

**Sexual Abuse and Forced Sex Among a Sample
of Women Experiencing Intimate Partner
Violence: Identifying the Need for Sexual Health
Interventions and Sexual Safety Planning**

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Study Purpose

To learn more about the prevalence of, and factors associated with, **forced sex** and **sexual abuse** by an intimate partner in a sample of women who have reported intimate partner violence in order to inform needs assessment and services provided.

Research Questions

What is the prevalence of **sexual abuse** and **forced sex** among a sample of women experiencing IPV?

What factors are related to **sexual abuse** and **forced sex** among a sample of women experiencing IPV?

Background Definitions

- **Intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV)**
 - Sexual component of intimate partner violence
- **Forced sex**
 - Unwanted sex obtained through physical force
 - Includes a range of sex acts
- **Intimate partner sexual abuse (IPSA)**
 - Sexual coercion
 - Sexual control, e.g. refusal to wear condoms

Background Literature

IPSV Prevalence

- Nearly 1 in 10 women in the U.S. has been raped by an intimate partner (CDC, 2011)
- In previous studies, 7.7% (Tjaden and Thoennes, 2000) to 13% (Basile, 2002) U.S. women reported forced sex by an intimate partner in national random samples
- Past year sexual coercion rates in community samples ranged from to 14% (Meyer, Vivian, O'Leary, 1998) to 50% (Marshall & Holtzworth-Munroe, 2005)
- IPSV has been correlated with negative physical, mental, emotional, and sexual outcomes

Data: From the OK-LA Study

Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)

Collaboration b/t police and social service providers created by the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence

Two Steps:

1. 11-item Lethality Assessment (LA) to assess homicide risk (derived from the 20-item Danger Assessment)
2. Immediate coordination with local social service providers for victims at high risk

Data: The OK-LA Study

- Comparison group at T1 – structured phone interview
 - Avg < 1 day after police-involved DV incident
 - 7 Oklahoma police jurisdictions
 - 1,137 referrals
 - 38.7% (n=440) women completed interviews
 - 42.7% (n=486) unable to be contacted
 - 27.2% (n=164) refused
 - 4.1% (n=47) not eligible (not IP, under 18)
- 432 women included in dataset** (missing data n=8)
- nearly 90% reported severe or near-lethal violence

Study Sample: Demographics

432 women included in dataset (missing data n = 8)

		N (%) / Mean (SD)
Age	Years	32.59 (9.46)
Race/Ethnicity	White	195 (45.14)
	African American	142 (32.87)
	Native American	57 (13.19)
	Latina	32 (7.41)
	Other	28 (6.48)
Marital Status	Single	251 (58.10)
	Married	102 (23.61)
	Separated/Divorced	79 (18.29)
Education	No HS degree	89 (20.60)
	HS degree or higher	343 (79.40)

Dependent Variable

- **No Sexual Violence (=0)**
- **Sexual Abuse (=1)**
 - Has your partner made you have sex without a condom? (CTS-2)
 - Has your partner insisted on sex when you did not want to (but did not use force)? (CTS-2)
- **Forced sex (=2)**
 - Has your partner used force (like hitting you, holding you down or using a weapon) to make you have sex? (CTS-2)
 - Has your partner ever forced you into sex when you didn't wish to? (Danger Assessment)

Results: Prevalence of IPSV

Some form of IPSV	43.98% (n = 190)
Sexual abuse only	17.36% (n = 75)
Forced sex	26.26% (n = 115)

Of those who experienced forced sex, 91.30% (n = 105) also reported sexual abuse.

Prevalence of IPSV is greater in a sample of women who report IPV than in the general population

Results: Factors Related to IPSV

Variable	N (%)	Sex Abuse (AOR)	Forced Sex (AOR)
Sexual Jealousy	251 (58.10)	1.50	2.37**
Threats to Kill	204 (47.22)	1.07	1.37**
Stalking/Harassment	231 (53.47)	1.21	2.57**
Strangulation	315 (72.92)	2.74**	2.19**
Miscarriage due to IPV	27 (6.25)	1.67	3.36**
Child in Common	204 (47.22)	1.41	2.24**
Shame	315 (72.92)	2.80*	3.07**
PTSD	2.33 (1.52)	1.29*	1.29*
			N = 432

* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Implications for Service Provision

If forced sex and/or sex abuse is reported:

- Urgent need for safety planning and PTSD screening
- Attention to childcare, child safety needs, & child custody concerns
- Understanding the influence of shame on help seeking

DV and SA agency directors identified:

- Concern with their ability to provide integrated and comprehensive services for both IPV & sexual assault
- IPSV survivors may have different needs, e.g. more likely to seek individual than group services
- IPV clients may not report IPSV (Macy et al., 2010)

Discussion: Sexual Safety Planning

Adapted from Rountree and Mulraney's (2010) HIV risk reduction intervention

- Self-perception & self image
- Healthy relationships
- Impact and health consequences of IPSV
- Sexual risk assessment
- Dynamics of violent relationship
 - Power and control
 - Early warning signs of a violent relationship
- Safety planning for immediate danger
- Communication and sexual negotiation skills
- Links to sexual health services and support

Questions for Future Research

Found: Overlap in sexual abuse and forced sex

Do these forms of IPSV occur in tandem, or is there a trajectory from sexual abuse to forced sex?

Found: Forced sex is related to having a child with the abuser

Is forced sex related to unintended pregnancy?

Are childcare, child safety, and child custody factored into services provided?

Questions for Future Research

Found: Sexual abuse and forced sex are related to risk factors for IP homicide.

Are social workers knowledgeable about risk factors and safety planning?

Found: Sexual abuse and forced sex are related to PTSD symptoms and shame.

Should social workers screen for PTSD and IPSV?

Is sexual safety planning an effective intervention for women who have experienced IPSV?