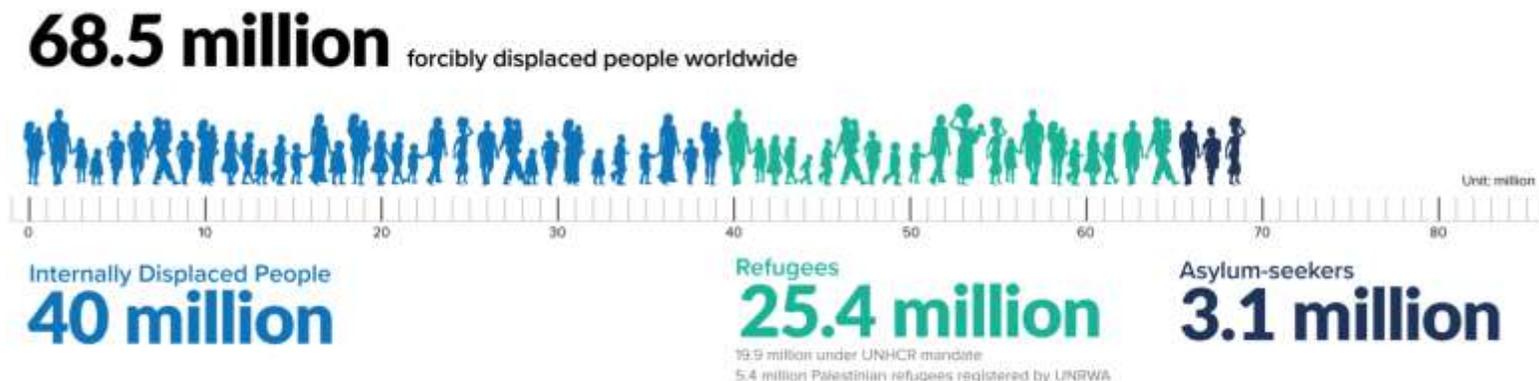


INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND EMPOWERMENT AMONG REFUGEE WOMEN IN RWANDA: AN EXPLORATION

Naira Kalra, M. Phil, PhD



The Refugee Crisis:



- A **refugee** is defined by UNHCR:

“who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so.”¹

- *“A **protracted refugee** situation is defined as one where 25,000 or more refugees from the same country have been hosted for five or more years by a host country”* (UNHCR, 2004, 2018)

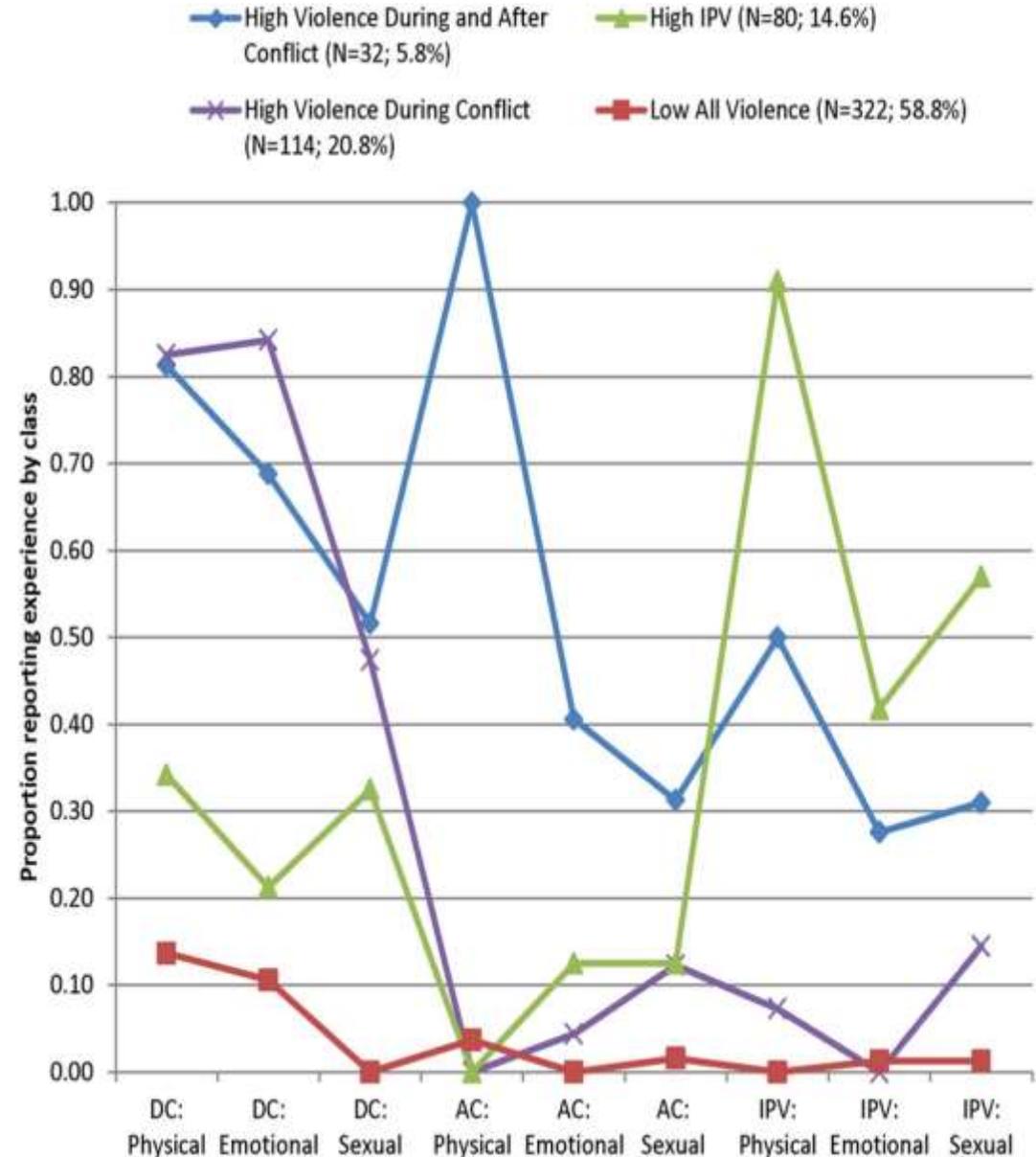
Source: Image from UNHCR facts and statistics

