

# Men's Attitude and Practices regarding Gender and Violence against Women in Bangladesh

## Preliminary Findings





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## Preliminary Findings

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# Foreword

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) remains one of the most pervasive yet least recognised human-rights abuses in the world. It is a worldwide problem, crossing cultural, geographic, religious, social and economic boundaries. It exists in the private and public spheres, and occurs in times of peace and conflict.

Globally, as many as one in every three women is beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some way during her lifetime (UN General Assembly 2006). The most common form of violence experienced by women and girls globally is domestic violence, which is most often perpetrated by a male partner against a female partner. The Asia-Pacific region has some of the highest reported levels of VAWG in the world and in Bangladesh previous studies indicate that one in two women have faced some form of violence in their lives (WHO 2005).

Despite decades of work to end violence, and some significant advances in terms of public awareness, laws and policies, there is no indication that aggregate levels of violence have decreased in the region. Thus, VAWG continues unabated and often quietly condoned; impairing families, communities and societies in general.

Most responses to VAWG focus on women's rights and empowerment, legal reform, protection and service provision. Whilst these interventions continue to be key priorities, addressing root causes of VAWG through

primary prevention is vital if we are to create violence-free societies.

This report, Men's Attitudes and Practices Regarding Gender and Violence against Women in Bangladesh, is part of The Change Project: Understanding gender, masculinities and power to prevent gender-based violence. It is the first study of its kind in Bangladesh. Interviewing men has provided new knowledge on prevailing social norms, men's attitudes and behaviours – and how they perpetuate violence. Significantly, this study demonstrates that violence is not inevitable and points us in the direction of how to stop violence before it starts.

We see that creating more gender equitable attitudes reduces the risk of violence perpetration. Education of boys, along with girls has an important role to play. The empowerment of women is vital, as is changing social norms and notions of masculinity associated with power and dominance. Changing ideologies of male sexual entitlement as well as impunity for perpetration is key. We must also focus on protecting children from abuse to end the cycle of violence.

The evidence shows that many men do not use violence – we must reach out to such men so that they can become partners in social justice work. This study offers hope that together we can create a future of peace and equality for all.

# Acknowledgements

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# Executive Summary

Men's violence against women and girls (VAWG) is widespread in Bangladesh. There is a growing understanding that it is critical to study perpetrators for preventing and adequately responding to this violence. The present quantitative study is devoted to this cause. This study is part of The Change Project coordinated by Partners for Prevention and implemented in the Asia-Pacific region. The specific objectives of this study were to explore:

- 1) Men's attitudes related to masculinities with particular reference to gender equality and violence against women;
- 2) Factors associated with gender-inequitable and violence-condoning attitudes;
- 3) Prevalence of different forms of violence against women as reported by men; and
- 4) The relationship between attitudes toward gender and violence against women and perpetration of this violence.

The survey was conducted between January and June 2011 in one urban and one rural area of Bangladesh. A multi-stage random sampling procedure was followed for drawing samples representative of the study sites. A total of 2400 men aged 18 to 49 (1254 in the urban and 1146 in the rural area) were interviewed.

## **Men's attitudes regarding gender and violence against women**

Despite some variations, gender inequitable attitudes were very common among men. Men almost universally supported at least one gender inequitable statement. About 20- 29 percent of men strongly agreed with a number of gender inequitable statements, whereas only about 1-5 percent of men strongly disagreed with a number of gender inequitable statements.

Results show that men who experienced physical violence during childhood have an increased likelihood of being gender inequitable. Results also revealed that men (both urban and rural) with secondary and higher education are more likely to be gender equitable. In addition, in the rural area, men with some secondary education similarly are more likely to be gender equitable. Also, higher socio-economic status was associated with greater gender equitable attitudes.

## **Men's perpetration of violence against female intimate partners**

About 52 percent of urban and 46 percent of rural men reported emotionally abusing their female intimate partners during their lifetime. About 52 percent of men in both the sites reported ever physically assaulting female intimate partners. Most of the perpetrators of emotional and physical violence victimized women many times. About 10 percent of urban and 15 percent of rural men reported ever forcing their intimate partners into sex. Men with gender inequitable attitudes have an increased likelihood of perpetration of physical violence against female intimate partners.

## **Men's perpetration of sexual violence against any women**

About 10 percent of urban and 14 percent of rural men ever perpetrated sexual violence against a woman/women. Non-partner sexual

violence was perpetrated by 4 percent of urban men and 3 percent of rural men. Gang rape was perpetrated by 1 percent of urban and 2 percent of rural men. About three fourths of the perpetrators sexually abused one woman. Notably, 2- 3 percent of men sexually abused more than 10 women. More than 40 percent of men in both the rural and urban sites perpetrated sexual violence for the first time when they were children (i.e., aged less than 19).

The most common motivation for sexual violence was the belief that sex is men's entitlement (77 percent of urban and 81 percent of rural men). About 29-35 percent of men sexually abused women to take out their anger or to punish them, while about 57- 67 percent of men sexually abused women just for fun. The analysis revealed that men with gender inequitable attitudes regarding sex have an increased likelihood of perpetration of sexual violence against women.

About 43- 51 percent of the perpetrators did not have any concerns or reactions. Only about 15-25 percent reported fear of repercussion from different sources. Close to 30 percent of the perpetrators in both sites were worried about being found out. About 37- 39 percent reported feeling guilty.

## **Policy implications and recommendations**

To address the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

- Male education needs to be emphasized side by side education for females.
- Violence against children within and outside the home needs to be addressed.
- Policies and programs aimed at changing men's gender inequitable attitudes need to be developed and implemented.
- The legal framework for addressing domestic violence against women needs to be properly implemented.
- Laws need to be passed and implemented against sexual violence within marriage.
- The variation in motivations for and reactions after the perpetration of sexual violence indicate the need for adopting different approaches that address the motivations and reactions of different groups of perpetrators.
- Men who do not perpetrate sexual violence against women and girls need to be made allies in interventions against sexual violence.

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a violation of human rights. Intimate partner violence is the most common form of VAWG (Morrison et al. 2004; Naved et al. 2004). According to findings from the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence, prevalence of physical violence by an intimate partner ranges from 23 to 61 percent; sexual violence – from 10 to 59 percent; and physical or sexual violence or both – from 29 to 71 percent in developing countries (Garcia-Moreno et al. 2006). In Bangladesh, the national rate of physical violence perpetrated by a husband calculated from reports by men is as high as 58 percent (BDHS 2009). In 2007, about 60 percent of men reported ever perpetrating physical and/or sexual violence against their wives (BDHS 2009).

VAWG has serious consequences for women's health and well-being, ranging from fatal outcomes, such as homicide or suicide to non-fatal outcomes, such as physical injuries,

chronic pain syndrome, gastrointestinal disorders (Gazmararian et al. 1995; Heise et al. 1999; Garcia-Moreno 2002), complications during pregnancy, miscarriage, low birth-weight of children (Campbell 2002; Asling-Monemi et al. 2009a), poor maternal-infant feeding interactions (Frith 2006), growth impairment of children, or higher childhood morbidity (Asling-Monemi et al. 2009b; Silverman et al. 2009) and mortality (Asling-Monemi et al. 2003; Asling-Monemi et al. 2008). The mental health of women and girls is also affected by VAWG (Deyessa et al. 2009; Ellsberg et al. 2008; Naved and Akhter 2008). VAWG also poses significant costs for the economies of developing countries, including lower worker productivity and incomes and lower rates of accumulation of human and social capital (Waters et al. 2004).

Most responses to VAWG focus on women's rights and empowerment, legal reform, protection and service provision. Whilst these interventions continue to be key priorities,

addressing root causes of VAWG through primary prevention with boys and men is vital for creating societies where gender-based violence is unacceptable to all (Green et al. 1995; Helzner 1996; AVSC International 1997; Shepard 1996). The majority of research and interventions on VAWG has focused on females, however, understanding prevailing social norms, men's attitudes and behaviours – and how they perpetuate violence – is vital because VAWG is rooted in power relations among women, men, girls and boys. Men are overwhelmingly involved in all types of violence. They are the primary perpetrators of VAWG.

A number of empirical studies have found that men's approval of marital and dating violence is associated with inflicting physical aggression against their spouses or girlfriends (Dibble and Straus 1980; Kaufman et al. 1987; Margolin et al. 1998; O'Keefe 1998; Russell and Hulson 1992; Smith 1990; Stith 1990; Stith and Farley 1993; Tontodonato and Crew 1992). Other studies indicate that attitudes reflecting approval of violence may be an important link between violent experiences in the family of origin and aggressive behaviors in adult relationships (Markowitz 2001; Silverman and Williamson 1997; Stith and Farley 1993). A study conducted in Bangladesh clearly shows that condoning attitude toward wife-beating is the strongest predictor of VAWG perpetration. In fact, men who believed wife-beating is acceptable were more than four times as likely to report recent violence against their wives (Johnson and Das 2009). There is also evidence that efforts in changing condoning attitude of young men towards violence against women and promoting gender equality can lead to a reduction of the sexual harassment of girls and women (Pulerwitz and Barker 2008; Verma et al. 2006).

In general, attitudes condoning partner violence among men is very high in many diverse countries (Antai and Antai 2008; Rani et al. 2004; Rani and Bonu 2009). Using Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data, Rani et al. (2004) found that in Sub-Saharan Africa the proportion of men who justified partner violence ranged from 25 percent in Malawi to 75 percent in Ethiopia. In South Asia, acceptance of partner violence among men ranged from 29 percent in Nepal to 57 percent in India (Rani and Bonu 2009). Data from DHS carried out in 2007 in Bangladesh shows that 36% of men justified violence against a wife in at least one scenario presented to them (BDHS 2009).

The specific objectives of this study were to explore:

- (1) Attitudes of men related to masculinities with particular reference to gender equality and violence against women;
- (2) Factors associated with gender-inequitable and violence-condoning attitudes;
- (3) Prevalence of different forms of violence against women as reported by men; and

The relationship between attitudes towards gender and violence against women and perpetration of such violence. This study is part of The Change Project initiated by Partners for Prevention: Working to Prevent Gender-based Violence, a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional programme for Asia and the Pacific. The Change Project, the largest ever multi-country study on gender-based violence and masculinities interviewing men, will produce valuable, cutting-edge knowledge to inform more effective policies and programmes for violence prevention. A collaboration between UN, CSO, governments, academics and researchers, the project will survey over 15,000 men and women across in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

# 2

## METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Survey design and sampling

A cross-sectional population-based survey was carried out with randomly selected 18- to 49-year-old men from one urban and one rural site. The total sample size for the quantitative study is approximately 2000 men from 100 clusters divided equally between the rural and urban sites.

