

Changing normative beliefs to reduce partner violence

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WhatWorks

TO PREVENT VIOLENCE



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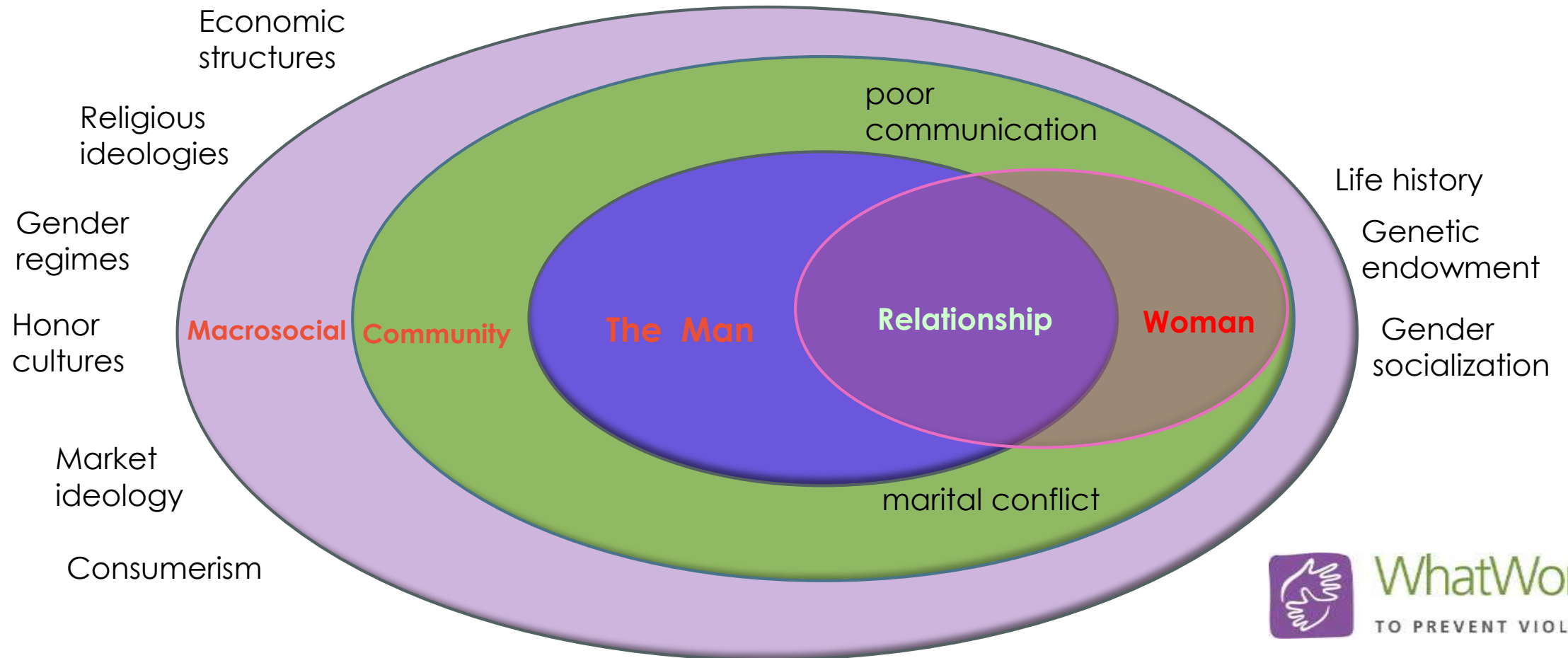
What role, if any, do norms play in driving prevalence of IPV and individual-level risk?

”

Norms are collective beliefs about what is typical and appropriate within a valued reference group

The origins of violence are multi-causal

Ecological Model



IPV is sustained by a set of interlocking beliefs, norms and attitudes

- ▶ Belief: Men are the “natural” head/authority in the family
- ▶ Attitude: Women should be obedient to their husbands
- ▶ Belief: Beating is an effective form of discipline
- ▶ Norm: Others expect men and women to adhere to strict, gendered division of labor
- ▶ Attitude: It is not right for other to intervene in the domestic matters of others
- ▶ Norm: Others will look down upon a man who is ‘controlled’ by his wife

Cross sectional studies suggest that norms are an important community and individual level risk factor

AUTHORS

- ▶ Koenig et al. 2006
- ▶ Boyle et al. 2009
- ▶ Heise 2012
- ▶ Heise & Kotsadam 2015

SOURCE

AJPH
Soc Sci Med
PhD
Lancet Global Health

COUNTRY

Bangladesh
India
Brazil, Peru
Multi-country
(88 surveys)



Tanya Abramsky's new analysis (LSHTM)

- ▶ We now have evidence from the SASA! Intervention trial that changing norms on acceptability of IPV is an important mechanism for **reducing** IPV victimization and perpetration

SASA! – Community mobilization approach

- ▶ Activities to reach out to all levels in the community to affect norm change
 - ◆ Training and on-going support of community activists
 - ◆ Uses the language of power rather than women's rights
 - ◆ Not curriculum based
- ▶ Content evolves with each phase



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Analysis

- ▶ Did SASA! Achieve both primary and secondary prevention of physical IPV?
- ▶ Which mediating factors played a role in reducing IPV?
 - ▶ Victimization of women
 - ▶ Perpetration by men

Methods

- ▶ Cluster level intention to treat analysis of prevalence in intervention versus control enumeration areas (EAs)
 - Adjusted for site pair (n=8),
 - Marital status
 - Baseline EA-level prevalence of physical IPV
- ▶ Assess intervention impact on intermediate variables and then association between intermediate variable and past year physical IPV*

**Risk ratios or risk difference calculated at the cluster-level, using logistic/poisson regression, adjusted for community-pair, and weighted according to the number of observations per village.



