

**Abstracts of Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles of Interest for  
“Guidance for Gender Based Violence (GBV) Monitoring and  
Mitigation within Non-GBV Focused Sectoral Programming”**

The following articles illustrate the breadth of information available on GBV and its impacts and relationships with development outcomes.

- **Aizer A. The gender wage gap and domestic violence. *The American Economic Review*. 2010;1847–1859.**

Three quarters of all violence against women is perpetrated by domestic partners. This study exploits exogenous changes in the demand for labor in female-dominated industries to estimate the impact of the male-female wage gap on domestic violence. Decreases in the wage gap reduce violence against women, consistent with a household bargaining model. These findings shed new light on the health production process as well as observed income gradients in health and suggest that in addition to addressing concerns of equity and efficiency, pay parity can also improve the health of American women via reductions in violence.<sup>i</sup>

- **Bajracharya A, Amin S. Microcredit and Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: An Exploration of Selection Bias Influences. *Demography*. 2013;50(5):1819-1843.**

This article explores the relationship between women's participation in microcredit groups and domestic violence in Bangladesh. Several recent studies have raised concern about microcredit programs by reporting higher levels of violence among women who are members. These results, however, may be attributable to selection bias because members might differ from nonmembers in ways that make them more susceptible to violence to begin with. Using a sample of currently married women from the 2007 Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey (BDHS) (N = 4,195), the authors use propensity score matching (PSM) as a way of exploring selection bias in this relationship. Results suggest that the previously seen strong positive association between membership and violence does not hold when an appropriate comparison group, generated using PSM, is used in the analyses. Additional analyses also suggest that levels of violence do not differ significantly between members and nonmembers and instead could depend on context-specific factors related to poverty. Members for whom a match is not found report considerably higher levels of violence relative to nonmembers in the unmatched group. The background characteristics of members and nonmembers who do not match suggest that they are more likely to be younger and from relatively well-to-do households.<sup>ii</sup>

- **Bobonis GJ, González-Brenes M, Castro R. Public Transfers and Domestic Violence: The Roles of Private Information and Spousal Control. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. 2013;5(1):179-205.**

The research examines whether transfer programs in which funds are targeted to women decrease the incidence of spousal abuse. It examines the impact of the Mexican Oportunidades program on spousal abuse rates and threats of violence using data from a specialized survey. Beneficiary women are 40 percent less likely to be victims of physical abuse, but are more likely to receive violent threats with no associated abuse. This evidence is consistent with a model of decision-makers' interactions with asymmetric information in the male partner's gains to marriage, who can then use threats of violence to extract rents from their female partners.<sup>iii</sup>

- **Chin Y-M. Male backlash, bargaining, or exposure reduction?: women's working status and physical spousal violence in India. *Journal of Population Economics*. 2012;25(1):175-200.**

Labor force participation of women is expected to decrease the risk of spousal violence by enhancing their bargaining power or diminishing their contacts with abusive partners. The opposite effect is predicted when female employment induces male backlash. The author identifies the effect of female employment on spousal violence by exploiting the exogenous variations in rural women's working status driven by rainfall shocks and the rice–wheat dichotomy. The instrumental variable regression result indicates that female employment significantly reduces the incidence of spousal violence. This result is mainly driven by the exposure reduction effect that dominates male backlash. There is, however, no evidence on the bargaining effect.<sup>iv</sup>

- **Haushofer J, Shapiro J. Welfare effects of unconditional cash transfers: evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Kenya. 2013.**

The research examines the welfare effects of an unconditional cash transfer program in Kenya using a randomized controlled trial. First, it documents large economic effects of transfers; treatment households have 80% more assets, 23% higher expenditure, and 25% higher incomes than control households. Monthly transfers are more likely to be spent on improving food security than lump-sum transfers, while lump-sum transfers are more likely to be spent on durables such as metal roofs. The authors find no increase in expenditure on temptation goods. Second, transfers lead to a 30-50% reduction in reports of physical violence by the man against the woman, and a 50-60% reduction in reports of rape within the marriage. These effects are larger when the transfer is made to the woman, but the authors observe some reduction in domestic violence even when the transfer is made to the man. When comparing \$1,100 to \$300 transfers, the authors observe decreasing returns to transfer size in terms of assets, income, and expenditure, but increasing returns in terms of domestic violence reduction. Third, the authors study in detail the effects of the program on psychological wellbeing. They observe a 0.21 SD increase in psychological wellbeing, driven by decreases in depression, stress, and worries, and increases in happiness, optimism, and life satisfaction. In addition, large transfers lead to a significant decrease in levels of the stress hormone cortisol. The authors discuss the relationship between indicators of psychological wellbeing to more traditional welfare measures, and of cortisol to other measures of psychological wellbeing.<sup>v</sup>

