviors Associated with Alcohol Use

Approximately 37% (n = 42) of the dating sample and 15% (n = 80) of the non dating sample in the current study reported drinking alcohol (Table 4). There were no significant differences between the dating and non dating sample that reported drinking with regard to problem behaviors associated with alcohol use (t = 1.39, p = .17) (Table 5). For example, 33% of the dating sample and 44% of the non dating sample reported not being able to do their homework or study for a test because of drinking, 43% of the

dating sample and 25% of the non dating sample said they missed a day of school or work because of their drinking and 43% of the dating sample and 26% of the non dating sample reported having a fight or an argument with a friend after drinking. This shows that the problem behaviors associated with drinking are common among those who drink, irrespective of their relationship status.

Correlates of Perpetration and Victimization

Ten variables were correlated with perpetration and victimization of physical abuse (see Table 6). Since the sample size was small, the significance level was set at .10. Of the 20 correlations, 10 were significant; six at the 0.10 level, two at the 0.05 level and two at the 0.01 level (see Table 6). None of the demographic variables (father's level of education, mother's level of education and family income) were related to the perpetrating and receiving physical abuse.

There was a statistically significant relationship between having witnessed abuse in one's family of origin and one's experience of perpetration ($r = .32$, $p < .05$) and victimization ($r = .37$, $p < .01$) of physical abuse. This means that those who witnessed abuse in their family of origin were more likely to perpetrate and receive physical violence.

There was a statistically significant relationship between experiencing abuse in one's family of origin and one's experience of perpetrating ($r = .28$, $p < .10$) and receiving ($r = .26$, $p < .10$) physical abuse. This indicates that as the rate of experiencing abuse in one's family of origin increases, the level of physical abuse perpetrated or received also increases.

There was a significant relationship between one's anger management skills and one's rate of perpetrating physical abuse (r = -.27, p < .05), which means that as one's anger management skills increases their rate of perpetrating physical abuse decreases.

There was a significant relationship between one's justification of wife beating and one's experience of physical abuse perpetration (r = .33, p < .10 and victimization (r = .31, p < .10). This means that as the level of one's justification of wife beating increases, one's rate of perpetrating and receiving physical violence also increases.

There was a significant relationship between one's score on the Rutger's Alcohol Problem Index and one's perpetration of physical abuse (r = .59, p < .05) and victimization (r = .39, p <.10). This relationship indicates that as one's problem behaviors associated with alcohol use increases there is a simultaneous increase in one's physical abuse perpetration and victimization.

Finally, there was a very strong statistically significant relationship between perpetrating and receiving (r = .96, p < .01) physical abuse, which means that as one's level of perpetrating physical abuse increases their rate of receiving physical abuse also increases.

Culture Based Perceptions about Intimate Partner Violence in India

Ten questions were designed specifically for this study to understand the culture based perceptions about intimate partner violence in India (see Table 7 and Table 8). The majority of the participants, both dating (60%) and non dating (64%), believed that it was not abusive for a husband to pinch his wife and close to half (48%) of the participants who were not in a dating relationship reported that it was not abusive for a husband to push his wife. There was a significant difference in perceptions between the dating and

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non dating samples with regard to "pushing" being abusive. While 70% of the dating sample believed that a husband pushing his wife was abusive only 52% of the non dating sample had a similar perception (X^2 = 8.606, df = 1, p = .003). Furthermore, there was a significant difference between the dating and non dating participants with regard to their awareness of others in their age group who were in violent relationships (X^2 = 10.540, df = 1, p = .001). While 36% of the dating sample knew someone in their age group who was in a violent relationship, only 19% of the non daters reported the same. There were no significant differences between the two samples with regard to beliefs about husbands pinching (X^2 = .288, df = 1, p = .59), slapping (X^2 = .027, df = 1, p = .87) and beating (X^2 = .376, df = 1, p = .54) their wives.

The majority of participants in this study showed at least some awareness of the phenomenon of dating and intimate partner violence in India (see Table 8). For example, 26% of the participants reported that people are involved in dating relationships in India, while 44% stated that it was a fairly common practice. Close to half (48%) of the participants reported that wife assault happens in India while 28% reported that this was fairly common. Furthermore, close to 60% of the responses to the question about prevalence of girlfriend assault ranged between "it happens" and "it is fairly common" (see Table 8).

Table 1: Characteristics of Participants (N = 489)

Characteristics	Dating Sample		Non Dating Sample		Significance Test
	n	%	n	%	
Sample Size (N = 489)	99	20.25%	390	79.75%	
Age at the time of survey (years)					
18	23	25.6%	109	30%	
19	43	47.8%	179	49.3%	
20	19	21.1%	55	15.2%	
21	2	2.2%	12	3.3%	t = .506
Religion					
Hindu	51	56.7%	243	66.9%	
Christian	22	24.4%	75	20.7%	
Muslim	15	16.7%	27	7.4%	
Sikh	0	0%	8	2.2%	
Other	2	2.2%	10	2.8%	X^2 = 10.341*
Father's Education	12	13.3%	50	13.8%	
Below High School	4	4.4%	57	15.7%	
High School	34	37.8%	147	40.5%	
Bachelors Degree	8	8.9%	28	7.7%	
Diploma	20	22.2%	53	14.6%	
Masters	12	13.3%	24	6.6%	X^2 = 13.930*
Post Masters					
Mother's Education	22	24.4%	99	27.3%	
Below High School	11	12.2%	82	22.6%	
High School	34	37.8%	123	33.9%	
Bachelors Degree	8	8.9%	17	4.7%	
Diploma	7	7.8%	25	6.9%	
Masters	7	7.8%	15	4.1%	X^2 = 10.062
Post Masters					
Family Income (yearly)	2	2.2%	18	5%	
Below INR 10,000	23	25.5%	72	19.8%	
Between INR 10,000 - 39,000	15	16.6%	86	23.8%	
Between INR 40,000 – 79,000	45	50%	168	46.3%	
Above INR 80,000					X^2 = 15.316