A multi-stage random sampling scheme, with clusters as the primary sampling unit, was employed for sampling. The sample was designed to be self-weighted. The choice of sites reflected practical considerations as it was not possible to assume generalizability beyond the study site. Given that Bangladesh is a predominantly rural country, it was important to include a rural site. Furthermore, as rural and urban differences are significant in Bangladesh an urban site was also included in this survey. The second stage of this multi-stage sampling

involved the selection of clusters for interviews. The clusters or primary sampling units were mohollas or the smallest administrative units in the urban site, and villages in the rural area. In the urban area, 50 mohollas were selected using the probability proportional to size (PPS) method. From within each moholla, one enumeration area (EA) consisting of 120 households on average was randomly selected using Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2011 data collected for the purpose of the 2011 Population Census. Household listing was carried out in these EAs. From each EA, households were randomly selected for inclusion in the survey for achieving a sample of 1000. Households were oversampled taking into account unavailability of men and presumed refusals. In households with more than one eligible man for the survey, one man was randomly selected for the survey. In the rural area, 50 villages were randomly selected using PPS sampling. Household lists were obtained from ICDDR,B's Demographic

and Health Surveillance database, which is regularly updated. Taking into consideration unavailability and non-response rates, 30 households were randomly selected from each of these 50 villages for inclusion in the survey in order to finally achieve a sample of 1000 men.

At least three attempts were made to interview the selected study sample and no replacement was made.

## 2.2 Definitions

### *Physical violence*

Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, injury or harm. Physical violence includes, but is not limited to: scratching, pushing, shoving, throwing, grabbing, biting, choking, shaking, poking, hair pulling, slapping, punching, hitting, burning, the use of restraints or one's body size or strength against another person, and the use of a weapon (gun, knife or object).

### *Abusive sexual contact*

Abusive sexual contact is any act in which one person in a power relationship uses force, coercion or psychological intimidation to force another to carry out a sexual act against her or his will, or participate in unwanted sexual relations. Abusive sexual contact occurs in a variety of situations, including within marriage, on dates, at work and school, and in families (i.e., incest). Other manifestations include undesired touching, oral, anal or vaginal penetration with the penis or objects, and obligatory exposure to pornographic material (WHO 2004).

### *Forced sex*

Forced sex is when one person uses force, coercion or psychological intimidation to force another to engage in a sex act against her or his will, whether or not the act is completed.

### *Sex act*

Sex act is defined as contact between: the penis and vulva, or the penis and the anus, involving penetration, however slight; contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva or anus;

or penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person by a hand, finger or other object.

### *Emotional abuse/psychological violence*

Emotional or psychological violence is any act or omission that damages the self esteem, identity or development of the individual. It includes but is not limited to humiliation, threatening loss of custody of the children, forced isolation from family or friends, threatening to harm the individual or someone they care about, repeated yelling or degradation, inducing fear through intimidating words or gestures, controlling behavior and the destruction of possessions.

### *Economic violence*

Economic violence includes denying a woman access to and control over basic resources. It includes acts such as the denial of funds, refusal to contribute financially to household expenses, denial of food and basic needs, and controlling access to health care, employment, etc.

### *Transactional sex*

Transactional sex refers to the exchange of money or goods for sexual services, either regularly or occasionally, involving female, male and transgender adults, young people and children where the person may or may not consciously define such activity as income-generating.

### *Masculinity*

Masculinity can be defined as either identities or a pattern of practices associated with the positions of men in various gender systems. There is no one masculinity: constructions of masculinity vary over time and across and within cultures, creating multiple masculinities. However, there is often a hierarchy of masculinities in which one (or more) pattern of masculinity is socially dominant and others are marginalised.

The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been globally influential after it was introduced in the 1980s through the work of Connell. The concept of hegemony seeks to explain the

exercise of power and, in particular, the ways in which power is reproduced and enacted in contexts where coercion is not explicitly used (or even threatened). Hegemonic masculinity may not be the most common pattern in the everyday lives of boys and men, only a minority of men might enact it. But it is normative in the sense that it embodies the currently most honoured way of being a man, and requires other men to position themselves in relation to it (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Gender is always relational, and patterns of masculinity are socially defined in contradistinction from some model (whether real or imaginary) of femininity (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005).

## 2.3 Questionnaire

The survey instrument was developed by Partners for Prevention, drawing upon the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women, and the South Africa Study of Men, Masculinities, Violence and HIV, carried out by the Medical Research Council (MRC). IMAGES has been applied in many countries to understand the changing gender attitudes and behavior of men. The WHO study has also been conducted in several countries including Bangladesh. The tools used in those surveys were adapted to the Bangladeshi context - to study the attitude of men regarding gender and gender-based violence; men's perpetration of this violence and correlates of men's attitudes and practices. The questionnaire was piloted with a small sample of respondents to assess instrument utility (e.g., with regard to meaning, language, clarity of instructions). Revisions were made on the basis of the pilot.

The questionnaire had eight sections:

2) **Childhood experiences:** Victimization by

violence as children; witnessing of gender-based violence; household decision-making in family of origin; and gender balance in work/child care in family of origin.

3) **Fatherhood (for men who have children):**

Number of children; living situation of each child; attendance of birth of last child; attendance of antenatal or prenatal visits of last child; time spent in care of children; and use of paternity leave.

4) **Attitudes about relations between men and women:**

Attitudes toward rape; attitudes toward gender equality (using the GEM Scale); attitudes towards partner violence; attitudes towards women's ability to refuse sex with her husband; and attitudes towards homosexuality.

5) **Intimate relationships:** Current/most recent partner's age, education and income

in relation to his; household decision-making; division of household chores; use of controlling behavior against partner; and use of physical violence against partner

6) **Policies:** Awareness of and attitudes towards various gender-equality policies and GBV policies and campaigns.

7) **Health and well being:** Use of health services, STIs/HIV (past history, HIV testing); satisfaction with sexual relations; life satisfaction scale; mental health issues (CES depression scale, suicide ideation); and empathy scale.

8) **Self administered section:** Men's self-reported history of criminal behavior including theft, fights, gangs, being arrested, imprisoned; alcohol use; drug use; men's experiences of violence outside the home; sexual orientation; use of sexual violence against men and women, partners and non-partners; behaviors related to SRH, HIV/AIDS; and indicators of socio-economic status.

## 2.4 Interviewer training and survey team structure

A key part of ethical assurance involved the training of the survey team members. The

previous experiences of the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women and of the International Research Network on Violence against Women had indicated that research on domestic violence required additional training and support to that normally provided to survey research staff (Jansen et al. 2004). Thus, a 12-day training for the interviewers was organized. An integral part of the training goals were: 1) To increase the sensitivity of participants to gender issues; 2) To develop a basic understanding of gender-based violence, its forms, its link to masculinities, and its impact on the health of women and children; 3) To learn skills for interviewing and engaging with the study participants, taking into account safety and ethical guidelines; 4) To learn how to administer the questionnaire using Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). A number of specific exercises were planned for the training (e.g., analysis of stories of violence, etc). The selection of survey team members was conducted after the training.

There were four teams consisting of five male data collectors and one supervisor each. A survey coordinator was in charge of overall management of the survey. Each survey team member had a Masters degree.

## 2.5 Data handling and analysis

The survey used personal digital assistants (PDAs) in the data collection for the following reasons:

- They facilitate the asking of questions about the most sensitive topics;
- No data entry is required which reduces data entry error and speeds up data input and clean-up;
- They address the ethical issues related to asking questions of men about involvement in criminal activities (i.e., rape, theft etc). It is unethical for an interviewer to ask such questions face-to-face as they may have a legal obligation to report positive responses to the police. With PDAs the respondent's answers will remain totally anonymous;
- They address issues of interviewer fatigue

and interviewer bias; and

- Experience from the previous studies clearly indicates that self-administered paper and pencil questionnaires are difficult for respondents to complete due to complex skip patterns. This often results in missing data. PDAs can be programmed to automatically make the necessary skips, thus addressing this issue.

Partners for Prevention made PDAs available to the study and coordinated the programming of the PDAs.

The PDAs were audio enhanced to enable self-administration of the most sensitive questions in populations with low literacy. This was done following an example from South Africa, where use of audio-enhanced PDAs yielded high self-reports of rape.

The field supervisors performed quality checks on a regular basis. 5 percent of the total sample was randomly selected to be interviewed by the field supervisors for verifying whether the questions were asked properly and interviews taken following the ethical guidelines.

## 2.6 Ethics and safety

VAWG is a sensitive and stigmatized issue, and study participants may fear being judged or blamed for reporting violence condoning attitudes or perpetration of violence. For this reason, particular care was taken to ensure that all questions about violence and attitudes toward it were asked sensitively, in a non-judgmental manner. Survey team members were trained to be aware of the effects that the questions may have on the respondent and, if necessary, to modify their approach considering the reaction.

Care was taken when designing the questionnaires and interview guides to try to carefully and sensitively introduce and enquire about VAWG. Then, before direct questions concerning violence and attitudes towards it were asked, the participant was reminded that the answers will be kept confidential. The issue of violence was introduced in a way that acknowledges its widespread occurrence, which aimed to enable participants to be able to respond without feeling that they will be blamed or judged.



# 3

## SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The total sample achieved as well as reaction of the participants to the survey have been reported in Table 3.1. A total of 2,400 men (1,254 in the urban site and 1,146 in the rural site) were successfully interviewed for this study. A total of 1749 urban households and 1567 rural households were sampled. Approximately 2 percent of the urban households were either completely vacant or destroyed, or there were no eligible men in the household. In the rural area, about 21 percent of households were in this category. Migration of males is very high and in the rural area; therefore 21 percent of households did not have any eligible men. In both the sites, 0.2 percent of the sample left the interview incomplete. In the urban area, 4 percent refused to give an interview, while in the rural area 2 percent refused. Thus, the individual response rate was 0.73 percent in the urban site and 0.93 in the rural site. The survey was highly appreciated by those who completed it. About 93 percent of the urban participants and

85 percent of the rural participants felt good as a result of giving the interview, while 5 percent and 11 percent correspondingly reported no difference.

As shown in Table 3.2 on socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, the urban sample was younger than the rural sample with 52 percent of the sample aged below 30, while 61 percent of the rural sample was aged above 34. The proportion of men with no education was double in the rural sample (20 percent) compared to the urban sample (10 percent). The urban sample was also highly educated compared to the rural sample. Thus, 42 percent of the men in the urban site had secondary or higher level of education, while only 15 percent of the rural sample did so. A comparable proportion of the sample was currently employed (85 percent in the urban and 87 percent in the rural site). About 41 percent of men in the urban sample were never married, whereas only 28 percent of men in the

rural sample were never married. Correspondingly, 52 percent of the urban sample did not have a child, while the percentage of such men in the rural sample was 39 percent. The differences in age, education, partnership status and number of children between rural and urban samples were highly statistically significant (not shown here).