<https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html> <https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

¹<https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>

➤ Unclear prevalence

- PTSD and depression symptoms worse for those who continue to experience IPV (Gupta et al., 2014; Vinck & Pham, 2013; Wirtz et al., 2018)
- Sipsma et al. (2015) links between emotional distress and IPV in refugees in Rwanda:
 - High lifetime IPV class report 2 X odds of experiencing emotional distress compared to those allocated to the class reporting only high NPV during conflict (and no IPV)
 - The high lifetime IPV class also had 4 X odds of emotional distress compared to those experiencing no violence
 - Similar health consequences of IPV- but in a broken health system



**Why are refugee women
disproportionately affected by IPV?**

Changing gender roles & strengthening of harmful masculinity in men:

“she will say, don't ask, you are just my husband, you don't work, I eat from UNHCR, you don't give me anything, don't ask. The man becomes angry, if your wife tells you 'you don't control me', you have to become angry” - Somali refugee man in the study by Horn, 2010a, (pg. 368)

- Men's traditional role of a provider and protector- leading to exertion of harmful forms of masculinity, control over the partner, alcohol consumption, multiple partners etc.
- Women's traditional roles involved subservience and taking care of the housework and children now  in employment opportunities and egalitarian treatment by aid agencies= agency! (Relative resource theory)

“Even if you quarrel, you can't say to him, “you were out with a girlfriend.” You can't say that because you will be beaten like hell. It is his home—you have no rights” - Mozambican woman refugee who settled in South Africa in Sideris, 2003, (pg. 720)

Other factors: Experience of non-partner violence and exposure to violence in the past:

- Exposure to inter-parental violence during childhood (Rubenstein et al., 2017; Wirtz et al., 2018) → acceptance of IPV, mental health, re-victimization
- Partner's experience of violence during conflict → Partner's alcohol consumption as 'self-medication' (Ertl et al., 2016; Ezard, 2014; Mootz et al., 2018; Saile et al., 2013)
- Women's exposure to sexual violence during conflict (Kelly et al. 2011, 2018; Wako et al., 2015) → mental health consequences for women (Tol et al., 2017; Saile et al., 2013)
- Current non-partner violence from outsiders (host community) during activities like fuel gathering (GACC, 2016; Carlson, 2005; Wako et al., 2015)

How does women's decision-making agency and IPV interact in this setting?

- Women's agency is perceived as both a risk factor and a protective factor for IPV in these settings
- For whom is agency protective and whom does it increase risk?
- To holistically understand the power dynamics in inter-personal relationships of refugee women in Rwanda we aimed to carry out analyses to explore:
 - If there are classes or groups of women in our sample that are different with regard to the power and agency they may have in their intimate relationships;
 - Which latent class structure best describes the heterogeneity in power and agency in intimate relationships among refugee women in Rwanda and;
 - What are the key risk factors that are associated with membership into different classes of power and agency in these intimate relationships.