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .005

Table 2: Wife Beating is Justified

Items	Dating Sample			Non Dating Sample		
	n	Yes	No	n	Yes	No
There is no excuse for a man beating his wife.	89	76%	17%	358	73%	19%
A woman who constantly refuses to have sex with her husband is asking to be beaten.	90	13%	74%	353	13%	65%
Wives could avoid being battered by their husbands if they knew when to stop talking.	89	56%	27%	359	62%	23%
Episodes of man beating his wife are the wife's fault	90	15%	71%	362	12%	68%
Even when women lie to their husbands they do not deserve to get a beating.	90	73%	21%	359	40%	19%
Sometimes it is ok for a man to beat his wife.	90	19%	72%	357	18%	71%
A sexually unfaithful wife deserves to be beaten.	90	28%	57%	358	32%	48%
Even when a wife's behavior challenges her husband's manhood, he's not justified in beating her.	89	73%	9%	354	70%	13%
A husband has no right to beat his wife even if she breaks agreements she has made with him.	89	73%	21%	356	68%	21%
Occasionally violence by a husband towards his wife can help maintain the marriage.	88	22%	66%	357	20%	69%
A wife doesn't deserve a beating even if she keeps reminding her husband of his weak points.	89	75%	14%	358	69%	18%
It would do some wives some good to be beaten by their husbands.	87	24%	58%	349	32%	47%

Table 3: Experience of Violence

Type of Abuse	Self Reported Perpetration		Self Reported Victimization	
	n	Yes	n	Yes
Severe Physical Assault	57	14%	57	18%
Overall Physical Assault	56	30%	56	25%
Severe Psychological Aggression	60	40%	59	29%
Overall Psychological Aggression	59	70%	58	57%
Severe Sexual Coercion	60	7%	59	10%
Overall Sexual Coercion	58	28%	57	42%
Severe Injury	60	10%	59	15%
Overall Injury	59	15%	58	21%

Table 4: Problem Behaviors Associated with Drinking Alcohol

Problem Behaviors	Dating Sample		Non Dating Sample	
	n	Yes	n	Yes
Not able to do your homework or study for a test?	33	33%	71	44%
Got into fights, acted bad, or did mean things?	30	33%	64	30%
Missed out on other things because you spent too much money on alcohol?	31	23%	60	12%
Went to work or school high or drunk?	30	23%	59	15%
Caused shame or embarrassment to someone?	31	26%	59	19%
Neglected your responsibilities?	30	33%	61	28%
Relative avoided you?	30	30%	57	25%
Felt that you needed more alcohol than you used to use in order to get the same effect?	30	30%	59	17%
Tried to control your drinking by trying to drink only at certain times of the day or certain places?	29	28%	58	28%
Had withdrawal symptoms, that is, felt sick because you stopped or cut down on drinking?	29	17%	56	13%
Noticed a change in your personality?	29	38%	54	28%
Felt you had a problem with alcohol?	30	20%	55	22%
Missed a day (or part of a day) of school or work?	30	43%	56	25%
Tried to cut down or quit drinking?	30	30%	55	15%
Suddenly found yourself in a place that you could not remember getting to?	30	23%	56	29%
Passed out or fainted suddenly?	30	17%	55	22%
Had a fight, argument or bad feelings with a friend?	30	43%	55	26%
Kept drinking when you promised yourself not to?	30	23%	54	24%
Felt you were going crazy?	30	40%	53	19%

Problem Behaviors	Dating Sample		Non Dating Sample	
	n	Yes	n	Yes
Had a bad time?	29	31%	55	24%
Felt physically or psychologically dependent on alcohol?	30	13%	54	15%
Was told by a friend or neighbor to stop or cut down drinking?	30	30%	56	25%
Drove shortly after having more than 2 drinks?	29	17%	54	22%
Drove shortly after having more than 4 drinks?	29	10%	46	17%

Table 5: Mean Frequencies and T-Test Comparison between Dating Sample (n = 99) and Non Dating Sample (n = 390).

Variable	Dating M (SD)	Non Dating M (SD)	<u>df</u>	<u>t</u>
Wife Beating is Justified	2.66 (.97)	2.98 (.88)	1, 402	- 2.92***
Problems with Alcohol	1.52 (.74)	1.30 (.55)	1, 62	1.39
Age at the time of Survey	19 (1.04)	19 (.99)	1, 451	.506

* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .005

Table 6: Intercorrelations between Demographic Variables, Experience and Witnessing Childhood Violence, Anger Management Skills, Attitude that Wife Beating is Justified, Problem Behaviors associated with Alcohol Use and Physical Abuse Perpetration and Victimization.