**Table 3.1:** Response rates by site

|                            | Urban (n=1749) |             | Rural (n=1567) |             |
|----------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
|                            | Number         | %           | Number         | %           |
| Male interview completed   | 1,254          | 71.7        | 1,146          | 73.1        |
| HH empty / destroyed       | 15             | 0.9         | 5              | 0.3         |
| No eligible man in HH      | 22             | 1.3         | 329            | 21.0        |
| Eligible man not available | 384            | 22.0        | 61             | 3.9         |
| Eligible man refused       | 71             | 4.1         | 23             | 1.5         |
| Partially completed        | 3              | 0.2         | 3              | 0.2         |
| <b>Response rate</b>       |                | <b>0.73</b> |                | <b>0.93</b> |

**Table 3.2:** Sample characteristics, %

| Variables                                     | Urban (n=1254) | Rural (n=1146) |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Age:</b>                                   |                |                |
| 18 – 24                                       | 30.5           | 23.9           |
| 25 – 34                                       | 36.1           | 28.6           |
| 35 – 49                                       | 33.3           | 47.4           |
| <b>Education:</b>                             |                |                |
| None  | 9.9            | 20.3           |
| Primary                                       | 18.4           | 33.2           |
| Some secondary                                | 29.3           | 31.7           |
| Secondary complete                            | 14.6           | 9.7            |
| Above secondary                               | 27.8           | 5.1            |
| <b>Employment:</b>                            |                |                |
| Currently employed                            | 84.5           | 86.6           |
| Employed ever but not in last year            | 0.8            | 1.6            |
| Never employed                                | 14.7           | 11.8           |
| <b>Relationship status:</b>                   |                |                |
| Never partnered                               | 40.8           | 27.6           |
| Currently married                             | 56.5           | 68.8           |
| Currently cohabiting                          | 0.4            | 0.4            |
| Currently has partner but not living together | 0.8            | 0.4            |
| Previously married                            | 0.8            | 2.0            |
| Previously partnered                          | 0.6            | 0.7            |
| <b>Number of children:</b>                    |                |                |
| No children                                   | 52.3           | 38.7           |
| 1   | 16.4           | 12.3           |
| 2 to 3  | 27.3           | 37.8           |
| 4 or more                                     | 4.0            | 11.3           |

# 4

## MEN'S EXPERIENCES OF BEING ABUSED DURING CHILDHOOD

### 4.1 Men's experience of emotional abuse during childhood

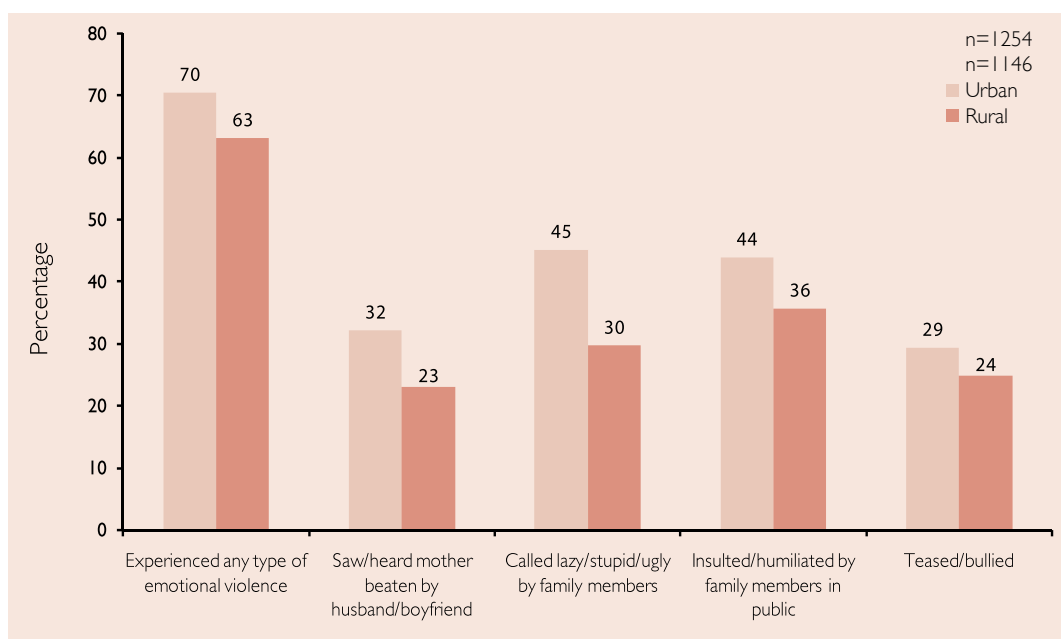
A large portion of urban (70 percent) and rural men (63 percent) reported experiencing some form of emotional abuse (Table 4.1; Figure 4.1). It is noteworthy that almost one third of urban men and one fifth of rural men reported seeing or hearing their mother being beaten by her husband or boyfriend. However, the most common type of emotional abuse experienced

by urban men (45 percent) was being told he was lazy or stupid or ugly by someone in his family. Almost an equal proportion of urban men (44 percent) also reported that they were insulted or humiliated in public by someone in the family. This latter category of emotional abuse was reported as the highest experienced type by rural men (36 percent). About 29 percent of urban men and 24 percent of rural men reported being teased and bullied by others. A higher proportion of urban men reported experiencing each type of emotional violence compared to rural men.

**Table 4.1:** Prevalence of emotional violence victimization of men during childhood by site, %

| <i>Emotional violence</i>                                       | <i>Ever experienced emotional violence during childhood</i> |                       |
|---|---|-----------------------|
|   | <i>Urban (n=1254)</i>                                       | <i>Rural (n=1146)</i> |
| Any type of emotional violence                                  | 70.4  | 62.8                  |
| Saw or heard his mother being beaten by her husband/boyfriend   | 31.9  | 22.7                  |
| Was told he was lazy or stupid or ugly by someone in the family | 44.6  | 29.7                  |
| Was insulted or humiliated in public by someone in the family   | 43.5  | 36.1                  |
| Was teased and bullied as a child                               | 29.4  | 24.3                  |

**Figure 4.1:** Prevalence of emotional violence experienced by men during childhood by site, %



### 4.2 Men's experience of being physically abused during childhood

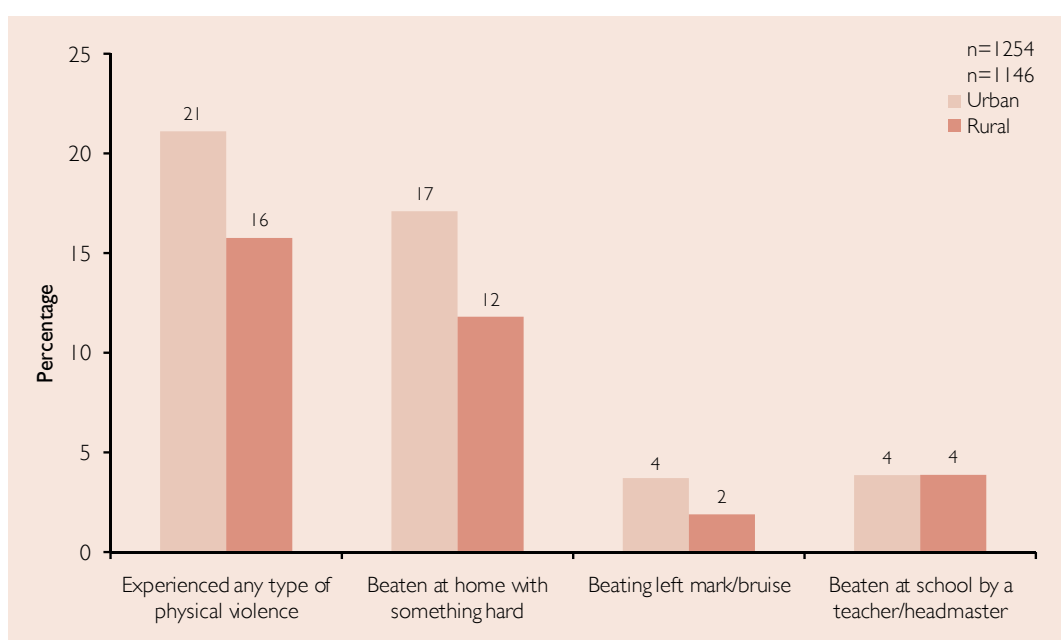
About 21 percent of urban men and 16 percent of rural men reported experiencing some form of physical abuse during their childhood (Table 4.2; Figure 4.2). The most commonly reported physical violence experienced by men during childhood was being

beaten at home with a belt, stick, whip or something else that was hard (17 percent of urban men and 12 percent of rural men). About 4 percent of men in the urban site and 2 percent in the rural site report severe physical abuse during childhood defined as being beaten so hard that it left a mark or bruise. Experience of physical violence in school was much lower than at home (4 percent in both the sites).

**Table 4.2:** Prevalence of physical violence victimization of men during childhood by site, %

| Physical violence  | Ever experienced physical violence during childhood |                |
|--|---|----------------|
|  | Urban (n=1254)                                      | Rural (n=1146) |
| Any type of physical violence  | 21.0  | 15.7           |
| Was beaten at home with a belt or stick or whip or something else which was hard | 16.9  | 11.6           |
| Was beaten so hard at home that it left a mark or bruise                         | 4.1   | 1.8            |
| Was beaten or physically punished at school by a teacher or headmaster           | 4.1   | 3.6            |

**Figure 4.2:** Prevalence of physical violence experienced by men during childhood by site, %



### 4.3 Men's experience of being sexually abused during childhood

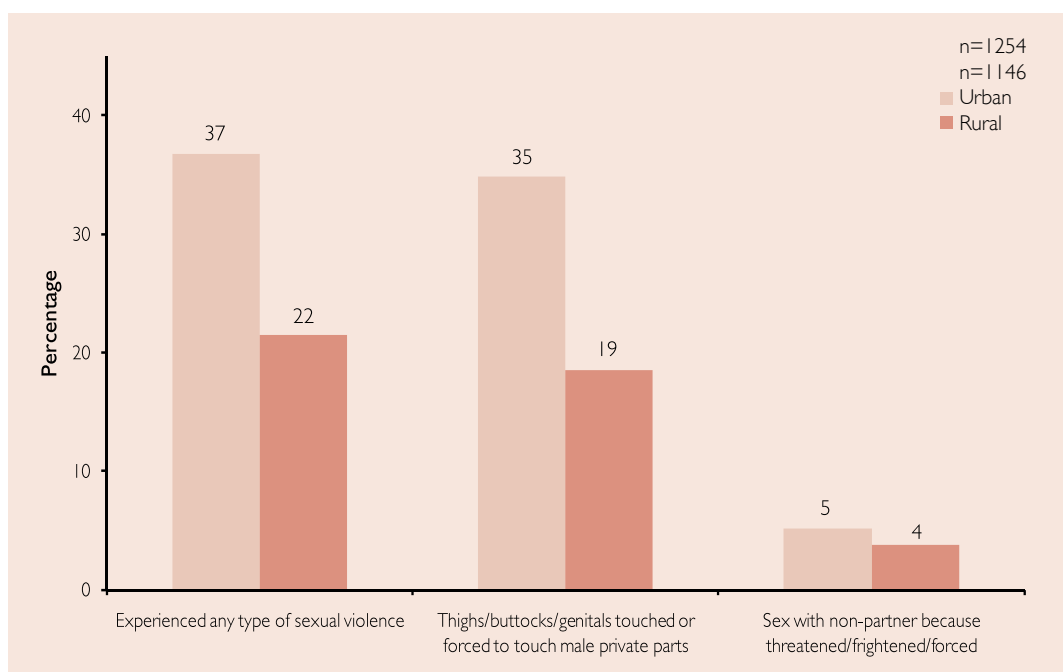
As shown in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.3, a remarkable proportion of both urban and rural men reported experiencing some form of sexual abuse during childhood (37 percent and 22

percent, respectively). About one third of urban men and one fifth of rural men reported being touched in their thighs, buttocks, breasts or genitals, or being made to touch a male's private parts when they did not want to. Due to threat, force or out of fear, about 5 percent of urban and 4 percent of rural men had sex with someone who was not their girlfriend or boyfriend.

