The association between witnessing intimate partner violence and later experience of physical and sexual intimate partner violence in Kampala, Uganda

Shannon Wood
National Institutes of Health
Gender Violence and Health Centre, LSHTM

CEDOVIP
Center for Domestic Violence Prevention

LONDON SCHOOL of HYGIENE &TROPICAL MEDICINE

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

Raising Voices

Witnessing Violence as a Child and Adult IPV

- Literature highlights witnessing violence as a child as a risk factor for adult IPV, but few studies have examined the difference between physical and sexual violence

- Proposed mechanisms:
  - May teach children normalcy of violence
  - Violence may act as form of emotional abuse

SASA!

- SASA!: a cluster randomized controlled trial addressing the drivers of gender-based violence and HIV by reshaping gender norms
- Secondary analysis of baseline data
- 717 women in eight communities in Kampala, Uganda interviewed from 2007-2008

Analysis

- Exposure: Witnessing violence as a child
- Outcomes:
  - Physical and/or sexual IPV
  - Physical IPV only
  - Sexual IPV only
  - Combined physical and sexual IPV
- Odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals calculated from multivariate logistic regression models
- Models adjusted for study site, age group, education level, type of sexual partnership, partner having an extramarital relationship, and partner's drinking

Demographic Results

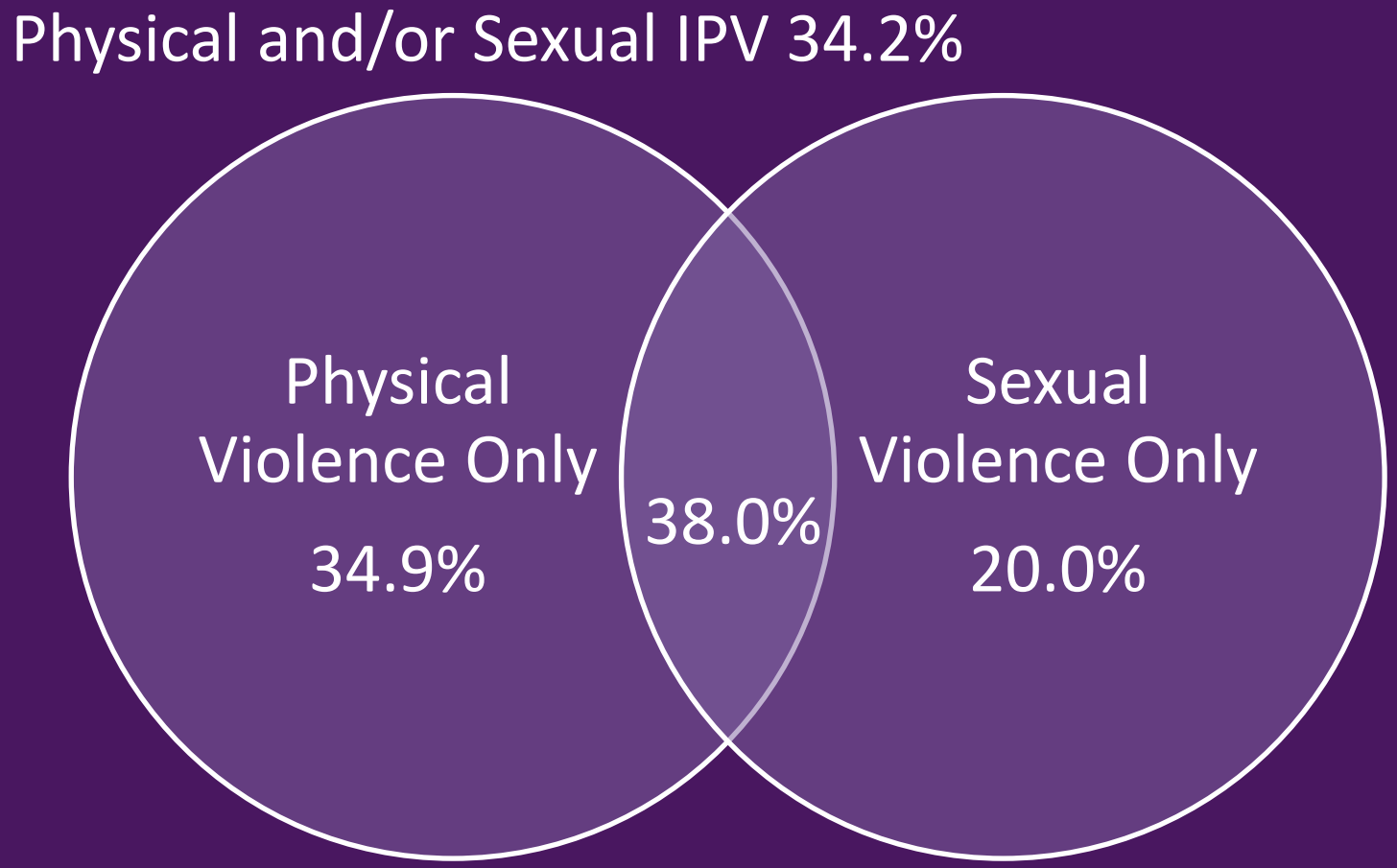
- Mean age of 28.3 (SD=7.7)
- 65% from the Buganda tribe
- 77% completed primary school, but only 6% completed university
- 77% currently married or had a regular partner

Prevalence of Exposure and Outcomes

- Witnessing Violence as a Child: 29%

- All forms of IPV: 44%
- Physical violence only: 28%
- Sexual violence only: 6%
- Combined physical and sexual violence: 22%

Prevalence of Witnessing Violence as a Child Across IPV Outcomes



Crude vs. Adjusted Regression Models

Table 1: Crude and Adjusted Associations between Exposure to Violence as a Child and Later Violence Outcomes for Women

	All Forms of Violence (n=294)		Physical Violence Only (n=156)		Sexual Violence Only (n=35)		Combined Physical and Sexual Violence (n=103)	
Witnessing Parental Violence as Child	OR (95% CI)	p-value	OR (95% CI)	p-value	OR (95% CI)	p-value	OR (95% CI)	p-value
Crude	1.41 (1.01, 1.97)	0.05	1.5 (1.00, 2.24)	0.05	0.61 (0.26, 1.42)	0.25	1.67 (1.05, 2.65)	0.03
Adjusted	2.04 (1.10, 3.80)	0.02	2.27 (1.13, 4.54)	0.02	0.54 (0.11, 2.76)	0.46	2.63 (1.10, 6.33)	0.03

Adjusted for: study site, age group, education level, current partnership, partner's extramarital relationships, and partner's drinking

Discussion

- Consistent with literature for all forms of violence, physical violence only, and combined physical and sexual violence
- Further exploration of sexual violence only with larger sub-sample
- Limitations:
  - Generalisability
  - Small subgroup analyses
  - Difficulty in assessing frequency of violence
  - Did not differentiate type of violence witnessed as a child

Conclusions

- This study confirmed the already-proposed association between witnessing violence as a child and later physical and sexual abuse
- The associations continued to hold for all forms of violence, physical violence only, and combined physical and sexual violence after adjusting for confounding

Recommendations

- Further research on type of violence witnessed by children and other childhood maltreatment exposures on adult violence outcomes
- Further research on predictors of sexual violence only
- Further research of women who witnessed violence as a child but did not experience adult IPV

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