Variables	Physical Abuse Perpetration		Physical Abuse Victimization	
	n	r	n	r
Father's Education	49	-.22	50	-.25
Mother's Education	49	-.06	50	-.14
Family Income	49	-.17	50	-.18
Witness of Abuse in the Family of Origin	49	.32**	50	.37***
Experience of Abuse in the Family of Origin	48	.28*	49	.26*
Anger Management Skills	55	-.27**	54	-.21
Attitude that Wife Beating is Justified	36	-.33*	36	-.31*
Problem Behaviors Associated with Alcohol Use	17	.59**	18	.39*
Victimization	55	.96***		1
Perpetration		1	55	.96***

*p < .10, **p < .05, ***p < .01

Table 7: Culture Based Perception about Interpersonal Violence among Dating and Non Dating Samples

Culture Based Perceptions	Dating Sample		Non Dating Sample		Chi Square
	n	Yes	n	Yes	X²
Is it abusive for a husband to pinch his wife?	90	40%	362	36%	.288
Is it abusive for a husband to push his wife?	89	70%	362	52%	8.606***
Is it abusive for a husband to slap his wife?	90	76%	363	73%	.027
Is it abusive for a husband to beat his wife?	90	79%	361	80%	.376
Do you know anyone your age that is in a violent relationship?	90	36%	362	19%	10.540***

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .005

Table 8: Perceptions about the prevalence of dating relationships and intimate partner violence in India.

Questions	It Never Happens	It Rarely Happens	It Happens	It is Fairly Common	It Happens All The Time
Is it common for a college woman to go on a date in India?	5%	13%	33%	40%	9%
Is it common to date in India?	3%	11%	26%	44%	16%
Is it common for a husband to assault his wife in India?	2%	12%	48%	28%	10%
Is it common for a boyfriend to assault his girlfriend in India?	4%	33%	45%	14%	5%

CHAPTERV

Discussion

This study was a preliminary inquiry into the phenomenon of dating violence in the Indian society. There is extensive literature in the Indian context exploring Domestic Violence, its nature and scope. On the other hand, there is very little research about intimate partner violence among the slowly but surely emerging population of dating couples.

This study looked at the phenomenon of dating violence through the lens of both the Feminist Theory and the Ecological model. From a feminist perspective, in this study it was expected that the participants would be accepting of violence against women in intimate relationships because of years of patriarchal social conditioning around the ideals of being a giving and adjusting woman. The results of this study however, were more mixed and surprising. Even though only 11% of all participants reported that wife beating was a woman's fault, 62% of the participants felt that it could be avoided if a woman knew when to stop talking. Further, while 92% of the participants felt that women should be protected by law, 33% felt that a sexually unfaithful woman deserved to be beaten (Som & Stith, 2005). This finding is consistent with another study done in Chennai, India, which found that suspected infidelity by the husband was justifiable of violence in a marriage (Go et al., 2003). It was also very interesting to note that the non dating sample was more tolerant of wife beating than the dating sample. One reason for this could be that the dating sample, having been in dating relationships themselves, knew firsthand some of the issues confronting dating couples and had an opportunity to

establish their opinions based on personal experiences rather than being society or culture driven.

Another interesting finding of this study which is inconsistent with previous literature on domestic violence in India is that both perpetration and victimization of different types of abuse were high among the dating sample. Previous research on domestic violence in India discusses the unidirectional nature of violence in Indian marriages as the norm with occasional exceptions where a woman is violent in an act of self defense (Ahmed- Ghosh, 2004; Go et al., 2003; Mahrotra, 1999; Nayak, Byrne, Martin & Abraham, 2003; Rao, 1997). The current study was more in agreement with the more recent study conducted by Straus and colleagues among Indian college students in dating relationships. This study found a high level of female perpetration of violence among its participants (2004). The reason for this discrepancy could be that, the recent studies are being conducted in a more modern and global Indian society where women are open to disclosing their dating relationships and experiences of violence perpetration and victimization when compared to previous generations. Therefore the researcher's hypothesis that the rate of victimization among the participants would be higher than the rate of perpetration was rejected.

(Hypothesis 1: *Rate of victimization among participants will be higher than the rate of perpetration of abuse*.)

This study also examined the issue of dating violence through the lens of the Ecological model, reflecting on the changing socioeconomic norms in the country as a result of technological advancement. At the *macroystemic* level it was predicted that the more tolerant participants were towards domestic violence the more vulnerable they

would be to receiving abuse. Here tolerance was assumed to be a function of socioeconomic and cultural conditioning. In this study there was a significant positive relationship found between the degree of acceptance of violence and participants' experience receiving physical abuse. Hence the hypotheses proposed- *Hypothesis 4: The greater the tolerance towards wife beating among the participants the higher will be the chances of their victimization,* was supported by this study.

At the *exosystemic* level various demographic factors such as participant age, religion, family income and parents' level of education were examined. While there were no significant differences in age and family income between the dating and non dating samples, there were differences found between their religions and fathers' level of education. Surprisingly, one of the more conservative communities, Muslims, had a relatively greater representation among the dating population (16.7%) than among the non dating sample (7.4%). However, because of the small sample size of daters representing the Muslims in the study (only 15 participants), no conclusions can be drawn about this finding. It was also interesting to see that the fathers of the dating sample had higher degrees of education when compared to those of the non dating sample. This could partially explain why this sample was more open to dating relationships and less tolerant to the phenomenon of intimate partner violence. However, overall demographic factors were not a significant predictor of violence in this study. This could be because of the homogeneous nature of the sample in terms of their demographic characteristics. Hence hypothesis 2: *Family income will be negatively related to dating violence among the participants;* and hypothesis 3: *Parents' level of education will be negatively related to dating violence among the participants,* were both rejected in this study.