**Table 4.3:** Prevalence of sexual violence victimization of men during childhood by site, %

| Sexual violence   | Ever experienced sexual violence during childhood |                |
|---|---|----------------|
|   | Urban (n=1254)                                    | Rural (n=1146) |
| Any type of sexual violence   | 36.8  | 21.5           |
| Someone touched his thighs, buttocks, breasts or genitals when he did not want him to or made him touch his private parts when he did not want to | 34.9  | 18.5           |
| Had sex with someone who was not his (girl) boyfriend because he was threatened or frightened or forced   | 5.2   | 3.8            |

Figure 4.3: Prevalence of sexual violence experienced by men during childhood by site, %



# 5

## MEN'S ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES REGARDING GENDER

This study drew upon items from two different sources for measuring men's attitudes toward gender and violence against women. One of the important sources of developing this scale was the Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale developed by Population Council and Instituto Promundo and used in India, Brazil and more than 15 other countries to date. These attitudinal questions used in diverse settings have consistently shown high rates of internal reliability (Pulerwitz and Barker 2008). The other important source was the South Africa Study of Men, Masculinities, Violence and HIV conducted by the Medical Research Council in South Africa (Jewkes 2009 cited in Barker et al. 2011).

A series of gender-related statements were read out to the study participants and they were asked whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the statements. For the purpose of the analysis all the responses were coded in a way so that agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statements

implied gender inequitable attitudes. In order to maintain comparability, results of the scales drawn from different sources have been presented here separately.

### 5.1 Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale

The results yielded by the GEM Scale are presented in Table 5.1. Judging by the responses received almost no single man was completely gender equitable. Thus, about 98 percent of urban and 100 percent of rural men either agreed or strongly agreed with at least one of the gender inequitable statements in the scale. The proportion of men submitting to all the gender inequitable statements was 7 percent in the urban area and 8 percent in the rural area.

The pattern of gender attitudes in both the sites was similar in the sense that the ranking of most commonly agreed items was very similar.

Both urban (93 percent) and rural (98 percent) men almost universally agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that 'to be a man one needs to be tough'. Use of force in defending one's reputation was justified by 66 percent of urban and 69 percent of rural men. About 69 percent of men in the urban area and 78 percent of men in the rural area believed that men need sex more than women do.

**Table 5.1:** Proportion of men agreeing or strongly agreeing to items from Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale by site, %

| <i>Items from GEM scale</i>   | <i>Urban (n=1254)</i> | <i>Rural (n=1146)</i> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family | 77.9                  | 91.7                  |
| Men need sex more than women do   | 68.6                  | 77.7                  |
| There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten                                | 59.7                  | 61.9                  |
| It is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant                          | 36.8                  | 59.1                  |
| A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together             | 49.9                  | 64.4                  |
| Would be outraged if his wife asked him to use a condom                           | 14.0                  | 20.9.0                |
| If insulted, will defend his reputation, with force if he has to                  | 66.1                  | 69.2                  |
| To be a man, one needs to be tough  | 93.0                  | 97.6                  |
| Proportion of men agreeing to at least one of the statements                      | 98.3                  | 99.8                  |
| Proportion of men agreeing to all the statements                                  | 7.4                   | 8.1                   |
| Proportion of men agreeing to none of the statements                              | 1.7                   | 0.2                   |
| <i>Tertiles of men by GEM score</i>   |                       |                       |
| Least equitable men   | 20.4                  | 28.9                  |
| Moderately equitable men  | 75.0                  | 70.3                  |
| Highly equitable men  | 4.6                   | 0.8                   |

About 78 percent of urban men and 92 percent of rural men believed that a woman's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family. The majority of urban (60 percent) and rural (62 percent) men were of the opinion that at times a woman deserves to be beaten. Moreover, half of the urban men (50 percent) and the majority of the rural men (65 percent) believe a woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together. As shown in Table 5.1, a higher proportion of rural men had gender inequitable attitudes.

In order to come up with a scale of low, moderate and most equitable men using the items from the GEM Scale, 'strongly agree' was assigned the lowest value (i.e., 1). Scores were calculated by adding up all the scores and categorizing them into tertiles as follows: scores less or equal to 16 as low; between 17 to 24 as moderate; and scores between 25 and above as high equitable attitude. According to

these results, about 5 percent of urban men and only 1 percent of rural men were most gender equitable. On the other hand, about 20 percent of urban and 29 percent of rural men were least gender equitable. The rest of them fell into the moderately gender equitable category (75 percent in the urban site and 70 percent in the rural site). The grouped results were consistent with the item-wise response; i.e., urban men reported more equitable attitudes than rural men.

## 5.2 Men's attitudes on gender equality assessed by other items

Table 5.2 presents results yielded using the items from the MRC survey. Although the overwhelming majority of men in both sites (about 95 percent from urban and 97 percent from rural) said people should be treated the



same whether they are male or female, opinions expressed in response to the other statements contradicted this view. About 60 percent of urban and 76 percent of rural men held that a man should have the final say in all family matters. Correspondingly, 87 percent of urban men and 94 percent of rural men believe that a woman should obey her husband. About 83 percent of men in the urban and 89 percent of men in the rural area believe if a woman did something wrong her husband has the right to punish her. About 46 percent urban and 53 percent rural men were of the opinion that a

wife cannot refuse to have sex with her husband. A high proportion of urban men (45 percent) and the majority of rural men (54 percent) believe when a woman is raped she is usually to blame for putting herself in that situation. An overwhelming majority of urban and rural men (89 percent and 75 percent, respectively) believe if a woman does not fight back it is not a rape. All the men (100 percent in both sites) agreed to at least one of the gender inequitable statement and 16 percent of the urban and 14 percent of the rural men agreed to all the statements.

**Table 5.2:** Proportion of men agreeing or strongly agreeing to views on gender relations assessed by other items by site, %

| Items  | Urban<br>(n=1254) | Rural<br>(n=1146) |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| People should be treated the same whether they are male or female                                | 94.9              | 97.0              |
| A woman should obey her husband  | 87.2              | 94.3              |
| A man should have the final say in all family matters  | 60.1              | 75.7              |
| Men should share the work around the house with women such as doing dishes, cleaning and cooking | 84.9              | 70.7              |
| A woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband   | 45.7              | 53.0              |
| If a wife does something wrong her husband has the right to punish her                           | 83.1              | 88.5              |
| When a woman is raped, she is usually to blame for putting herself in that situation             | 44.7              | 53.9              |
| If a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape  | 89.2              | 75.1              |
| Proportion of men agreeing to at least one of the statements                                     | 100               | 99.9              |
| Proportion of men agreeing to all the statements   | 15.6              | 14.1              |
| Proportion of men agreeing to none of the statements   | 0.0               | 0.1               |

### 5.3 Factors associated with men's attitudes regarding gender

For exploring the factors associated with men's attitudes regarding gender and violence against women, separate analyses were performed for urban and rural sites as they were quite different in terms of background, attitude and practices. For a complete description of the analysis see Annex I.

The results of the regression analyses have been presented in Table 5.3 and Table 5.4.

The regression results show that men who had secondary and higher education and belonged to the highest socio-economic strata were


remarkably less likely to be gender inequitable (reduced the relative risk ratios of being relatively gender inequitable in both the second and first tertiles). Even some secondary education lowered the risk of being gender inequitable among rural men in the first tertile (RRR=0.53). For rural men in the second and first tertiles, belonging to middle socio-economic strata reduced the likelihood of having gender inequitable attitudes (RRR=0.51 and RRR=0.54 correspondingly). Experience of physical violence during childhood increased the risk of being gender inequitable 1.7 times among urban men in the second tertile; 2.8 times among urban men in the first tertile; and 2.1 times among rural men in the first tertile.

**Table 5.3:** Multinomial logistic regression model for exploring factors associated with men's moderately equitable attitude compared to highly equitable attitude regarding gender

| Independent variables  | Urban (n=1193) |         |           | Rural (n=1085) |         |           |
|--|----------------|---------|-----------|----------------|---------|-----------|
|  | RRR            | P value | 95% CI    | RRR            | P value | 95% CI    |
| <b>Age group:</b>  |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| 18-24  | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       |
| 25-34  | 1.06           | 0.75    | 0.73-1.55 | 1.01           | 0.97    | 0.65-1.56 |
| 35-49  | 1.26           | 0.26    | 0.84-1.89 | 1.12           | 0.63    | 0.70-1.78 |
| <b>Education:</b>  |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| None   | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       |
| Primary  | 1.32           | 0.34    | 0.74-2.35 | 1.25           | 0.45    | 0.70-2.22 |
| Some secondary   | 1.17           | 0.58    | 0.66-2.07 | 0.59           | 0.07    | 0.34-1.03 |
| Secondary complete   | 0.44           | 0.02    | 0.22-0.88 | 0.39           | 0.01    | 0.21-0.74 |
| Above secondary  | 0.18           | 0.00    | 0.10-0.34 | 0.13           | 0.00    | 0.05-0.30 |
| <b>Socioeconomic status (How easy to find Tk. 100,000/\$1370 for treatment):</b> |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| Very difficult   | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       |
| Somewhat difficult   | 1.10           | 0.62    | 0.75-1.61 | 0.51           | 0.00    | 0.34-0.78 |
| Easy or Very easy  | 0.55           | 0.00    | 0.37-0.81 | 0.61           | 0.01    | 0.42-0.90 |
| <b>Childhood experience:</b>   |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| Physical abuse   | 1.72           | 0.01    | 1.14-2.58 | 1.69           | 0.07    | 0.95-3.01 |
| Sexual abuse   | 0.85           | 0.39    | 0.59-1.23 | 1.12           | 0.68    | 0.65-1.92 |
| Emotional abuse  | 0.77           | 0.12    | 0.55-1.08 | 0.79           | 0.14    | 0.58-1.09 |