- **Hidrobo M, Fernald L. Cash transfers and domestic violence. *Journal of Health Economics*. 2013;32(1):304-319.**

Violence against women is a major health and human rights problem yet there is little rigorous evidence as to how to reduce it. The authors take advantage of the randomized roll-out of Ecuador's cash transfer program to mothers to investigate how an exogenous increase in a woman's income affects domestic violence. They find that the effect of a cash transfer depends on a woman's education and on her education relative to her partner's. The results show that for women with greater than primary school education a cash transfer significantly decreases psychological violence from her partner. For women with primary school education or less, however, the effect of a cash transfer depends on her education relative to her partner's. Specifically, the cash transfer significantly increases emotional violence in households where the woman's education is equal to or more than her partner's.<sup>vi</sup>

- **Hidrobo M, Peterman A, Heise L. The effect of cash, vouchers and food transfers on intimate partner violence: Evidence from a randomized experiment in Northern Ecuador.**

Despite the pervasive and far reaching consequences of intimate partner violence (IPV), there is little conclusive evidence on policy instruments to reduce or prevent violence. Using a randomized experiment in Northern Ecuador, this study provides evidence on whether cash, vouchers and food transfers targeted to women in poor urban areas and intended to reduce poverty and food insecurity also affected IPV. Results indicate that overall transfers reduce controlling behaviors and multiple forms of IPV including moderate physical and any physical or sexual violence by 6-7 percentage points. Impacts do not vary by transfer modality, which combined with the overall negative impacts on IPV, suggests that violence is not being used to forcefully extract resources. Instead, initial conditions and power dynamics between partners is important in determining the magnitude and significance of reductions in IPV.<sup>vii</sup>

- **Pronyk PM, Hargreaves JR, Kim JC, et al. Effect of a structural intervention for the prevention of intimate partner violence and HIV in rural South Africa: results of a cluster randomized trial. *The Lancet*. 2006;368:1973-1983.**

The study provides evidence that a combined microfinance and training intervention has the potential to generate social and economic benefits, and lead to reductions in levels of IPV among programme participants. There was very limited evidence of wider indirect effects on HIV risk among young people in the short term. Social and economic development interventions have the potential to alter risk environments for HIV and IPV in southern Africa and should be evaluated further.<sup>viii</sup>

- **Sabia JJ, Dills AK, DeSimone J. Sexual Violence against Women and Labor Market Outcomes. *American Economic Review*. 2013;103(3):274-278.**

The authors contribute to the literature by examining a nationally representative sample of women and paying careful attention to the role of unmeasured heterogeneity at the community, school, family, and individual levels in the relationship between sexual violence and labor market outcomes. In addition, the study is the first to explore whether the effects of sexual violence vary by the identity of the perpetrator and the circumstances surrounding the attack. Finally, the authors explore the extent to which the psychological and physical health consequences of sexual violence mediate the relationship between violence and earnings.<sup>ix</sup>

- **Schuler SR, Lenzi R, Yount KM. Justification of intimate partner violence in rural Bangladesh: what survey questions fail to capture. *Studies in family planning*. 2011;42(1):21-28.**

This article presents qualitative findings from a project designed to develop better methodological tools for clarifying women's and men's attitudes about intimate partner violence (IPV) in rural Bangladesh and their perceptions of norms about IPV in their communities. Cognitive interviews and focus-group discussions were used to explore respondents' subjective understanding of standard survey questions meant to elicit attitudes about IPV. The authors find that the proportion of participants who justified IPV under some circumstances increased when additional context was provided, suggesting that the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) questions may underrepresent the proportions of people who

condone IPV. Moreover, most people in this social context also believed that IPV often goes beyond socially sanctioned limits and that something should be done to stop it—an important caveat that the DHS questions are not designed to capture. These findings suggest that incorporation of additional context into questions on IPV attitudes would make responses to these questions more meaningful.<sup>x</sup>

- **Solotaroff , Jennifer L., and Rohini Prabha Pande. 2014. *Violence against Women and Girls: Lessons from South Asia*. South Asia Development Forum. Washington, DC: World Bank.**

This book examines the prevalence of, and factors associated with, violence against women and girls in South Asia, and highlights gaps where intensive research or interventions might be undertaken. The book examines prevalence, patterns, risk factors, and types of interventions by form of violence across the life stages of women and girls. Analyses cover excess female child mortality, abuse against girl children, child marriage, intimate partner and domestic violence, sexual harassment against girls and women of all ages, trafficking of girls and women, custodial violence, and honor killings. Countries include Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The research team identified and lists, by sector, over 700 organizations across the South Asia region working in multiple sectors to prevent, and/or provide services for survivors of any of the types of violence considered. Of these, 101 evaluated interventions are analyzed in-depth in the book. Based on promising lessons from evaluated interventions, this book offers recommendations for NGOs, governments, researchers, donors, media and the private sector to engage in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls.<sup>xi</sup>