At the *microsystemic* level this study examined experiences of witnessing and receiving abuse in one's family of origin and how these experiences relate to one's experience of perpetrating or receiving abuse in dating relationships. This study supports the proposed hypothesis that- *Experiencing or witnessing violence in childhood will be positively related to perpetration and victimization of dating violence among the participants.* Consistent with the literature on the cycle of violence (Downs, Miller, Testa & Panek, 1992) this study found a significant relationship between witnessing abuse in one's family of origin and physical abuse perpetration and victimization in dating relationships. Similarly, a significant relationship was also found between experiencing violence in one's family of origin and physical abuse perpetration and victimization in dating relationships. This is a cause for concern because previous research suggests that childhood experience of witnessing or receiving abuse could be predictors of aggression in later years (Carr & Vandeusen, 2002; McCloskey & Lichter, 2003). This could explain the high rate of perpetration of abuse among the participants in this study.

At the *ontogentic* level this study looked at participants' anger management skills, problem behaviors associated with alcohol use, and experiences of victimization and perpetration in dating violence. All of these risk factors were highly correlated with each other. There was a significant negative relationship found between participant's anger management skills and perpetration of physical abuse, hence supporting the hypothesis: *It is predicted that there will be a significant negative relationship between participants' anger management skills and their experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.* Findings from this study are consistent with the limited literature available on the relationship between anger management and perpetration and victimization of

violence (Dye & Eckhardt, 2000; Parrot & Zeichner, 2003). Individuals with effective anger management skills are better at managing relationship issues and hence are less likely to be perpetrators of abuse. And hence, it would be imperative to have an anger management component included in dating violence education and prevention programs with the hope that better anger management would reduce chances of violence in intimate relationships.

Also consistent with the literature, there was a significant relationship found between problem behaviors associated with alcohol use and one's experience of both victimization and perpetration of dating violence. Therefore supporting the hypothesis: *It is predicted that there will be a significant positive relationship between problems with alcohol and experiences, perpetration and victimization, of dating violence.* It was interesting to see that even though dating and alcohol use is lower in India than in the United States, the problem behaviors associated with dating and alcohol use were similar in nature to those found in another study conducted by Stith and colleagues at Virginia Tech, U.S.A. (2003). For example, 42% of the Indian sample and 40% of the Virginia Tech sample reported that they were not able to do their homework or study for a test because of drinking (Som & Stith, 2005). Therefore, this would be an important factor to consider when identifying groups at risk of experiencing dating violence in the Indian community.

Limitations

There are numerous limitations of this study that need to be addressed. First, the sample was selected from only one college in a Southern city in India and cannot be considered representative of the entire Indian population. Further, the sample was

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homogeneous with regard to their demographic characteristics which are very different from the Indian population which is very diverse demographically and culturally.

Dating relationships being rare in India, the sample size for those in dating relationships was very small in this study. Though this is consistent with previous research on dating violence in India (Straus, 2004; Walden, Vaden-Goad & Sikka, 1999) it is a limitation in terms of its accuracy and relevance for future research, intervention and education.

All the standardized instruments that were used in this study were developed keeping the western society in mind and were not adapted to fit the subtle cultural differences of the Indian population. There is scope for misinterpretation of reports of attitudes and experiences by the participants in this study based on cultural implications of the same. For example, one of the questions in the CTS- "I called my partner fat or ugly" could be considered emotionally abusive in the American culture but could be culturally accepted by most people in India. Therefore it would be important to test the reliability and validity of these measures in India.

Clinical Implications

Since this is a new area of inquiry and there is very limited knowledge about the issue of dating violence, it is very important that clinicians pay close attention to the growing dating population in India. The creation of psychoeducational programs for the youth and the development of prevention and intervention programs are the responsibility of clinicians working in the area of domestic violence.

It is clear that issues associated with dating relationships such as physical abuse, psychological aggression, sexual coercion, anger and alcohol abuse are prevalent within

the dating population. Therefore, a thorough assessment of risks factors associated with violence in dating relationships should be made an integral part of the clinical intake process.

This study found a significant relationship between the experience of witnessing or receiving abuse in childhood and one's vulnerability to being abused in later life. The issue of intergenerational transmission of violence should therefore be addressed by clinicians through family therapy, education and community development programs. Furthermore, college students need to be educated about risk factors for dating violence and about safe dating, if they are going to start dating.

This study also found that, among those who use alcohol, problem behaviors associated with drinking were highly prevalent. Because of the cultural stigma associated with substance use there are no steps taken by families, educators and the society at large to prepare the youth to deal with substance related issues. It is the responsibility of the educated and trained adults to develop a safe environment for the youth to talk about such issues. Prevention and intervention measures need to be implemented at both the high school and college levels. Furthermore, educating the youth about the affects of substance abuse on intimate partner violence is also essential at the high school and college level considering the emerging social dating phenomenon in the country.