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Mediation analysis

- ▶ Asks: *Does measured impact appear to work through the hypothesized pathway?*
- ▶ If Adjusted RR reduces significantly when the intermediate variable is added to the full model, we take this as suggestive evidence of mediation
- ▶ Measure of effect = percent reduction in the adjusted risk ratio (for continuous variables) or adjusted risk difference (for binary variables)



Results

- ▶ 52% less physical IPV in last 12 months as reported by women (aRR 0.48, 95%CI 0.16 - 1.39)
- ▶ 61% reduction in past year physical IPV perpetration as reported anonymously by men (aRR 0.39, 95%CI 0.20 - 0.73)
- ▶ Intervention had an impact on both primary and secondary prevention (i.e. new and continued IPV)
- ▶ Impact was greatest on women who reported IPV at baseline

Hypothesized mechanisms of impact

Community

- Transform norms
 - Acceptability of wife beating
 - Gender norms
 - Sexual entitlement
 - Violence no longer private
- Community response*

Relationship

- Improved communication
- Changed power dynamics
- Relationship ends
- Reduced conflict
- Fewer outside partners

Individual

- Changed attitudes toward wife beating
- Changed attitudes toward male sexual entitlement in marriage
- Increased disclosure or help seeking
- Reduced drinking

*ok to intervene; people help



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SASA! mechanisms of change

Model 1 w/o
pathway
variable

Model 2 with
pathway
variable

Adjusted RR → **Community** → Adjusted RR

Adjusted RR → **Relationship** → Adjusted RR

Adjusted RR → **Individual** → Adjusted RR



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SASA! mechanisms of change



▶ Transform norms

- Acceptability of wife beating
- Gender norms (husband's decision if wife works)

▶ Appropriate community response

Victimization

Perpetration

70%

95%

46%

67%

0%

38%



SASA! mechanisms of change



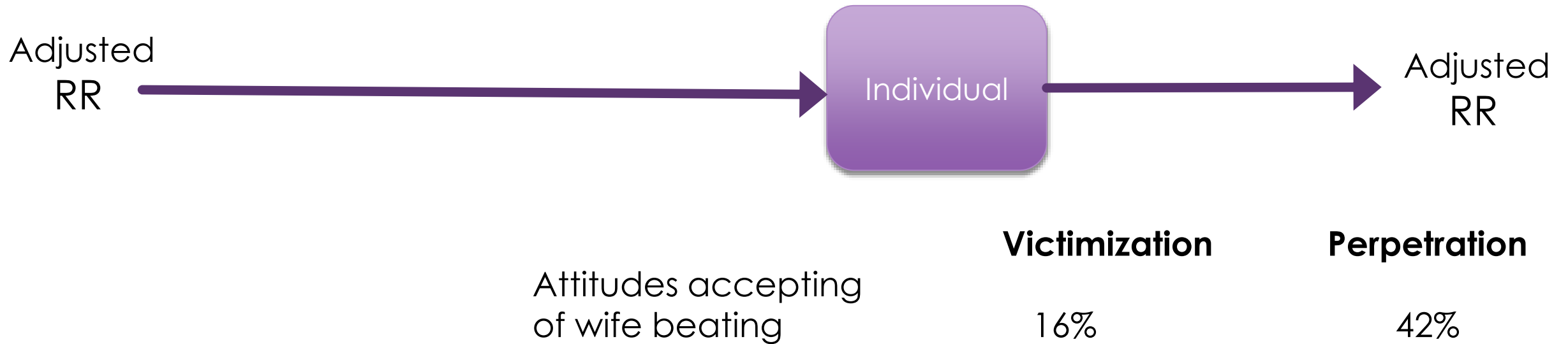
SASA reduced concurrent partners among men but this does not appear to be a significant pathway for IPV reduction

- Reduced suspicion around infidelity
- Improved communication around sex

	Victimization	Perpetration
	18%	22%
	16%	7%



SASA! mechanisms of change



Conclusions

- ▶ Community level norm change holds great promise for substantial reductions in victimization and perpetration of IPV in low resource settings
- ▶ Norms appear to play a more significant mediating role than changes at either the relationship- or individual-level.
- ▶ Reduced suspicion of infidelity may play a significant role at a relationship level
- ▶ Reductions in broad measures of gender inequality may not be sufficient in themselves to prevent violence if specific attitudes toward IPV are not also directly addressed and challenged.



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