

Formal help seeking among men who experienced intimate partner violence

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Context

This research explores the prevalence and heterogeneity of male IPV in Canada, revealing four major types of IPV victimization among men that range from milder forms of physical violence (57.3%) to extremely severe physical IPV combined with psychological abuse (9.7%). The number of men who reported experiencing physical and sexual IPV in their current relationships between 2010 and 2014 exceeded the number of women who reported IPV, but men who experienced IPV were less likely than female victims to seek help and report incidents of IPV victimization to the authorities.

Key finding(s) from the research

Men facing intimate partner violence (IPV) are less likely to seek formal or informal help. However, severity of IPV was a key predictor for seeking professional services. Further, being unemployed and residing with young children were identified as structural barriers for seeking formal help. Being in a longer relationship and possessing a university degree were associated with more formal help seeking.

Population(s) studied: Men above the ages of 15 years who reported to have experience with intimate partner violence, randomly selected from the 10 provinces in Canada

Research dataset(s) used: 2009 and 2014 cycles of the Canadian General Social Survey on Victimization

Policy implications for this research

These findings highlight prominence and variability of male experience of IPV in Canada and demonstrate the need to develop gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive public policy and intervention programs that help all victims of IPV regardless of victim gender. Developing effective programs and policies to address IPV requires comprehensive knowledge about the experiences of IPV and strategies to obtain help among both women and men. Examining men's experiences with formal help seeking is especially crucial in the light of the studies that find many men are also victims of IPV. Further, these formal IPV support services should recognize and address potential structural barriers to access, such as unemployment.

Policy area(s) this research can inform: Crime and justice; Families, households and marital status; Health; Society and community

Read the full article

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