Future Research and Policy Implications

Future research could benefit from a mixed methods framework when studying the phenomenon of dating violence. While quantitative research could be used to explore the issue further, the qualitative approach could help us better understand the underlying themes and cultural implications of the different variables. Such research can help us

understand the meaning of violence as it is perceived within the Indian context. Unacceptable in the general sense, violence in the context of jealousy, infidelity, possessiveness and love could have several shades that can only be understood through interviewing and conducting descriptive studies. Qualitative methods could also help us explore what steps are being taken at the community and family levels to prepare the youth for dating relationships.

Further, research needs to focus on understand the changes in the attitudes and perceptions about dating and intimate partner violence among the parents' of the Indian youth. There is no available literature assessing for such changes or shifts in the Indian context. Data related to this would be crucial in developing effective community wide prevention and intervention programs and would also aide future policy formulation efforts. Therefore, while exploring the issues around dating violence among the youth, it is equally important to divert attention to an exploration of the familial and societal level changes that are taking place as a result of economic, social and cultural modernization.

It would also be important to conduct longitudinal studies that look at whether the trajectory of violence starting at the dating phase continues into marriage. Such findings could help formulate policies and programs, targeting the youth, keeping healthy marriages and families of the future in mind.

Finally, since this study was done in a commuter college it would be interesting to see the differences in attitudes and experiences of students that attend residential schools. Future research needs to be more versatile geographically and demographically to better understand the phenomenon of dating and intimate partner violence at the national level.

Summary

Overall, this study was a preliminary step in the exploration of the slowly but steadily emerging problem if dating violence in India. Although much is known about domestic violence and wife assault in the Indian context, there is almost no information or effort in the direction of prevention and education in the realm of dating violence. While India is advancing technologically, creating new opportunities for its youth, there is no simultaneous effort being made to protect its youth from risks of urbanization and cultural shifts. The young adults of India today are joining the global economy. However, there is no system put in place to educate and nurture their social and cultural evolution. Findings from this study suggest that as the youth open themselves up to the culture of dating and premarital courtship, there needs to be a parallel effort made to educate and train them about healthy relationships.

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Appendix A

Study of Attitudes about Violence against Women and Prevalence of Dating Violence and Alcohol Abuse among College Women in India

Participation

You may choose not to participate in this study without any penalty whatsoever. Simply turn the unanswered survey into the project coordinator.

Confidentiality

ALL of your responses will be completely anonymous. We will NOT ask you for your name, and the answers to these questions will never be associated with you in any way.

PLEASE do not make any extra marks on the questionnaires or answer sheets, because otherwise we won't be able to computer score them.

PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE OR THE ANSWER SHEETS. **PLEASE USE HB2 PENCIL**

Questionnaire for college student dating relationships

Background Information:

1) What is your year at the university?
    1) First Year
    2) Second Year
    3) Third Year

2) How old are you?

1=18	6=23
2=19	7=24
3=20	8=25-29
4=21	9=30 Older
5=22	

3) What is your religious background?
    1) Christian
    2) Muslim
    3) Sikh
    4) Hindu
    5) Other

4) What is your father's highest level of education?
    1) Less than 12th grade
    2) 12th grade
    3) Bachelor's Degree
    4) Diploma
    5) Masters
    6) Post Masters

5) What is your mother's highest level of education?
    1) Less than 12th grade
    2) 12th grade
    3) Bachelor's Degree
    4) Diploma
    5) Masters
    6) Post Masters

6) What is your family's annual income?
    1) Under Rs.10,000 (around US$ 222)
    2) Rs.10.000 to Rs.19,000
    3) Rs.20,000 to Rs.29,000
    4) Rs.30,000 to Rs.39,000
    5) Rs.40,000 to Rs.49,000
    6) Rs.50,000 to Rs.59,000
    7) Rs.60,000 to Rs.69,000
    8) Rs.70,000 to Rs.79,000

Following are a number of statements about violence towards wives which some people agree with and others disagree with. There are no right or wrong answers.

"Beating" is used to mean repeated hitting intended to inflict pain.
Please use the following scale to rate your answers:

1= STRONGLY AGREE

2= AGREE

3= SLIGHTLY AGREE

4= NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE

5= SLIGHTLY DISAGREE

6= DISAGREE

7= STRONGLY DISAGREE

7. Social agencies should do more to help battered women.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. There is no excuse for a man beating his wife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Wives try to get beaten by their husbands in order to get sympathy from others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. A woman who constantly refuses to have sex with her husband is asking to be beaten.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Wives could avoid being battered by their husbands if they knew when to stop talking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Episodes of man beating his wife are the wife's fault	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Even when women lie to their husbands they do not deserve to get a beating.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Women should be protected by law if their husbands beat them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Wife- beating should be given high priority as a social problem by government agencies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Sometimes it is ok for a man to beat his wife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Women feel pain and no pleasure when beat- up by their husbands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. A sexually unfaithful wife deserves to be beaten.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Cases of wife- beating are the fault of the husband.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Battered wives try to get their partners to beat them as a	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

way to get attention from them.

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1= STRONGLY AGREE

2= AGREE

3= SLIGHTLY AGREE

4= NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE

5= SLIGHTLY DISAGREE

6= DISAGREE

7= STRONGLY DISAGREE

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21. Husbands who batter should be responsible for the abuse   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
because they should have foreseen that it would happen.

22. If I heard a woman being attacked by her husband, it   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
would be best that I do nothing.

23. Battered wives are responsible for their abuse because   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
they intended it to happen.