**Table 5.4:** Multinomial logistic regression model for exploring factors associated with men's least equitable attitude compared to highly equitable attitude regarding gender

| Independent variable   | Urban (n=1193) |         |           | Rural (n=1085) |         |           |
|--|----------------|---------|-----------|----------------|---------|-----------|
|  | RRR            | P value | 95% CI    | RRR            | P value | 95% CI    |
| <b>Age group:</b>  |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| 18-24  | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       |
| 25-34  | 1.21           | 0.34    | 0.81-1.79 | 1.56           | 0.09    | 0.93-2.61 |
| 35-49  | 1.08           | 0.73    | 0.70-1.65 | 1.93           | 0.01    | 1.22-3.08 |
| <b>Education:</b>  |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| None   | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       |
| Primary  | 1.18           | 0.59    | 0.64-2.17 | 1.24           | 0.41    | 0.74-2.08 |
| Some secondary   | 0.57           | 0.08    | 0.30-1.07 | 0.53           | 0.02    | 0.32-0.90 |
| Secondary complete   | 0.13           | 0.00    | 0.06-0.27 | 0.25           | 0.00    | 0.12-0.52 |
| Above secondary  | 0.05           | 0.00    | 0.02-0.10 | 0.07           | 0.00    | 0.03-0.18 |
| <b>Socioeconomic status (How easy to find Tk. 100,000/\$1370 for treatment):</b> |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| Very difficult   | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       | Ref            | Ref     | Ref       |
| Somewhat difficult   | 1.26           | 0.30    | 0.81-1.95 | 0.54           | 0.01    | 0.35-0.84 |
| Easy or Very easy  | 0.59           | 0.04    | 0.36-0.97 | 0.57           | 0.04    | 0.34-0.97 |
| <b>Childhood experience:</b>   |                |         |           |                |         |           |
| Physical abuse   | 2.84           | 0.00    | 1.98-4.08 | 2.06           | 0.02    | 1.15-3.71 |
| Sexual abuse   | 1.16           | 0.46    | 0.77-1.74 | 1.52           | 0.13    | 0.88-2.61 |
| Emotional abuse  | 0.71           | 0.11    | 0.47-1.08 | 1.22           | 0.21    | 0.89-1.67 |



# MEN'S PERPETRATION OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The study explored men's perpetration of lifetime and current (defined as violence that took place within the past 12 months) forms of intimate partner violence against women. In addition, the frequency of violence was researched to understand the frequency at which violence was perpetrated - from never, a few times (between 1 and 7 times) and many times (more than 7 times).

## 6.1 Emotional violence

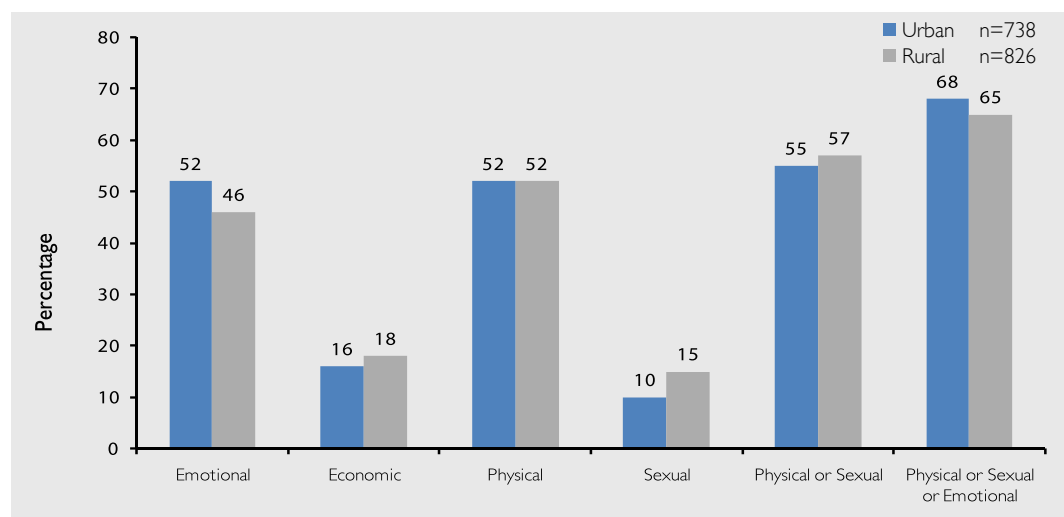
As shown in Table 6.1 and Figure 6.1, 52 percent of urban men and 46 percent of rural men reported ever emotionally abusing their intimate partners. Both in urban and rural sites the most commonly reported acts of emotional violence were intimidation (35 percent in urban and 26 percent in rural sites), threat of harm

**Table 6.1:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of emotional violence against female intimate partners by site, %

| <i>Emotional violence</i>                               | <i>Urban (n=738)</i> | <i>Rural (n=826)</i> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Lifetime emotional violence:</i>                     |                      |                      |
| Any type of emotional violence perpetrated              | 51.6                 | 46.3                 |
| Insulted  | 30.1                 | 21.9                 |
| Belittled/humiliated                                    | 27.4                 | 16.7                 |
| Intimidated/ scared                                     | 35.4                 | 25.9                 |
| Threatened to harm                                      | 32.3                 | 28.2                 |
| Hurt others as a way of hurting her                     | 11.5                 | 8.4                  |
| <i>Any emotional violence in the past 12 months</i>     | 18.1                 | 19.7                 |
|   | <i>Urban (n=380)</i> | <i>Rural (n=383)</i> |
| <i>Frequency of emotional violence by perpetrators:</i> |                      |                      |
| A few times   | 35.0                 | 44.6                 |
| Many times  | 65.0                 | 55.4                 |

(32 percent in urban and 28 percent in rural sites) and insults (30 percent in the urban area and 22 percent in the rural area). Compared to rural men, a higher proportion of urban men reported perpetrating all the different types of emotional abuse covered in the study. Among those who perpetrated emotional violence, the majority used this violence many times (65 percent in the urban and 55 percent in the rural site) (Table 6.1; Figure 6.3). Perpetration of emotional violence during the last 12 months was reported by 18 percent of urban and 20 percent of rural men (Figure 6.2).

**Figure 6.1:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of multiple types of violence against female intimate partners (ever) by site, %



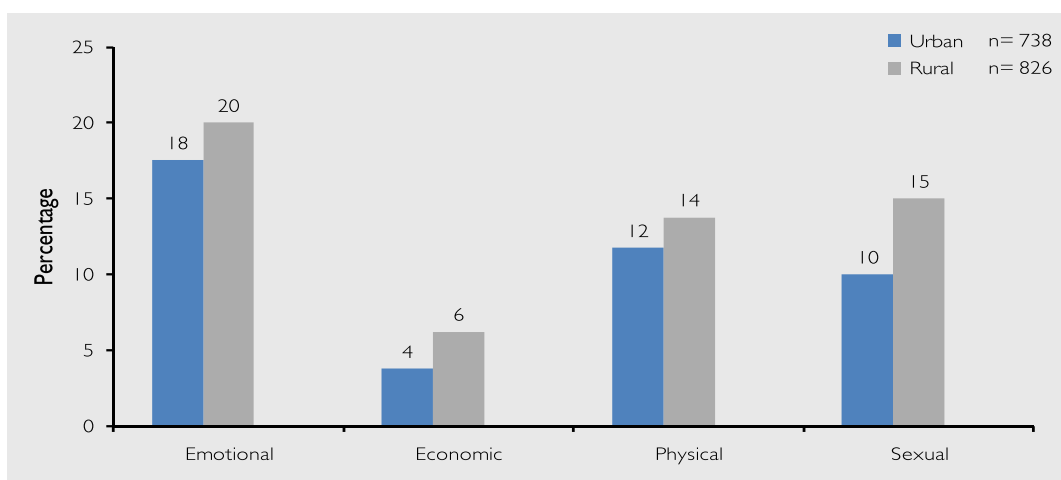
## 6.2 Economic violence

About 16 percent of urban men and 18 percent of rural men reported perpetrating some kind of economic abuse against their partners during their lifetime (Table 6.2; Figure 6.1). The proportion of men currently (within the past 12 months prior to the interview) perpetrating economically abusive acts for urban and rural sites was 4 percent and 6 percent, respectively (Table 6.2; Figure 6.2). The most commonly reported act of economic abuse by urban men was prohibiting their partners from work (10 percent), while the most commonly reported economic abuse by rural men was taking partners' earnings against her will (13 percent). Among those who reported perpetrating economic violence in urban and rural areas, the majority reported doing it a few times (79 percent of urban men and 94 percent of rural men) (Table 6.2; Figure 6.3).

**Table 6.2:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of economic violence against female intimate partners by site, %

| <i>Economic violence</i>  | <i>Urban (n=738)</i> | <i>Rural (n=826)</i> |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Lifetime economic violence:</i>  |                      |                      |
| Any type of economic violence perpetrated   | 15.6                 | 17.7                 |
| Prohibited from work  | 10.4                 | 9.4                  |
| Male partner has taken her earnings against her will  | 9.5                  | 12.9                 |
| Thrown partner out of house   | 6.6                  | 6.6                  |
| Kept money for self for alcohol, tobacco etc, when partner was finding it hard to afford household expenses | 4.3                  | 3.3                  |
| <i>Any economic violence in the past 12 months</i>  | 3.5                  | 6.0                  |
| <i>Frequency of economic violence by perpetrators:</i>  |                      |                      |
| A few times   | 79.1                 | 93.8                 |
| Many times  | 20.9                 | 6.2                  |

**Figure 6.2:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of multiple types of violence against female intimate partners during last 12 months by site, %



### 6.3 Men's perpetration of physical and sexual violence against an intimate partner

As shown in Table 6.3 and Figure 6.1, over half of the urban and rural men reported ever perpetrating some kind of physical violence against a partner (52 percent). Perpetration of this violence within the last 12 months was reported by 12 percent of urban and 14 percent of rural men (Table 6.3; Figure 6.2). The most commonly reported act of physical violence by urban and rural men was slapping (about 48 percent in both sites), followed by pushing or shoving (about 38 percent in both sites), hitting with fists (17 and 18 percent, respectively), kicking, dragging, beating (8 percent and 7 percent, respectively) and threatening or using a weapon (2 and 1 percent).

