



WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women



United Republic of Tanzania

1. Introduction

The Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women, sponsored by the World Health Organization, between 2000 and 2003 collected data from over 24 000 women in Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Namibia, Peru, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand, and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Study assessed women's experiences of violence using a questionnaire developed and validated for cross-cultural use, with a special focus on violence by intimate partners. It also investigated how such violence is associated with ill-health and injury, and the strategies that women use to cope with the violence.

In the United Republic of Tanzania, the collaborating institutions in the Study were Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences and the Women's Research and Documentation Project situated in the grounds of the University of Dar es Salaam. Data collection in the field took place in 2001 and 2002.

2. Methods

In the United Republic of Tanzania, the Study involved individual interviews with 1 820 women aged between 15 and 49 years in Dar es Salaam and 1 450 women in the Mbeya district. Of those interviewed, 80% in Dar es Salaam and 87% in Mbeya were "ever partnered" (defined as ever married, ever having lived with a man or currently having a regular sexual partner). In Dar es Salaam, 25% of respondents had more than primary education, compared to only 9% in Mbeya.

In the Study, the following definitions of partner violence were used. *Physical violence* meant the woman had been: slapped, or had something thrown at her; pushed or shoved; hit with a fist or something else that could hurt; kicked, dragged or beaten up; choked or burnt; threatened with or had a weapon used against her. *Sexual violence* meant the woman had: been physically forced to have sexual intercourse; had sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what her partner might do; been forced to do something sexual she found degrading or humiliating.

3. Main findings

3.1 Prevalence of partner violence

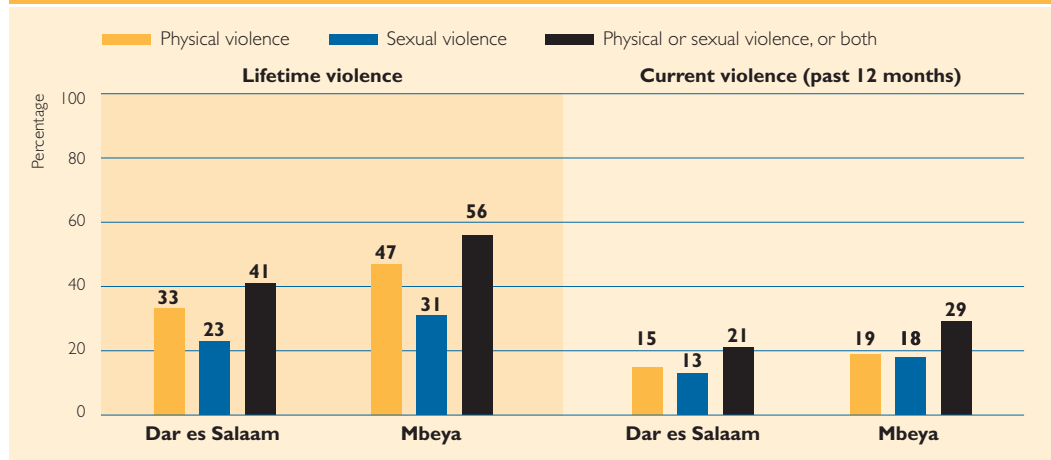
- 41% of ever-partnered women in Dar es Salaam and 56% in Mbeya had ever experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner. In Dar es Salaam, 33% of ever-partnered women had experienced physical violence and 23% sexual violence, compared to 47% and 31% in Mbeya.
- 17% of ever-partnered women in Dar es Salaam and 25% in Mbeya had experienced severe physical violence (being hit with a fist or something else, kicked, dragged, beaten up, choked, burnt on purpose, threatened with a weapon or had a weapon used against them). For between one third and one half of the women this had occurred in the past 12 months.

3.2 Injuries inflicted by a partner

- In both sites, 29% of those experiencing physical violence had suffered injuries, with over a third of these reporting being injured in the past year.
- 15% of injured women in Dar es Salaam and 23% in Mbeya had lost consciousness at least once as a result of their beatings.



Percentage of women who experienced violence by an intimate partner, among ever-partnered women aged 15–49 years, United Republic of Tanzania



3.3 Physical violence by a partner during pregnancy

- In Dar es Salaam, 7% of ever-pregnant women were beaten during at least one pregnancy, of whom 38% reported being punched or kicked in the abdomen. In Mbeya these figures were 12% and 23%, respectively.
- Among the women who had been beaten during a pregnancy, 65% in Dar es Salaam and 57% in Mbeya were beaten by the same person before pregnancy. Among these, 16% in Dar es Salaam and 20% in Mbeya reported that the beating got worse when they were pregnant.

3.4 Non-partner physical and sexual violence since the age of 15 years

- 19% of all respondents in Dar es Salaam and 16% in Mbeya reported that someone other than a partner had been physically violent towards them since the age of 15 years. The main perpetrators were teachers, mentioned by more than half of all women who reported physical abuse.
- One in 10 women had experienced sexual violence by a non-partner since the age of 15 years. The most frequently mentioned perpetrators were boyfriends and strangers.

3.5 Sexual abuse of girls under 15 years of age and forced first sex

- About one out of ten respondents reported sexual abuse before the age of 15 years.
- In both sites, about 15% of women reported that their first experience of sex was forced.
- The younger a woman at first sex, the more likely that this was forced, with about 40% reporting that first sex was forced when the first sexual experience was under 15 years of age.

3.6 Impact on women's health of violence by a partner

- Women who had experienced physical or sexual partner violence were more likely to report current health problems than non-abused women in both settings, particularly in Dar es Salaam. These problems included pain, difficulty in walking and carrying out daily activities, dizziness, and problems with memory.
- Women who had experienced partner violence were twice as likely to have ever thought about ending their life.

3.7 Help-seeking by women experiencing physical violence by a partner

- 29% of women who had experienced physical violence in Dar es Salaam and 30% in Mbeya had told no one about the violence before the Study interview.
- In both sites, about 60% of all women who experienced physical partner violence had never gone for help to any formal service or person in a position of authority.
- 56% of women who did not seek help in Dar es Salaam, and 48% in Mbeya, did not seek help because they thought the violence was “normal” or not serious enough to require help.
- In both sites, the most common reasons for seeking help were not being able to endure more violence (mentioned by 59% of women who sought help) or being badly injured (mentioned by one in four women).

For more information, see

<http://www.who.int/gender/violence/en/>

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