24. If a wife is beaten by her husband, she should divorce   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
him immediately.

25. Husbands who batter are responsible for the abuse   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
because they intended to do it.

26. The best way to deal with wife- beating is to arrest   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
the husband.

27. Even when a wife's behavior challenges her husband's   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
manhood, he's not justified in beating her.

28. How long should a man who has beaten his wife spend in prison or jail?

     1) none   2) 1month   3) 6months   4)1yrs   5) 3yrs   6) 5 yrs

     7) 10yrs   8)Don't know

29. When a wife is beaten it is caused by her behavior in the   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
week before the battering.

30. A wife should move out of the house if her husband beats   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
her.

31. Wives who are battered are responsible for the abuse   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
because they should have foreseen it would happen.

32. A husband has no right to beat his wife even if she breaks   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
agreements she has made with him.

1= STRONGLY AGREE

2= AGREE

3= SLIGHTLY AGREE

4= NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE

5= SLIGHTLY DISAGREE

6= DISAGREE

7= STRONGLY DISAGREE

33. Occasionally violence by a husband towards his wife can help maintain the marriage.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

34. A wife doesn't deserve a beating even if she keeps reminding her husband of his weak points.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

35. Most wives secretly desire to be beaten by their husbands   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

36. If I heard a woman being attacked by her husband, I would call the police.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

37. It would do some wives some good to be beaten by their husbands.   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

The next set of questions will help us understand your thoughts and opinions about abuse in marital relationship.

38) Do you think it is abusive for a husband to pinch his wife?
    a. Yes
    b. No

39) Do you think it is abusive for a husband to push his wife?
    a. Yes
    b. No

40) Do you think it is abusive for a husband to slap his wife?
    a. Yes
    b. No

41) Do you think it is abusive for a husband to beat his wife?
    a. Yes
    b. No

The following questions relate to Intimate Partner Violence in India

42) How common is it for a college woman to go on dates alone in India?

     a. It never happens 2) It rarely happens 3) It happens   4) It is fairly common   5) It happens all the time

43) How common is dating in India?
     a. It never happens 2) It rarely happens 3) It happens   4) It is fairly common   5) It happens all the time

44) How common is it for a husband to assault a wife in India?
     a. It never happens 2) It rarely happens 3) It happens   4) It is fairly common   5) It happens all the time

45) How common is it for a boyfriend to assault a girlfriend in India?
     1) It never happens 2) It rarely happens 3) It happens   4) It is fairly common   5) It happens all the time

46) Do you know anyone your age who is in a violent (hitting, pushing, slapping, pinching) relationship?
     b. Yes
     c. No

47) How many friends do you have in your age group that get hit by their partner/ boyfriend?
     a. None
     b. One
     c. Two
     d. Three
     e. Four
     f. Five
     g. Six or more

48) While you were growing up, was there ever any physical violence between your parents (or whoever raised you?)
     a. No
     b. Yes: Father to mother violence
     c. Yes: Mother to father violence
     d. Yes: mutual violence between father and mother
     e. Yes: other

49) How were you disciplined as a child (please mark in the most severe along this continuum. For example, if both 1 and 2 apply to you, bubble in 2)?
     a. Verbal, mild (i.e. grounding, time-out, withholding privileges, etc.)
     b. Physical, mild (i.e. spanking)
     c. Verbal, severe (i.e. insulting, swearing, humiliating, etc.)
     d. Physical, severe (i.e. hitting, punching, slapping, beating, etc.)
     e. Other

The following statements are about you or the relationship between you and other people. Please read each statement and decide how much you agree with it.

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree
50. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.	1	2	3	4
51. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.				
	1	2	3	4
52. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.	1	2	3	4
53. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	1	2	3	4
54. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	1	2	3	4
55. There have been times when I have felt like rebelling against people of authority even though I knew they were right.	1	2	3	4
56. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.	1	2	3	4
57. No matter who I am talking to I am always a good listener.	1	2	3	4
58. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I have thought too little of my ability.	1	2	3	4
59. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.	1	2	3	4
60. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.	1	2	3	4
61. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.	1	2	3	4
62. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.	1	2	3	4

Following questions relate to your use of substances.

63. How frequently do you drink alcohol?

      1) never   2) rarely   3) sometimes   4) often

64. How frequently do you smoke cigarettes?

      1) never   2) rarely   3) sometimes   4) often

Different things happen to people when they are *drinking alcohol* **or as a** *result* **of their** *alcohol* **use. Some of the things are listed below. If you do not drink alcohol please skip to question # 88.**

Please indicate *how many times* **each has happened to you** *during the past six months* **while you were drinking alcohol or as the result of your alcohol use.**

How many times did the following things happen to you while you were drinking alcohol or because of your alcohol use during the past six months?