Study population and sampling:

Study context and sampling:

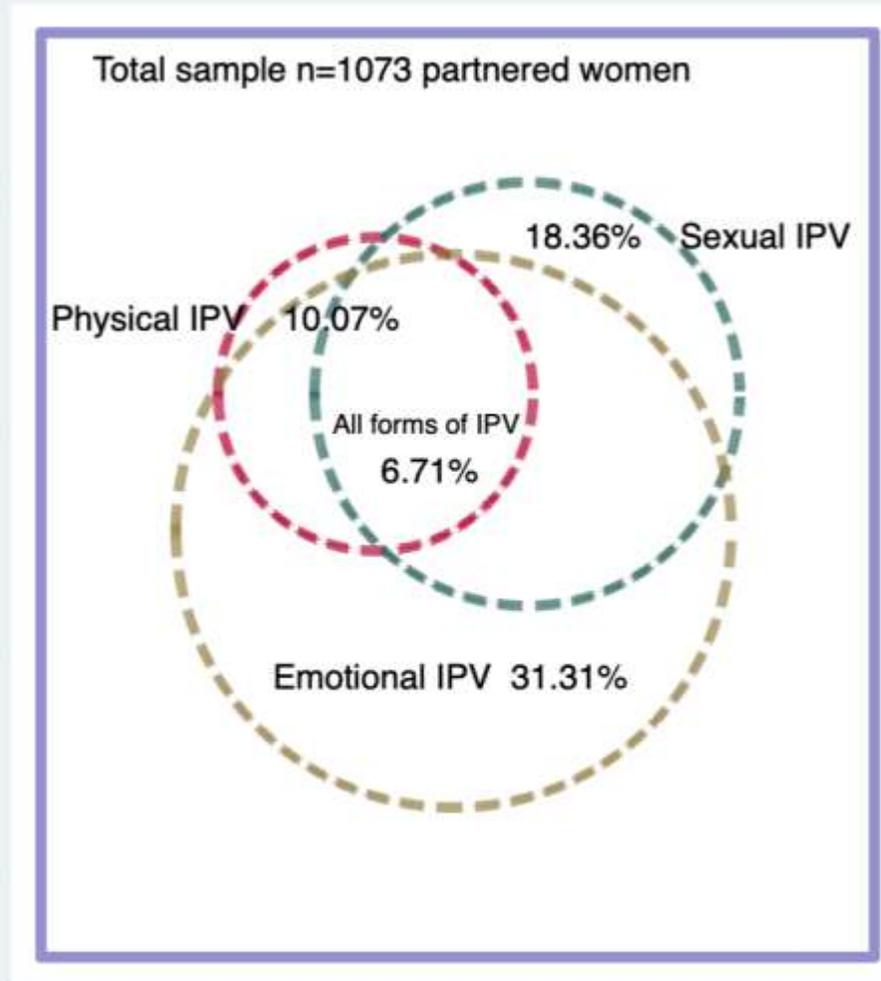
- Quantitative cross-sectional survey
- Implemented in *Kigeme* refugee camp Rwanda, using UNHCR's list + purposive sampling
- Plan International (& ARC) had on-going activities with regard to responding to GBV
- Parent study aims at assessing impact of clean cooking on NPV (and IPV) and empowerment on IPV
- Survey implemented using electronic data capture on password-protected tablets by trained non-refugee female enumerators in classrooms in the camp

The inclusion criteria:

- Women between the ages of 18 years–45 years of age (1 woman per household)
- In good general health- has the ability to give informed consent
- Currently living in a refugee camp
- Have the ability to participate in the interviews (i.e. can come to a private place)

Total sample size **1,073** partnered women

IPV in the past 6 months:



Total IPV any:
n=385, 35.88%



**Using the Theory of
Gender and Power to
Understand the
Interaction between
Intimate-Partner
Violence and
Household Decision
Making Agency –
A Latent Class
Approach**



Theory of Gender and Power (Connell, 1987)

3 structures used to identify and measure gender-based inequities in power between men and women (Wingood & DiClimente, 2000,2002)

- ***Gendered division of labor (or sexual division of labor)***

- e.g. women performing gendered 'labor' and having a reduced ability to seek employment; manifest itself as unemployment or under employment of women, lack of education opportunities