- **Yount KM, Halim N, Head S, Schuler SR. Indeterminate Responses to Attitudinal Questions About Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Rural Bangladesh. *Population Research and Policy Review*. 2012;31(6):797-830.**

Using data from 165 participants in a survey experiment in six Bangladeshi villages, the authors explored the levels and correlates of women's indeterminate responses to a five-part attitudinal question on intimate partner violence (IPV) against women from the 2007 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey. Over 80 % had indeterminate responses to all five parts of the question. Indeterminate responses included silence or initial non-response (53–58 %), misunderstanding the question (30–37 %), and conditional opinions (7–13 %). The percentages of women who justified IPV were lower when indeterminate responses were permitted (7–12 %) than when they were not (37–57 %). Older women (≥26 years) with less schooling (≤2 grades) whose husbands were older (≥36 years), had less schooling (≤8 grades), and were at least 7 years older than the respondent often had higher odds of giving indeterminate responses. Husbands' attributes and spousal age gaps were most consistently associated with women's indeterminate responses. Latent power, or fears of expressing transgressive views, may underlie women's indeterminate responses to attitudinal questions about IPV against women. Recommendations for further research are discussed.<sup>xii</sup>

- **Yount KM, Halim N, Schuler SR, Head S. A Survey Experiment of Women's Attitudes About Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Rural Bangladesh. *Demography*. 2013;50(1):333-357.**

According to the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in poorer countries, 50 % of women of reproductive age report that wife hitting or beating is justified. Such high rates may result from

structural pressures to adopt such views or to report the perceived socially desirable response. In a survey experiment of 496 ever-married women aged 18–49 years in rural Bangladesh, the authors compared responses to attitudinal questions that (1) replicated the 2007 Bangladesh DHS wording and portrayed the wife as transgressive for unstated reasons with elaborations depicting her as (2) unintentionally and (3) willfully transgressive. The probabilities of justifying wife hitting or beating were consistently low for unintended transgressions (.01–.08). Willful transgressions yielded higher probabilities (.40–.70), which resembled those based on the DHS wording (.38–.57). Cognitive interviews illustrated that village women held diverse views, which were attributed to social change. Also, ambiguity in the DHS questions may have led some women to interpret them according to perceived gender norms and to give the socially desirable response of justified. Results inform modifications to these DHS questions and identify women for ideational-change interventions.<sup>xiii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Aizer A. The gender wage gap and domestic violence. *The American Economic Review*. 2010;1847–1859.

<sup>ii</sup> Bajracharya A, Amin S. Microcredit and Domestic Violence in Bangladesh: An Exploration of Selection Bias Influences. *Demography*. 2013;50(5):1819–1843.

<sup>iii</sup> Bobonis GJ, González-Brenes M, Castro R. Public Transfers and Domestic Violence: The Roles of Private Information and Spousal Control. *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. 2013;5(1):179–205.

<sup>iv</sup> Chin Y-M. Male backlash, bargaining, or exposure reduction?: women's working status and physical spousal violence in India. *Journal of Population Economics*. 2012;25(1):175–200.

<sup>v</sup> Haushofer J, Shapiro J. Welfare effects of unconditional cash transfers: evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Kenya. 2013.

<sup>vi</sup> Hidrobo M, Fernald L. Cash transfers and domestic violence. *Journal of Health Economics*. 2013;32(1):304–319.

<sup>vii</sup> Hidrobo M, Peterman A, Heise L. The effect of cash, vouchers and food transfers on intimate partner violence: Evidence from a randomized experiment in Northern Ecuador.

<sup>viii</sup> Pronyk PM, Hargreaves JR, Kim JC, et al. Effect of a structural intervention for the prevention of intimate partner violence and HIV in rural South Africa: results of a cluster randomized trial. *The Lancet*. 2006;368:1973–1983.

<sup>ix</sup> Sabia JJ, Dills AK, DeSimone J. Sexual Violence against Women and Labor Market Outcomes. *American Economic Review*. 2013;103(3):274–278.

<sup>x</sup> Schuler SR, Lenzi R, Yount KM. Justification of intimate partner violence in rural Bangladesh: what survey questions fail to capture. *Studies in family planning*. 2011;42(1):21–28.

<sup>xi</sup> Solotaroff J, Jennifer L., and Rohini Prabha Pande. 2014. *Violence against Women and Girls: Lessons from South Asia*. South Asia Development Forum. Washington, DC: World Bank.

<sup>xii</sup> Yount KM, Halim N, Head S, Schuler SR. Indeterminate Responses to Attitudinal Questions About Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in Rural Bangladesh. *Population Research and Policy Review*. 2012;31(6):797–830.

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