> 1=NEVER
> 2=ONE TO TWO TIMES
> 3=THREE TO FIVE TIMES
> 4=SIX TO TEN TIMES
> 5=MORE THAN TEN TIMES

65. Not able to do your homework or study for a test?	1	2	3	4	5
66. Got into fights, acted bad, or did mean things?	1	2	3	4	5
67. Missed out on other things because you spent too much money on alcohol?	1	2	3	4	5
68. Went to work or school high or drunk?	1	2	3	4	5
69. Caused shame or embarrassment to someone?	1	2	3	4	5
70. Neglected your responsibilities?	1	2	3	4	5
71. Relative avoided you?	1	2	3	4	5
72. Felt that you needed more alcohol than you used to use in order to get the same effect?	1	2	3	4	5
73. Tried to control your drinking by trying to drink only at certain times of the day or certain places?	1	2	3	4	5
74. Had withdrawal symptoms, that is, felt sick because you stopped or cut down on drinking?	1	2	3	4	5
75. Noticed a change in your personality?	1	2	3	4	5
76. Felt you had a problem with alcohol?	1	2	3	4	5
77. Missed a day (or part of a day) of school or work?	1	2	3	4	5
78. Tried to cut down or quit drinking?	1	2	3	4	5
79. Suddenly found yourself in a place that you could not remember getting to?	1	2	3	4	5
80. Passed out or fainted suddenly?	1	2	3	4	5
81. Had a fight, argument or bad feelings with a friend?	1	2	3	4	5
82. Kept drinking when you promised yourself not to?	1	2	3	4	5
83. Felt you were going crazy?	1	2	3	4	5
84. Had a bad time?	1	2	3	4	5
85. Felt physically or psychologically dependent on alcohol?	1	2	3	4	5
86. Was told by a friend or neighbor to stop or cut down drinking?	1	2	3	4	5
87. Drove shortly after having more than 2 drinks?	1	2	3	4	5
88. Drove shortly after having more than 4 drinks?	1	2	3	4	5

89. Indicate which of the following applies to you.
1. I am currently in a relationship with a boyfriend/ partner that has lasted at least one month.
2. I have been in a relationship with a boyfriend that has lasted at least one month, but not now.

3. I have never been in a relationship with a boyfriend that has lasted at least one month
4. I have never been in a relationship with a boyfriend.

The words "partner" and "your partner" refer to the person in the relationship you will describe on the next questions. Answer every question for your current partner or most recent partner (and always answer about the same person).

If you are not or have never been in a dating relationship you do not need to answer any more questions. Thank you very much for participating in this survey.

90. Are you living with your boyfriend/ partner (or were you before the relationship ended)?
    1. Yes
    2. No

91. What is your relationship with your boyfriend/ partner (or what was it while you were together)?
    1. Dating
    2. Engaged
    3. Married

92. How long have you been in this relationship (or how long did the most recent relationship last)?
    1. Less than one month
    2. About 1 month
    3. About 2 months
    4. Three to five months
    5. Six months to eleven months
    6. About one year
    7. More than a year, but less than 2 years
    8. More than 2 years, but less than 4 years
    9. Four years or more

93. How long ago did this relationship end?
It has not ended
    1. It has not ended
    2. Less than one month ago
    3. About 1 month ago
    4. About 2 months ago
    5. Three to five months ago
    6. Six months to eleven months ago
    7. About a year ago
    8. More than a year but less than 2 years ago
    9. More Than 2 years ago

94. Is (was) sexual intercourse a part of your relationship?
    1. Yes
    2. No

Communication Patterns

This questionnaire asks you to describe how you and your partner work out problems and disagreements that arise between the two of you. Please indicate how likely you are of these strategies

How do the two of you handle problems when they first come up?

	Very unlikely								Very likely
95. We discuss the problem together.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
96. We both avoid talking about the problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
97. I try to start a discussion, but my partner tries to avoid discussion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
98. My partner tries to start a discussion, but I try to avoid discussion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The following statements are about you or the relationship between you and your partner. Please read each statement and decide how much you *agree* with it.

If you are currently in a relationship that has lasted *one month or more*, answer about that relationship.
If you have been in a relationship that has lasted *one month or more (but are not now)*, answer about the most recent relationship.

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree
99. When my partner picks a fight with me, I fight back.	1	2	3	4
100. Taking a break from my partner is a good way for me to calm down.	1	2	3	4
101. When my partner is nice to me I wonder what my partner wants.	1	2	3	4
102. My partner is rude to me unless I insist on respect.	1	2	3	4
103. My partner likes to make me mad.	1	2	3	4
104. I recognize when I am beginning to get angry at my partner.	1	2	3	4
105. I can usually tell when I am about to lose my temper at my partner.	1	2	3	4
106. I take time out as a way to control my anger at my partner.	1	2	3	4
107. I often think of something pleasant to keep from thinking about my anger at my partner.	1	2	3	4
108. If I keep thinking about what made me mad, I get angrier.	1	2	3	4
109. When arguing with my partner, I often raise my voice.	1	2	3	4
110. When I feel myself starting to get angry at my partner, I try to stick to talking about the problem.	1	2	3	4

RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIORS

Instrument has been omitted from the appendix because it is copy written. To get a copy of the instrument contact:

Western Psychological Services (WPS)
12031 Wilshire Boulevard,.
Los Angeles, California 90025-1251
Ph: 1-800-648-8857; FAX: 310-478-2061;
E-mail: custsvc@wpspublish.com
http://www.wpspublish.com/Inetpub4/index.htm

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY

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EDUCATION:

Masters of Science in Human Development (2003 – 2006)
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech.), Falls Church, VA.

Post Graduate Diploma in Child Psychology and Family Relations (2001 - 2002)
Osmania University College for Women, Hyderabad, India.

Diploma in Psychological Counseling (2001 - 2002)
St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad, India.

Bachelor of Arts (1998 - 2001)
St. Francis College for Women, Hyderabad, India.