- ***Gendered division of power (sexual division of power)***

- e.g. power inequity between men and women- IPV, decision-making agency

- Some studies find a negative association between displaced women's decision-making power and IPV (Rubenstein et al., 2017)

- ***Cathexis (Gendered Social Norms and Affective Attachments)***

- e.g. gender unequal social norms and practices, rigid gender-roles e.g. accepting attitudes towards wife beating, acceptance of alcohol consumption and multiple partners by men; inequities, stigma and victim blaming- internalized by women and manifested as psychological distress

Methods:

Latent Class Analysis: Explore if there are ‘classes’ or groups of women in our sample that are different with regard to the power they may have in their intimate relationships

Grouped women by patterns of their responses to 6 binary indicators of relationship power:

- Any physical IPV in the past 6 months (yes or no);
- Any sexual IPV in the past six months (yes or no);
- Any emotional IPV or resource denial in the past 6 months (yes or no);
- Is responsible for making all the primary decisions for the household (herself/jointly or ‘completely excluded’);
- Has final say about decisions involving how your family spends money on expensive items (herself/jointly or ‘completely excluded’);
- Believes whether “women should participate equally with their husbands in making decisions about the household?” (agreed or disagreed/neither)

Increased classes to identify the model with the best fit: based on information criteria and other indicators of model fit

Results:

Indicators	Class 1 Low Agency & Low IPV	Class 2 High agency & Low IPV	Class 3 High agency & High IPV
	n= 143	n= 746	n= 184
Proportion assigned to class	13.3%	69.5%	17.1%
Say in household decision making	0.626	0.893	0.798
Say in large household purchases	0.000	1.000	0.857
Right to decide equally	0.842	0.891	0.804
Emotional IPV	0.218	0.139	1.000
Physical IPV	0.009	0.008	0.494
Sexual IPV	0.078	0.056	0.712 ¹³

Latent Class Regressions:

Association of risk factors nested within the structures of gendered division of labor and cathexis that are associated with membership into different classes of power and agency in these intimate relationships

Variables that may impact membership in classes:

- Woman's age (continuous)
- Household size (continuous)
- Woman's education (any or none)
- Woman's employment (any or none)
- Partner had other partners (yes/she didn't know if he did or no)
- Partner consumes alcohol (yes or she didn't know/no)
- Woman holds views supportive of wife beating (yes or no/neither)
- Woman agreed that it's a wife's obligation to have sex with her husband even if she doesn't want (agree or disagree/neither)
- Psychological Distress (probable depression and anxiety and/or PTSD experienced over the past four weeks using HSCL-25 and HTQ cut-offs)

Variable/predictor	AOR (95% CI) Membership in Low agency Low IPV compared to High agency Low IPV	P value	AOR (95% CI) Membership in High agency High IPV compared to High agency Low IPV	P value
Household size	1.16 (1.07-1.28)	0.002**	1.10 (0.99-1.23)	0.08
Woman's age	0.92 (0.88-0.95)	< 0.001***	0.98 (0.94-1.02)	0.28
Woman has some education	0.81 (0.53- 1.23)	0.322	1.39 (0.89-2.21)	0.159
Woman is employed	0.89 (0.57-1.39)	0.597	0.75 (0.45-1.26)	0.279
Partner consumes alcohol	0.88 (0.59-1.31)	0.536	3.30 (2.11-5.17)	<0.001***
Partner has other partners	1.27 (0.82-1.96)	0.293	2.99 (1.95-4.59)	<0.001***
Justifies physical IPV	1.99 (1.06-3.74)	0.033**	0.95 (0.38-2.36)	0.91
Justifies sexual IPV	1.14 (0.76-1.71)	0.524	1.93 (1.25-2.97)	0.003**
Psychological distress	0.79 (0.57-1.39)	0.579	6.04 (3.53-10.34)	<0.001***

Overall conclusions of this paper:

- Overall, it appears that risk factors are more likely to be clustered with experiencing IPV despite the presence of agency in this group.
- Association between women's role in household decision-making and IPV is complex; IPV is an important factor- particularly associated with mental health outcomes even in the presence of high agency
- Using this data driven method provides an understanding of how vulnerabilities related to decision-making and IPV co-occur and co-exist in the group of women in our study
- Being a refugee overall increases women's agency and role in decision-making, and for some women exerting agency is protective, while for others it may increase their risk for IPV (Krause, 2014).
- Implications for our intervention

Limitations:

- Correlation  Causation!
- No exploration of temporality, no qualitative research
- Survey design not representative (although improvement over complete purposive sampling)- may be missing certain types of women
- Limited generalizability- one refugee camp in Rwanda
- Limited power (power calculation for clean cooking)
- Did not survey men (Mootz et al. (2018), find that women's reporting of partners' alcohol consumption is closely associated with men's actual alcohol consumption, we could not test if this is true in our setting)
- Approach to treat IPV as a binary variable- comparable but not complex

Strengths:

- Contributes to a nascent field of research
- Attempts at being representative at the household level- census like
- Limited non-response to questions in the survey
- Prevalence rates match other studies
- Measure of IPV was based on standardized questions WHO and Demographic Health Survey in Rwanda – Comparable
- Emphasize the need to measure all types of IPV and account for misclassifying other types as ‘no violence’ if the impact of one type of IPV alone is being assessed
- Theory driven H_0
- Guides our intervention work to also include men when addressing IPV

Appendix

Sampling & Survey:

- Quantitative cross-sectional survey
- Using UNHCR household list (31.2% (n=839) not found; of these 3.7%; n=38 did not want to participate)
- Attempted household census (n=1850) + purposive sampling (n=158)
- Total n=1992
- 1172 partnered women
- Removed those who had not lived with their partner at all in the 6 months prior to the survey (n=99)
- This resulted in a total sample size **1,073 partnered women**

Sampling	n	No. not found
Total population of the Camp: women, men and children	20,440	
Total number of households	3454 households + 383 single people = 3837	Not estimated
Total number of eligible women	5234	Not estimated
Total number of eligible women when one per household was selected	2689 (in 2667 households plus individual women)	See below
Total eligible partnered women	902	130
Total eligible single women	1787	709
Total women identified outside the lists	158*	N/A
Total women recruited to be interviewed	2008 of which effectively 1992 interviews were retained**	N/A
Total number of women who reported having an intimate partner	1,172	N/A
Partnered women who have lived with their partner in the past six months	1073	N/A
Total Inyenyeri (clean cooking) users in the sample	239	N/A

Partner Violence in the past 6 months	N	%
Physical IPV	108	10.07
Sexual IPV	197	18.36
Emotional IPV	336	31.31
Physical or Sexual IPV	233	21.71
Physical or Emotional IPV	342	31.87
Sexual or Emotional IPV	379	35.32
Physical or Sexual or Emotional IPV	385	35.88
Physical and Sexual IPV	72	6.71
Physical and Emotional IPV	102	9.51
Sexual and Emotional IPV	154	14.35
Physical & sexual & Emotional IPV	72	6.71

Classes	# free parameters	-2LL	AIC	BIC	LMR 2 times LL diff (p value)	BLRT, 2 times LL diff (p value)	Entropy
2 vs. 1	13	- 2891.199	5311.178	5375.894	487.246 (0.000)	497.220 (0.000)	0.861
3 vs 2	20	-2642.589	5267.143	5366.707	58.035 (0.000)	58.035 (0.000)	0.911
4 vs 3	27	-2613.571	5269.861	5404.272	11.056 (0.7127)	11.282 (0.6667)	0.702
5 vs 4	34	-2607.930	5274.189	5443.448	9.478 (0.2973)	9.672 (0.6667)	0.778

Physical IPV

- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever slapped you or thrown anything that could hurt you? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever pushed or shoved you? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever twisted your arm or pulled your hair? (DHS only)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever hit you with fists or with something else that could hurt you? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner husband/ partner ever threatened to use or actually used a gun, knife or other weapon against you? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever kicked you, dragged you or beaten you up? (WHO)

- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever choked you or burnt you on purpose? (WHO)

Sexual IPV

- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever physically forced you to have sex when you did not want to? (DHS and WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, have you ever had sex with a current husband or partner when you did not want to because you were afraid of what he might do? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever force you to do something sexual that you found degrading or humiliating? (WHO)

Emotional IPV

- Since coming to the camp, has your husband/partner ever insulted you or made you feel bad about yourself? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband/partner ever humiliated or belittled you in front of other people? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever done things to scare or intimidate you on purpose for example, by the way he looked at you, by yelling or smashing things, or destroying something you care about? (WHO)
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever threatened to harm you or harm someone you care about? (WHO)

Resource denial

- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever thrown you or your children out of the house where you were living?
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever refused to give you money you needed for household expenses and necessities even when he has money for other things?
- Since coming to the camp, has your husband or partner ever taken your money, property, jewelry or savings from you against your will?