Correlates of Gender Inequitable Attitudes of Men in Bangladesh

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SVRI Forum 2013
Bangkok, Thailand
Background

- Attitudes regarding gender is highly inequitable in Bangladesh *(WHO, 2005; BDHS 2007)*

- Violence condoning attitudes at the individual, community and district levels contribute to high level of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Bangladesh *(Amin et al., 2013; Johnson & Das, 2008; Naved & Persson, 2010; VanderEnde et al., 2013)*
Background

- VAW is fundamentally linked to gender inequality and patriarchy as well as male ideals and expectations about what it means to be a good wife, which are reflected in attitudes (Yllo 1993; Yllo and Bograd 1988; Yllo 1983; Dobash and Dobash 1980).

- Undoubtedly, it is important to better understand the attitudes of men and their correlates for preventing VAWG.
Study objectives were to explore:

- Attitudes of men regarding gender
- Correlates of gender inequitable attitudes of men in Bangladesh
The data and methods

- Population-based survey (Jan-Jun 2011)
- Study sites: Urban & Rural
- Study population: Men aged 18-49
- Total sample size: 2,400 (1,254 in urban & 1,146 in rural site)
- Multi-stage sampling scheme
- One eligible man/household (randomly selected)
• Face-to-face interviews using hand held computers (PDAs)

• Interviews conducted in private & in a non-judgmental manner

• Questionnaire stemmed from IMAGES & WHO but adapted for focusing on GBV & the Bangladesh context

• Data on background characteristics of men were collected (e.g., age, education employment status, marital status, etc)
Measurements and data analysis

An 8-item GEM scale was used for exploring male attitudes regarding gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Woman’s most important role is to take care of her family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man need more sex than women do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measurements and data analysis

• Distribution was explored of:
  - Responses to GEM scale by item
  - Men’s socio-demographic characteristics, and
  - Potential covariates

• Factor analysis was performed to check whether the GEM scale items cling together and define a latent construct (i.e., gender attitudes in this case)

• The scores obtained for each individual from factor analysis was categorized into tertiles corresponding to least, moderate & most gender inequitable attitudes
Measurements and data analysis

• Likelihood ratio test was performed to check whether low to medium category is the mirror image of medium to high category of gender inequitable attitudes.

• Finally, based on the result of this test multinomial logistic regression analysis was conducted for identifying the correlates of least to moderate and moderate to most gender inequitable attitudes of men.
## Background characteristics of men surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age, %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary or above</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Background characteristics of men surveyed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How easy to find Tk. 100,000/$1370 for treatment), %</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat difficult</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy or very easy</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Childhood exposure to abuse, %</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessing mother abuse by father</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Men agreeing or strongly agreeing to items from Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale by site in Bangladesh, %

- A woman’s most important role is to take care of her family: Urban 78, Rural 92
- Men need more sex than women do: Urban 69, Rural 78
- There are times when women deserve to be beaten: Urban 60, Rural 62
- It is women’s responsibility to avoid getting pregnant: Urban 37, Rural 59
- Women should tolerate violence for keeping family together: Urban 50, Rural 64
- Husband would be outraged if wife asked to use a condom: Urban 14, Rural 21
- A man would defend reputation with force if insulted: Urban 66, Rural 69
- A man needs to be tough: Urban 93, Rural 98
- Agreeing to no statement: Urban 2, Rural 0
- Agreeing to all statements: Urban 7, Rural 8
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men having least gender inequitable attitudes</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men having moderate gender inequitable attitudes</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men having most gender inequitable attitudes</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Correlates of most gender inequitable attitudes of men compared to moderately inequitable attitudes in Bangladesh

- Age category 35-49 (ref. 18-24) - 1.49
- Schooling, secondary or higher (ref. no schooling) - 0.63
- Somewhat difficult to find Tk 100,000 / $1370 for treatment (ref. very difficult) - 0.74
- Easy or very easy to find Tk 100,000 / $1370 for treatment (ref. very difficult) - 0.57
- Physical abuse during childhood - 2.01
- Relative Risk Ratio

- Urban
- Rural
Correlates of men’s least inequitable gender attitudes compared to moderately inequitable attitudes in Bangladesh

- Schooling, secondary or higher (ref. no schooling) - Relative Risk Ratio: 3.68
- Witnessing mother being abused by father during childhood - Relative Risk Ratio: 0.51
Take home messages

• Despite some variations, gender inequitable attitudes are very common in Bangladesh. Men almost universally support at least one gender inequitable statement. About 7-8% men agreed to all of these statements.

• Majority of the men were of the opinion that at times a woman deserves to be beaten and that a woman should tolerate violence for keeping family intact.
Take home messages

• Correlates of gender inequitable attitudes of men differ by residence and by levels of inequitable attitudes

• Secondary and higher education & highest socioeconomic status reduces the chances of a man having most gender inequitable attitudes, while physical abuse during childhood increases these chances in both the sites though to varying degrees

• Belonging to oldest age category increased the chances of a man being most gender inequitable compared to the youngest men in the rural site
Take home messages

• The chances of an urban man being least gender inequitable was lowered by 51% if he witnessed mother being abused by father

• Secondary and higher education increased the chances of an urban man being least gender equitable by 3 times

• In the rural site, no covariates entered in the model had any association with the outcome
Policy implications

- Male education needs to be promoted up to secondary level and beyond

- Child maltreatment needs to be prevented for reducing the chances of a man to have highly gender inequitable attitudes

- Wife abuse needs to be addressed for increasing the chances of making men least gender inequitable

- BDHS and UHS offers data on gender attitudes in different pockets of Bangladesh. Targeting highly gender inequitable areas may be based on these data
Limitations of the study

- Cross-sectional data not allowing causal inference
- Crude measure of socioeconomic status
- The model may not be appropriate for exploring the chances of a man having least gender inequitable attitudes in the rural site
Acknowledgements

- Men for participating in the study
- UNFPA, Bangladesh office for funding the study
- P4P for technical assistance