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE:

Clinical Internship - Center for Family Services, Virginia Tech. (*2004- 2006*)
- Family Therapy
- Couples Therapy
- Individual Therapy
- Play Therapy

Counseling Internship - Center for Multicultural Human Services (CMHS), Falls Church, VA. (*2005 - 2006*)
- Family Therapy
- Couples Therapy
- Individual Therapy
- Play Therapy

Baileys Elementary School, Fairfax, VA- LEAD Program *(2005-2006)*
- Individual Therapy
- Group Therapy
- Family Therapy

Therapeutic Groups. (*2003 – 2006*)
- Women's Empowerment Group (CMHS)
- War Trauma (Leaders of Tomorrow)- Children's Group (CMHS)
- Domestic Violence Children's Group (CMHS)
- Gang Prevention Group (Bailey's Elementary School)

School Counselor, School System, Hyderabad, India. (*2001 – 2002*)
- Individual Therapy
- Family Therapy

LANGUAGE SKILLS:
- English
- Bengali
- Hindi
- Urdu
- Telugu

HONORS:

- Student representative to the Board of the Virginia Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. *2005 – present*
- "Global Awareness Award" presented by Virginia Tech for the best poster presentation at the annual graduate research exposition 2006.
- Research Assistantship at Virginia Tech, Virginia, USA - January 2004 through May 2006
- Graduate Assistantship at Virginia Tech, Virginia, USA - August 2003 through December 2003
- Treasurer of Northern Virginia Chapter of the Graduate Student Assembly at Virginia Tech *2003- 2005*
- Graduate Internship at Lynchburg College, Virginia, USA- January 2003 through May 2003
- Merit Scholarship in High School- 1996-1998
- Bronze Award- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award for Young Achievers 1996

PUBLICATIONS:

Stith, S.M., Liu, T. L., Davies, C., Boykin, E.L., Alder, M.C., Harris, J.M., Som, A., McPherson, M, & Dees, J. (In press). Risk factors in child maltreatment: A meta-analytic review of the literature, *Journal of Aggression and Maltreatment.*

Stith, S.M., Pruitt, I. Dees, J. Fronce, M., Green, N., Som, A., & Linkh, D. (In Press). Implementing community-based prevention programming: A review of the literature. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*.

Technical Report:
Spouse and Child Abuse Meta Analysis, Virginia Tech (online publication): A compiled literature review of Child Abuse and Spouse Abuse is presented in the form of a manual for researchers and clinicians and can be accessed online in the following web page: **http://www.nvc.vt.edu/mft/fap_downloads.html**

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS:

Som, A., & Stith, S. M. (March 2006). "Dating violence among college aged women in India". **Poster Presented** at Virginia Tech Graduate Research Exposition, Falls Church, VA.

Stith, S., Davies, L.C., Boykin, E., McPherson, M., Alder, M., Harris, J. M., Som, A., & Dees, J. (Nov, 2004). Child physical maltreatment risk factors: A meta-analytic review. **Poster Presented** at Virginia Tech Graduate Research Exposition, Falls Church, VA.

Som, A., & Stith, S. M. (November 2005). "Dating violence among college aged women in India". **Poster Presented** at the National Council on Family Relation, Phoenix, AZ

Som, A., & Stith, S. M. (July 2005). "Dating violence and alcohol abuse among college aged women in India**". Paper Presentation** at the 9th International Family Violence Research Conference, Portsmouth, NH.

Stith, S.M., Pruitt, I. Dees, J. Fronce, M., Green, N., Som, A., & Linkh, D. (December 2005). Community-Based Prevention Programming. U.S. Air Force Community Prevention Division Meeting, San Antonio, TX.

Stith, S., Davies, L.C., Boykin, E., McPherson, M., Alder, M., Harris, J. M., Som, A., & Dees, J. (Nov, 2004). Child physical maltreatment risk factors: A meta-analytic review. **Poster Presented** at the National Council on Family Relation, Orlando, FL.

RESEARCH PROJECTS:

Masters Thesis: "Dating Violence Attitudes, Experiences and Perceptions of Women in College: An Indian Context": My current research constitutes the study of attitudes and experiences of dating violence among college aged women in India. The results of this study can be used by future researchers, policy makers and sociologists to design interventions, formulate policies and develop community outreach programs related to women's rights and empowerment.

Grants Research, Asian Women's Self Help Association (ASHA), Washington DC: Developed a database of funding opportunities available in the Washington DC area that ASHA could explore to generate funds for their future projects.

Healthy Families Project, Center for Multicultural and Human Services (CMHS), Falls Church, Virginia: Literature review of research in the area of marital and family systems across different world cultures. The information collected was used in organizing *Healthy Families Conference* for the different refugee communities in the Northern Virginia Area by CMHS.

Online Blogs:
Dating Violence: www.datingsafeandbetter.blogspot.com
Online Resources Review: www.newsnknowing.blogspot.com

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

- Student Representative to the board of Virginia Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. *2004 – present*
- Student member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. *2003 – present*
- Student Affiliate American Psychological Association. 2006
- Member of American Psychological Association of Graduate Students. 2006
- Member of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. *2005 - present*
- Member of the Network of South Asian Professionals. *2004 – present*
- Member of South Asian Psychological Networking Association. *2006 – present*
- Member of Indus Women Leaders *2006- present*

REFERENCES:

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