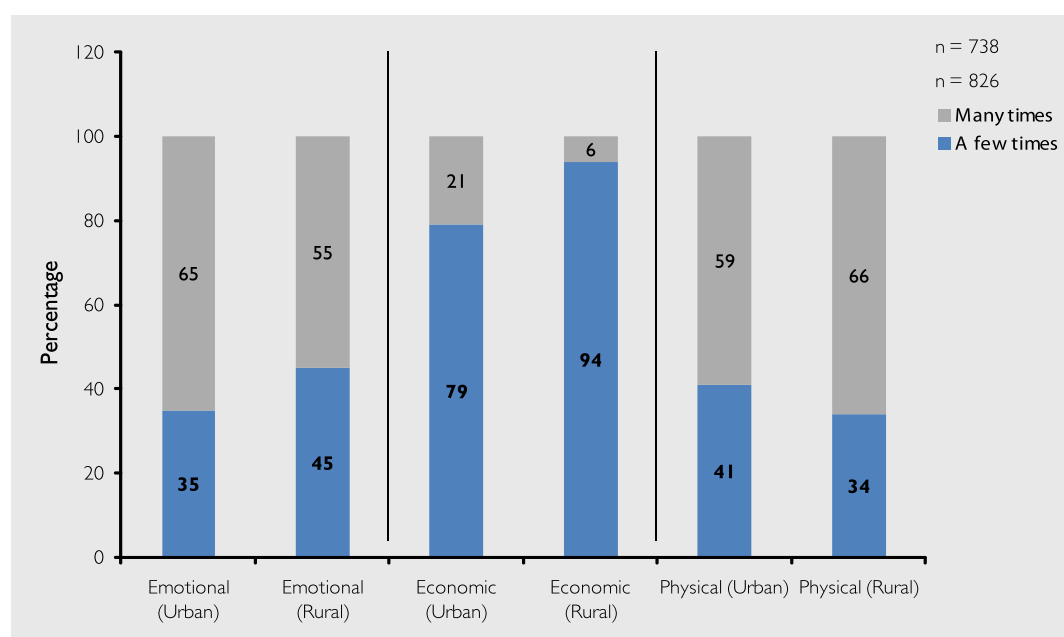
**Table 6.3:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of economic violence against female intimate partners by site, %

| <i>Physical violence</i>   | <i>Urban (n=738)</i> | <i>Rural (n=826)</i> |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Lifetime physical violence:</i>   |                      |                      |
| Any type of physical violence perpetrated  | 52.1                 | 51.6                 |
| Slapped  | 47.9                 | 47.8                 |
| Pushed/shoved  | 37.9                 | 38.4                 |
| Hit with fist  | 16.6                 | 18.1                 |
| Kicked, dragged, beaten  | 8.4                  | 7.4                  |
| Threatened or used weapon  | 2.4                  | 1.1                  |
| <i>Any physical violence in the past 12 months</i>                                       | 11.9                 | 13.5                 |
|  | <i>Urban (n=385)</i> | <i>Rural (n=425)</i> |
| <i>Frequency of physical violence by perpetrators:</i>                                   |                      |                      |
| A few times  | 41.3                 | 33.9                 |
| Many times   | 58.7                 | 66.1                 |
| <i>Sexual violence</i>   |                      |                      |
| <i>Lifetime sexual violence against a female intimate partner</i>                        | 10.4                 | 15.1                 |
| <i>Physical or Sexual</i>  |                      |                      |
| <i>Lifetime physical or sexual violence against a female intimate partner</i>            | 55.1                 | 57.2                 |
| <i>Physical or Sexual or Emotional</i>   |                      |                      |
| <i>Lifetime emotional, physical or sexual violence against a female intimate partner</i> | 67.8                 | 64.7                 |

It is noteworthy that frequent abuse was most common among those who perpetrated physical violence. The proportion of rural men perpetrating this violence 'many times' as opposed to 'a few times' was almost double. About 15 percent of the rural men and 10 percent of the urban men reported ever forcing their intimate partners into sex (Table 6.3; Figure 6.3).

About 55 to 57 percent of the men reported physically or sexually abusing their intimate partners, while about 65 to 68 percent reported emotionally, physically or sexually abusing their intimate partners.

**Figure 6.3:** Frequency of men's perpetration of violence against female intimate partners (ever) by site, %



## 6.4 Association between men's attitudes and perpetration of physical violence against female intimate partners

Random effects model was used to explore associations between men's attitudes regarding gender and lifetime perpetration of physical violence against female intimate partner<sup>1</sup>. The results of regression analysis have been presented in Table 6.4. In both the sites, highly gender inequitable attitudes increased the likelihood of perpetration of physical violence against a female intimate partner (OR=1.85 in the urban site; OR=1.76 in the rural site).

**Table 6.4:** Associated between men's attitude and perpetration of intimate partner physical violence against women in Bangladesh

| Gender related attitude                           | Urban (n=687) |         |           | Rural (n=746) |         |           |
|---|---------------|---------|-----------|---------------|---------|-----------|
|   | OR            | P value | 95% CI    | OR            | P value | 95% CI    |
| <b>Gender related inequitable attitude, score</b> |               |         |           |               |         |           |
| High  | Ref           | Ref     | Ref       | Ref           | Ref     | Ref       |
| Medium  | 1.44          | 0.10    | 0.93-2.23 | 0.97          | 0.88    | 0.62-1.50 |
| Low   | 1.85          | 0.01    | 1.15-2.96 | 1.76          | 0.01    | 1.14-2.71 |

<sup>1</sup> The model addressed the multi-stage sampling design and adjusted for potential confounding variables such as age, education, socio-economic status and involvement of dowry demand in marriage.

# 7

## MEN'S PERPETRATION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST FEMALE INTIMATE PARTNERS AND NON-PARTNERS

### 7.1 Men's perpetration of sexual violence against women

Results regarding men's perpetration of sexual violence and its pattern have been presented in Table 7.1 and Figure 7.1. About 10 percent of the urban sample and 14 percent of the rural sample reported ever perpetrating

sexual violence against any woman (partner or non-partner). Less than 1 percent of men in the urban area and about 3 percent of men in the rural area reported sexually abusing a woman during the last 12 months. Non-partner sexual violence was reported by 4 percent of urban men and 3 percent of rural men. Gang rape was reported by 1 percent of the urban men and 2 percent of the rural men.

**Table 7.1:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of sexual violence against female partner and/or non-partner, %

| <i>Sexual Violence</i>   | <i>Urban(n=1254)</i> | <i>Rural(n=1146)</i> |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Any sexual violence against a partner or non-partner (ever)                                  | 9.5                  | 14.1                 |
| Any sexual violence against a partner or non-partner in past year(past year)                 | 0.5                  | 2.7                  |
| Gang rape (ever)   | 1.4                  | 2.0                  |
| Non-partner sexual violence against women by man presumed to be acting alone (ever)          | 3.7                  | 3.4                  |
| Sexual violence against non-partner by men not reporting also perpetrating sexual IPV (ever) | 4.7                  | 5.3                  |

**Figure 7.1:** Prevalence of men's perpetration of sexual violence against female intimate partners and/or non-partners by site, %

## 7.2 Pattern and motivations for sexual violence perpetration by men against women

Among those who had committed sexual violence against women, 74 percent in the urban and 77 percent in the rural site reported sexually abusing one woman; 23 percent of urban men and 17 percent of rural men reported abusing two to three women; and 1 percent of urban men and 3 percent of rural men sexually abused four to ten women. Alarming, 3 percent of urban and 2 percent of rural men reported sexually abusing more than 10 women (Table 7.2; Figure 7.2).

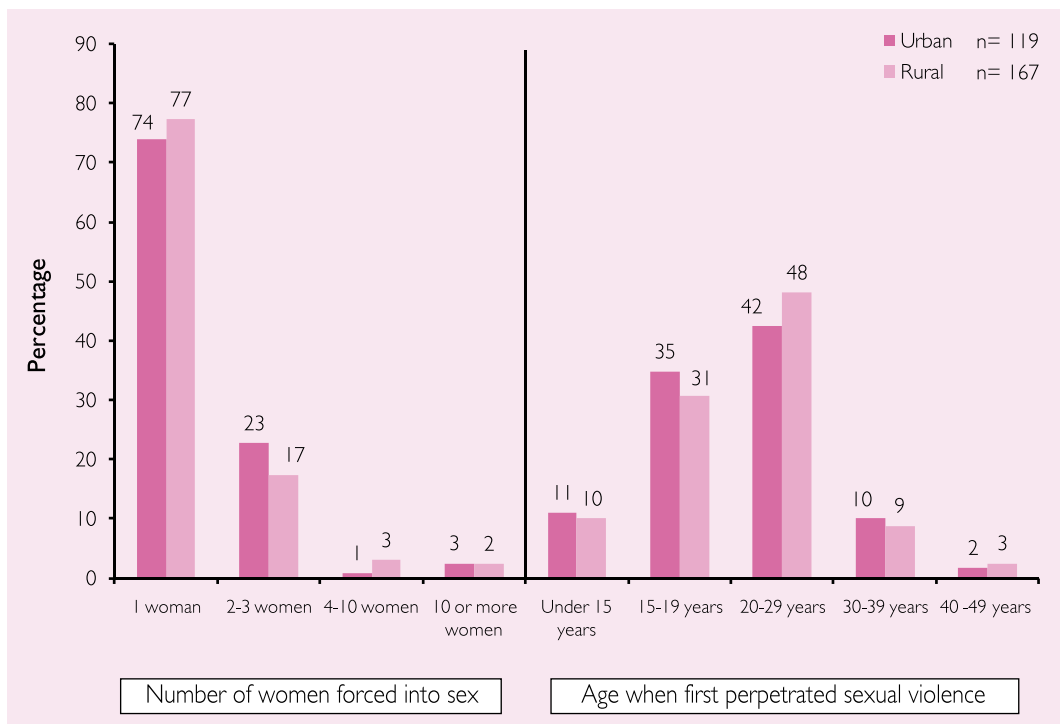
It is notable that a high proportion of men (46 percent in the urban site and 41 percent in the rural site) perpetrated sexual violence for the first time when they were children or adolescents

**Table 7.2:** Patterns and motivations of sexual violence perpetrated by men against women and consequences, among men reporting rape perpetration, %

|   | Urban (n=119) | Rural (n=167) |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Number of different women forced into sex:</b>         |               |               |
| 1 woman   | 74.0          | 77.3          |
| 2-3 women   | 22.7          | 17.4          |
| 4-10 women  | 0.8           | 3.0           |
| 10 or more women  | 2.5           | 2.4           |
| <b>Age at first time forced woman into sex:</b>           |               |               |
| Under 15 years  | 11.0          | 10.0          |
| 15-19 years   | 34.8          | 30.6          |
| 20-29 years   | 42.4          | 48.1          |
| 30-39 years   | 10.2          | 8.8           |
| 40 -49 years  | 1.7           | 2.5           |
| <b>Rape motivations (% that agree or strongly agree):</b> |               |               |
| Anger/punishment  | 28.5          | 35.2          |
| Fun   | 56.9          | 66.5          |
| Sexual entitlement  | 77.0          | 80.8          |
| Drinking  | 8.5           | 7.7           |



**Figure 7.2:** Patterns and motivations for sexual violence perpetrated by men against women and consequences, among men reporting rape perpetration by site, %



(under 19 years). In both the sites, a similar proportion of men reported perpetrating sexual violence for the first time when they were aged between 20 and 29 (42 percent in the urban and 48 percent in the rural area) (Table 7.2; Figure 7.2). This proportion radically dropped with increased age.

Table 7.2 and Figure 7.3 show motivations for men's perpetration of sexual violence. An overwhelming majority of the sexual violence perpetrators (77 percent in the urban area and 81 percent in the rural area) cited sexual entitlement as a motivation for this violence. Also alarming is the fact that 57 percent of urban men and 67 percent of rural men reported 'fun' as a motivating factor for sexual violence. About 29 percent of urban and 35 percent of rural men used sexual violence for punishing the woman or for taking out anger. About 9 percent of the urban and 8 percent of the rural men reported sexual violence due to drinking.

