Family and Community Context of Intimate Partner Violence Among Rural Men in My Hao District, Vietnam

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Project Background
- Intimate partner violence (IPV) refers to assaultive and coercive behaviors that adults use against their intimate partners.¹
- Globally, the lifetime prevalence of psychological, physical, and sexual IPV against women ranges from 15% - 71%.²
- The reasons for men’s perpetration of IPV are understudied in lower-income settings, leaving a gap in evidence for appropriate policy and intervention.
- Using qualitative and quantitative methods with rural Vietnamese men and women, previous CCIHP-Emory collaboration focused on understanding attitudes about IPV and women’s recourse in response to it. These data revealed that 37% of men reported perpetration of IPV, and a majority reported having witnessed IPV against their mother and having experienced physical maltreatment.³
- This GHI project extends the partnership between Emory and CCIHP to elucidate the reasons for men’s perpetration of IPV against women in rural Vietnam.
- To inform local policies and programs for men, detailed data are needed to understand the men’s exposures, understandings and how men’s perpetration of IPV is embedded in social, familial, and historical context.

Objective
- To collect new data from men to inform the design of a gender-based violence prevention program that is sensitive to the needs, experiences, and exposures of men. In this project, we conducted mixed methods research to develop a nuanced understanding of how men’s childhood experiences and community norms may influence their perpetration of IPV against wives.

Methodology
- Developed research tools including a semi-structured, in-depth interview guide, questionnaire and participant screening form.
- Purposively sampled Vietnamese men, ages 18-49 and married at least 12 months, in My Hao District, Vietnam. Eligible men were recruited by the My Hao health station employees. Men pertained to the 8 exposure and perpetration categories shown below.
- Trained 2 undergraduate volunteers to conduct individual qualitative interviews with participants. Interviews took place at a private room in the local health station of two communes in My Hao District.
- Interviewers obtained verbal informed consent from participants, and participants received an incentive for participation.

Preliminary Findings
- Men are willing to discuss and describe detailed exposures to both IPV and parent-child in their families and communities.
- Men fall across a spectrum of knowledge and attitudes regarding IPV; some display knowledge of federal laws against violence, while others suggest that violence is inevitable and acceptable.
- Men uphold some traditional roles of gender regarding husbands and wives: Men consider themselves “the pillar of the family” and providers, while women are typically expected to look after the household despite expansion in the labor force.
- Neighbors are often cited as critical in preventing or dispelling acute events of IPV.
- Family members are cited as critical in discussing IPV with perpetrators.
- Almost every man interviewed describes “social evils” such as gambling and/or excessive alcohol consumption as a catalyst for a husband’s IPV perpetration against his wife.
- Men express a sense of helplessness and limited agency in preventing other men’s perpetration of IPV.

Next Steps
- Perform a detailed analysis of data.
- Write final reports of analyses, findings, and discussion of implications.
- Disseminate findings to project partners including Emory University, CCIHP, the My Hao District/Commune leaders, and the My Hao community.
- Based on preliminary and detailed findings, assess feasibility of incorporation into local men-based anti-violence initiatives on behalf of CCIHP.
- Form potential second GHI team to continue the Emory-CCIHP partnership in anti-violence research and programming.

Project Partners
- Host organization in Hanoi, Vietnam: Center for Creative Initiatives in Health and Population (CCIHP)
- Emory Project advisors: Kathryn Yount, PhD and Monique Hennink, PhD of the Hubert Department of Global Health, Rollins School of Public Health
- Study site hosts: My Hao District Health officials
- Funding organizations: Emory Global Health Institute

References:
1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.