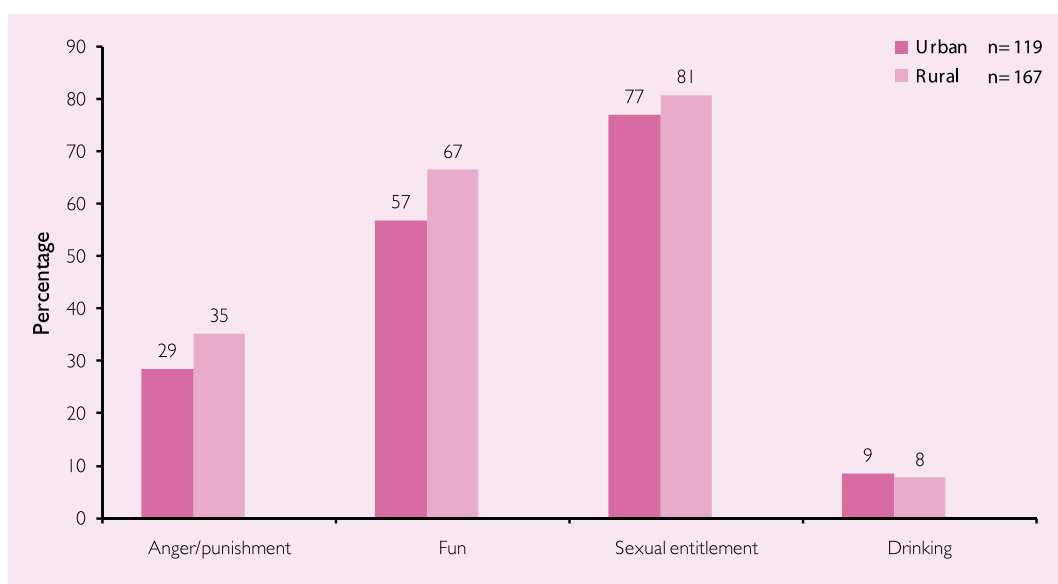
### 7.3 Association between men's attitudes regarding gender and sex and perpetration of sexual violence against any woman

Logistic regression analysis was run in order to explore the factors associated with men's perpetration of lifetime sexual violence against any women (Table 7.3). The results reveal that gender inequitable attitudes were not associated with perpetration of men's sexual violence against any women. However, when association between sex-related inequitable attitudes and perpetration of sexual violence was explored, a significant association was found in the rural site. Thus, rural men who held the most gender inequitable opinions in relation to sex were 1.80 times more likely to perpetrate sexual violence against a woman.

**Table 7.3:** Associated between men's attitude and perpetration of partner and/or non-partner sexual violence against women in Bangladesh, %

| Gender related attitude                                | Urban (n=687) |         |           | Rural (n=746) |         |           |
|--|---------------|---------|-----------|---------------|---------|-----------|
|  | OR            | P value | 95% CI    | OR            | P value | 95% CI    |
| <b>Gender related inequitable attitude, score:</b>     |               |         |           |               |         |           |
| High   | Ref           | Ref     | Ref       | Ref           | Ref     | Ref       |
| Medium   | 0.67          | 0.18    | 0.37-1.20 | 0.81          | 0.35    | 0.53-1.26 |
| Low  | 0.60          | 0.13    | 0.31-1.16 | 0.61          | 0.11    | 0.34-1.11 |
| <b>Sex related gender inequitable attitude, score:</b> |               |         |           |               |         |           |
| High   | Ref           | Ref     | Ref       | Ref           | Ref     | Ref       |
| Medium   | 0.76          | 0.38    | 0.41-1.41 | 1.10          | 0.75    | 0.63-1.92 |
| Low  | 1.14          | 0.66    | 0.64-2.03 | 1.80          | 0.03    | 1.06-3.06 |

**Figure 7.3:** Motivations for rape perpetrated by men against women by site, %



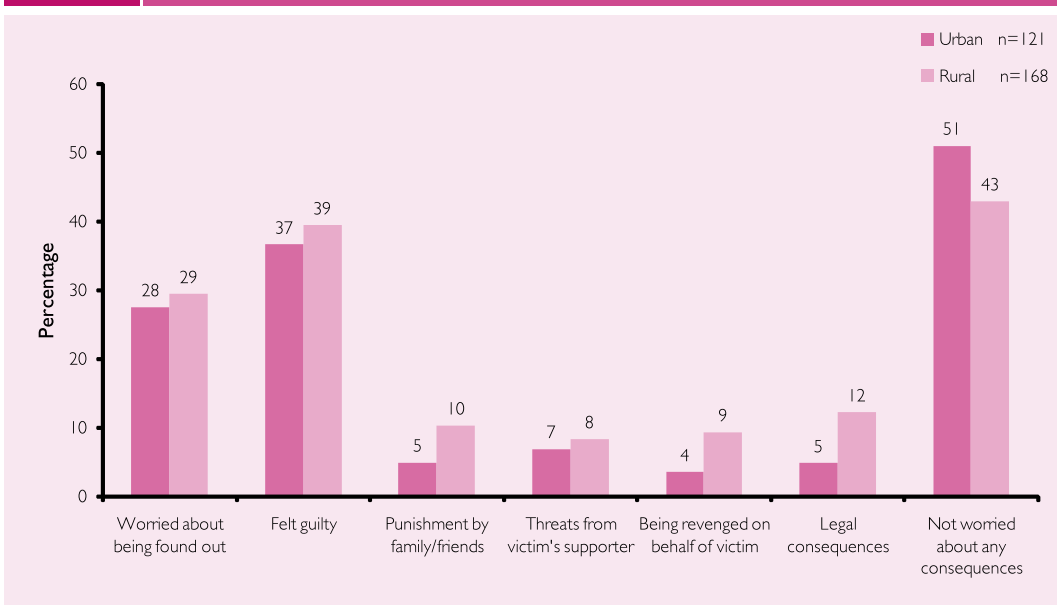
### 7.4 Men's immediate reaction after perpetrating sexual violence against women

As evident from Table 7.4 and Figure 7.4, 51 percent of urban and 43 percent of rural perpetrators of sexual violence did not report any consequences of such violence on them. A little more than one third felt guilty, while little more than one fourth were worried. Worries about repercussion from the woman's side or for being punished, experiencing revenge or being subjected to legal consequences were reported by less than one tenth of the perpetrators.

**Table 7.4:** Men's immediate reaction after perpetration of sexual violence against women, %

| Consequences                                      | Urban(n=121) | Rura (n=168) |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Worried a lot that I would be found out           | 27.5         | 29.4         |
| Felt guilty                                       | 36.6         | 39.4         |
| Punishment from my family/friends                 | 4.9          | 10.3         |
| Threats from someone supporting her/him           | 6.9          | 8.3          |
| Violence from someone getting revenge for her/him | 3.5          | 9.3          |
| Any legal consequences - arrest or jail           | 4.8          | 12.2         |
| No consequences                                   | 51.0         | 42.9         |

**Figure 7.4:** Men's immediate reaction after perpetration of sexual violence against women by site, %



# 8

## DISCUSSION

The levels of perpetration of lifetime intimate partner physical violence against women in both the urban and rural sites was comparable to the nationally representative 2007 BDHS (2009) findings. These rates exceeded any reports from IMAGES conducted in other countries around the world. Surprisingly, reports of such violence during the last 12 months were relatively low (around 13 percent) and were not close to the highest levels reported by IMAGES elsewhere. This pattern of reporting of high levels of lifetime violence and then relatively low levels of current violence is comparable to the findings from Rwanda (Barker et al. 2011).

There was variation in gender-related attitudes among men in both the sites. However, gender inequitable attitudes were widespread whether measured by the GEM Scale or by the scale developed in this study, which added some items from the scale devised by MRC. Although men's opinions varied by gender-related items, they almost universally supported at least one

gender inequitable item. One contradiction in the reports was noticeable. Despite high reports of condoning attitudes towards gender inequity (95 percent), an even higher proportion of men reported subscribing to the idea that men and women should be treated equally. This contradiction might indicate a socially desirable response conforming to the widespread promotion of equal treatment of men and women.

It is noteworthy that urban men consisting of a younger group with more education seem relatively more gender equitable compared to their rural counterparts. The regression results show that education indeed is an important correlate of gender equitable attitudes. Thus, in both the areas, secondary and upper education increased the likelihood of greater gender equitable attitudes among men, which points to the importance of increased education as a prevention measure. Childhood exposure to physical violence increased the risk of having

the most gender inequitable attitudes among men across sites and among urban men in the moderately inequitable group. Lower socio-economic status was also associated with higher risks of inequitable gender attitudes.

Negative associations between gender equitable attitudes and men's experience of violence during childhood support findings from other IMAGES studies (Barker et al. 2011).

Greater gender equitable attitudes were negatively associated with men's perpetration of intimate partner physical violence against women in both the sites. These findings lend support to the interventions targeted towards changing men's gender attitudes. Overall, these findings suggest that positively changing gender-related attitudes actually matters for prevention of violence against women, which is consistent with findings from IMAGES study in other settings (Barker et al. 2011).

Interestingly, male reporting of sexual violence against female intimate partners (15 percent) was much lower than female reported rates (50 percent) in the same rural site in a study conducted as part of the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women (2005). Although there is a huge time lag between the two surveys (10 years), trends as observed from BDHS 2004 (26 percent) and 2007 (18 percent) do not suggest any radical changes in the levels of violence over time (BDHS 2005; BDHS 2009). The tendency of lower reporting of intimate partner sexual violence by men compared to women (9 percent versus 18 percent, respectively) is also observed in 2007 BDHS (2009), where both men and women were asked to report about this violence. Although underreporting to conform to socially acceptable behaviours may contribute to lower reporting this study believes that there is another important reason for such underreporting linked to the interaction between the way sexual violence is defined and the culture of silence of women. Sexual violence against a woman refers to sex against her will. But in settings where the culture of silence and fear of repercussion preclude women's ability to express unwillingness in sex men may not always

recognize sexual violence. It is noteworthy that in our study most sexual violence occurred within marriage. Thus, in a socio-cultural context, where sex is considered a husband's entitlement (e.g., the refusal of sex by a wife is not expected by an overwhelming majority of the men and where more than two fifths of women believe they cannot refuse to have sex with their husbands (Garcia-Moreno et al. 2005)), space is created for sexual violence to go unnoticed by men. In this social context men personally may not need to resort to forced sex as social norms, perceptions and attitudes preclude reporting of unwillingness in sex by women and becomes instrumental in inducing sexual violence. Thus, this structural violence needs to be addressed by changing such violence-condoning social norms and attitudes.

Notwithstanding men's underreporting of perpetration of sexual violence against any women (partner and non-partner) in the present study sites the prevalence rates were higher than all the IMAGES countries except for India. The level of gang rape reported in this study was 2 percent compared to less than 1 percent reported in all other IMAGES countries (Barker et al. 2011) except for South Africa, where the level was as high as 9 percent (Jewkes et al. 2009 cited in Barker et al. 2011). In contrast to many other countries, sexual violence by men was perpetrated mostly against female intimate partners in Bangladesh. Noteworthy is the fact that more than two fifths of the men in both sites had first forced sex when they were children (i.e., aged less than 19), indicating the need for intervention in early years of life.

The finding that one third of the men sexually abused women for taking out their anger or for punishing them mirrors men's attitude towards women and women's low status and position. Most disturbing is the fact that about two thirds of the men mentioned perpetrating sexual violence just for fun. Changing these men and this culture might be extremely challenging. What this 'fun' entails need to be unpacked for better understanding the problem and for enabling policymakers and program implementers to address this. Men's perpetration of sexual violence against any women (partner

or non-partner) was not associated with overall gender-related attitudinal scores, but with sex-related inequitable attitudes in the rural area, which makes sense in light of the finding that sex was considered by many as an entitlement.

It is interesting to note that almost half of the perpetrators did not have any concerns or reactions after committing the violence, suggesting sexual violence as a normative behavior without fear of any repercussion. Fear of any repercussion was indeed reported by less than 10 percent of the men. The legal framework for addressing sexual violence within marriage needs to be developed and laws must be passed and implemented. Simultaneously, awareness regarding women's sexual and reproductive rights and an enabling environment for accessing these rights need to be created.

A little less than one third of sexual violence perpetrators reported worries about being found out, indicating stigma. Encouraging is the fact that about one third of the perpetrators reported feeling guilty, suggesting space for intervention. The findings on men's motivations and immediate reaction after sexual violence suggest a need for different strategies of intervention for

different groups of perpetrators.

Some possible limitations of this study need to be mentioned. Being a cross-sectional survey, causal inference cannot be drawn from these study findings. Also, strictly speaking, the findings are not generalizable beyond the study areas, however there is no reason to believe that these study areas are particularly unique or have different patterns from what might be expected in other areas of Bangladesh. As a study based on self-reports, recall might be an issue. The relatively high refusal rate in the urban area may have biased the findings. The interview took about an hour, which may have introduced participant fatigue.

Despite these possible limitations, the study is the first of its kind in Bangladesh to collect extensive data on men's attitudes and practices regarding violence against women. Findings from this study contribute to a better understanding of men's attitudes regarding gender and violence against women and their practices in relation to violence. As the study findings are similar across some developing countries, it is important to learn from each other. Interventions need to be jointly designed and adapted for specific contexts.

# 9

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study reconfirm that the prevalence on violence against women and girls is very high in Bangladesh. Based on the lifetime prevalence of perpetration millions of women, girls and boys experience physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence. It is vital to respond to the needs of these individuals in terms of legal, health and psycho-social support. However, with a problem of such scale, the need for services outstrips the capacity of Bangladesh. Violence against women and girls therefore requires a major focus on primary prevention and this study with its focus on perpetration, masculinities, social norms and attitudes, helps us to see the way forward.

There is no single-quick fix to this complicated and widespread problem, but violence against women and girls is not inevitable. A significant number of men in Bangladesh do not use violence against women, and show more gender equitable attitudes. Violence can be reduced through well-designed and effective programmes and policies that

target determinants at the societal, community, family and individual levels. The following recommendations are based specifically on the findings of the study and draw on evidence of prevention efforts that have some evidence of effectiveness. However, there is a dearth of evidence of effective programmes and policies for violence prevention, therefore any interventions in the Bangladesh context should include rigorous evaluation for continued learning. It is also recommended that effective and promising practices from outside of Bangladesh as adapted and evaluated for the specific socio-cultural context.

### **Change Socio-Cultural Norms Regarding Gender Attitudes And Masculinity**

1. **Develop and implement interventions targeted towards changing men and boy's gender attitudes.** The study shows

that greater gender equitable attitudes are negatively associated with men's perpetration of intimate partner physical violence against women in both urban and rural sites. Therefore, positively changing gender-related attitudes actually matters for prevention of violence against women. Programmes that show promise in this area include empowerment and participatory approaches for addressing gender inequality such as Stepping Stones and SASA!

2. **Promote new notions of masculinity that are associated with non-violence, respect and equality.** According to the study, dominant notions of masculinity in Bangladesh are linked to toughness, honour, and sexual prowess and dominance, which promote violence against women and girls. However, a large number of men do not use violence and show more equitable gender attitudes – thus alternative masculinities can be promoted to help end violence against women and girls.
3. **Change social and cultural gender norms through comprehensive media awareness campaigns**
4. **Work with men who do not perpetrate sexual violence against women as allies in interventions against sexual violence.**

### Address Ideologies of Male Sexual Entitlement

The study found that both sexual and physical violence committed by men is to a large extent rooted in ideologies of male sexual entitlement. More than 75 percent of men who had raped were motivated by sexual entitlement. In addition, men who have had transactional sex are significantly more likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence. Commonly held beliefs such as men need sex more than women do, or that women who have been raped are in part to blame, further reinforce the significance of this issue.

1. **Develop and implement interventions that work with young boys and girls to promote healthy, equitable intimate relationships where sex is always consensual.** The

disparity between women's reports (from other studies) and men's reports of sexual violence within marriage highlights that men often do not even recognize their behavior as sexually violent, because of the social norm that they are entitled to sex with their wives irrespective of consent. School-based prevention programmes that address social norms, perceptions and attitudes among men and women, boys and girls, where sex is considered a husband's entitlement and wives feel unable to refuse sex could be effective.

2. **Develop, pass and implement legislation that criminalises marital rape.** The majority of sexual violence in Bangladesh occurs within marriage. However, less than 13 percent of men who have raped experienced any legal consequences for their actions. Such impunity must be addressed through legislative reform.

### Promote Gender Equality And Social Equality

1. **Promote attainment of secondary level education of boys, alongside education of girls.** The study found that men who had completed secondary level education or higher were significantly less likely to perpetrate physical and or sexual violence against women. This requires addressing socio-economic inequalities.
2. **Promote women's empowerment.** The finding that one third of the men sexually abused women for taking out their anger or for punishing them, and that about two thirds of the men mentioned perpetrating sexual violence just for fun, highlights the dire need to address men's attitude towards women and women's low status and position in society. Empowerment and participatory approaches for addressing gender inequality such as microfinance and gender-equality training such as Stepping Stones in South Africa.
3. **Improve the implementation of currently existing laws on domestic violence.**



The majority of men who committed sexual violence did not even experience consequences such as guilt or worry about possible repercussions. Legal and criminal justice systems should aim to prevent further violence, facilitate recovery and ensure access to justice – for example through the provision of specialized police units, restraining orders and multi-agency sexual response teams. These actions would also help to reinforce non-violent social norms by sending a message that such acts will not be tolerated.

4. **Implement more gender equitable policies.** Violence against women and girls is rooted in gender inequality. Dismantling patriarchy and the social structures that support inequality will contribute to preventing violence against women and girls. Such policies could be related to paternity leave to promote men's care giving roles, women's access to health care, property, education, political participation and representation, among others.

## End Violence Against Children.

Physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children was found to be surprisingly common and found to be associated with violence later in life. We can break this cycle of violence if we address child abuse. While physical and sexual violence are often considered more serious than emotional abuse, the study found that boys who experience emotional abuse are most likely to perpetrate violence against women later in life so this must also be addressed.

1. **Implement child protection laws and end corporal punishment in the home.**

2. **Ensure implementation of the government's commitments in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child.**
3. **Implement school-based training to help children recognize and avoid potentially sexually abusive situations.**
4. **Parent education programmes to prevent child maltreatment**
5. **Bullying prevention programmes**

## Specifically Target At-Risk Groups

6. **Target primary prevention efforts at younger age groups, particularly boys.** Nearly half of all men who reported perpetrating sexual violence, perpetrated sexual violence for the first time when they were children or adolescents (under 19 years). School-based programmes to prevent violence in early relationships. While dating is not common in Bangladesh, some school-based programmes to prevent dating violence in high-income countries have been proven effective in reducing intimate partner violence. Such programmes could be adapted to address IPV in early marriage, particularly as violence seems to start early in life.
7. **Interventions for children and adolescents subjected to child maltreatment and/or exposed to intimate partner violence.** The study shows that men who experienced physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse as a child are significantly more likely to perpetrate violence against women in later life. Intervening early with this at-risk group has shown emerging evidence of effectiveness in prevention in some contexts.

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# Annex I

## Description of statistical analyses for exploring factors associated with men's attitude regarding gender

Several steps were taken in this analysis. First, principal component analyses were conducted to assess whether all the items included in the measurement had internal consistency. Cronbach alpha for the urban area was as high as 0.77 and 0.67 for the rural area, indicating reliability. The items included in the scale are shown in Box I. As per the coding scheme, a higher score denotes a relatively greater gender equitable attitude, while a lower score denotes a relatively lower gender equitable attitude of men. The scores obtained from this exercise were divided into tertiles. Thus, men included in the first tertile were most gender inequitable within each site, while men in the third tertile were most gender equitable.

**Box I: Items used for measuring men's gender attitude in Principal Component Analysis**

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and cook for her family.                              |
| 2  | Men need sex more than women do.  |
| 3  | There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten.   |
| 4  | It is a woman's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant.   |
| 5  | A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family together.  |
| 6  | You would be outraged if your wife asked you to use a condom.   |
| 7  | If someone insults you, you will defend your reputation, with force if you have to.                             |
| 8  | To be a man, you need to be tough   |
| 9  | You think that a woman should obey her husband  |
| 10 | You think that a man should have the final say in all family matters  |
| 11 | You think that a woman cannot refuse to have sex with her husband.  |
| 12 | You think that if a wife does something wrong her husband has the right to punish her                           |
| 13 | You think that when a woman is raped, she is usually to blame for putting herself in that situation             |
| 14 | You think that if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape  |
| 15 | You think that people should be treated the same whether they are male or female                                |
| 16 | You think that men should share the work around the house with women such as doing dishes, cleaning and cooking |

The assumption of proportional odds model was checked using likelihood ratio test to explore whether the relationship between the covariates was the same for the first versus the second tertile and then the first versus the last tertile of attitudinal score. The result suggested possible violation of the proportional odds assumption ( $p < 0.001$ ). Hence, multinomial logistic regression was used to separately explore correlates of second and third attitudinal tertiles compared to the first tertile. Two sets of regression analyses were performed for the second and third tertiles for each of the sites. In both the sets and both the sites the reference category was the most equitable men who had a zero value in the dichotomous dependent variable. In the first regression analysis the moderately gender equitable category was compared against the most gender equitable category, while in the second regression analysis most gender inequitable category was compared against the most gender equitable category. In multinomial logistic regression analyses clustering at village and moholla levels was taken into account. Factors such as age, education, socio-economic status, and experiences of emotional, physical and sexual violence were treated as independent variables in the models.

# Annex 2

## Research team members

| Name                     | Designation                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ruchira Tabassum Naved   | Principal Investigator        |
| Mizanur Rashid Shuvra    | Sr.Research Investigator      |
| Subrina Farah            | Research Investigator         |
| Jesmin Khan (Muna)       | Research Investigator         |
| Hamidul Haque            | Statistician                  |
| Md. Rafiqul Haque        | Senior Field Research Officer |
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| Md. Iftekhar Hossen      | "                             |
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| Md. Saidur Rahman        | "                             |
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