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## MEASURING INTERGENERATIONAL CYCLING OF VIOLENCE: SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S REPORTS OF WITNESSING IPV IN CHILDHOOD

Rachel Jewkes, Naemah Abrahams, Jani Nothling, Leane Ramsoomar, Samantha Willan, Mercilene Machisa, Venice Mbowane, Bianca Dekel, Asiphe Ketelo, Maureen Phakoe, Charntel Paile, Des Pass, Amanda Zembe, Nicola Christofides, Nataly Woollett, Tumi Seepamore, Laura Washington, Shibe Mhlongo, Esnat Chirwa

Gender & Health Research Unit, South African Medical Research Council



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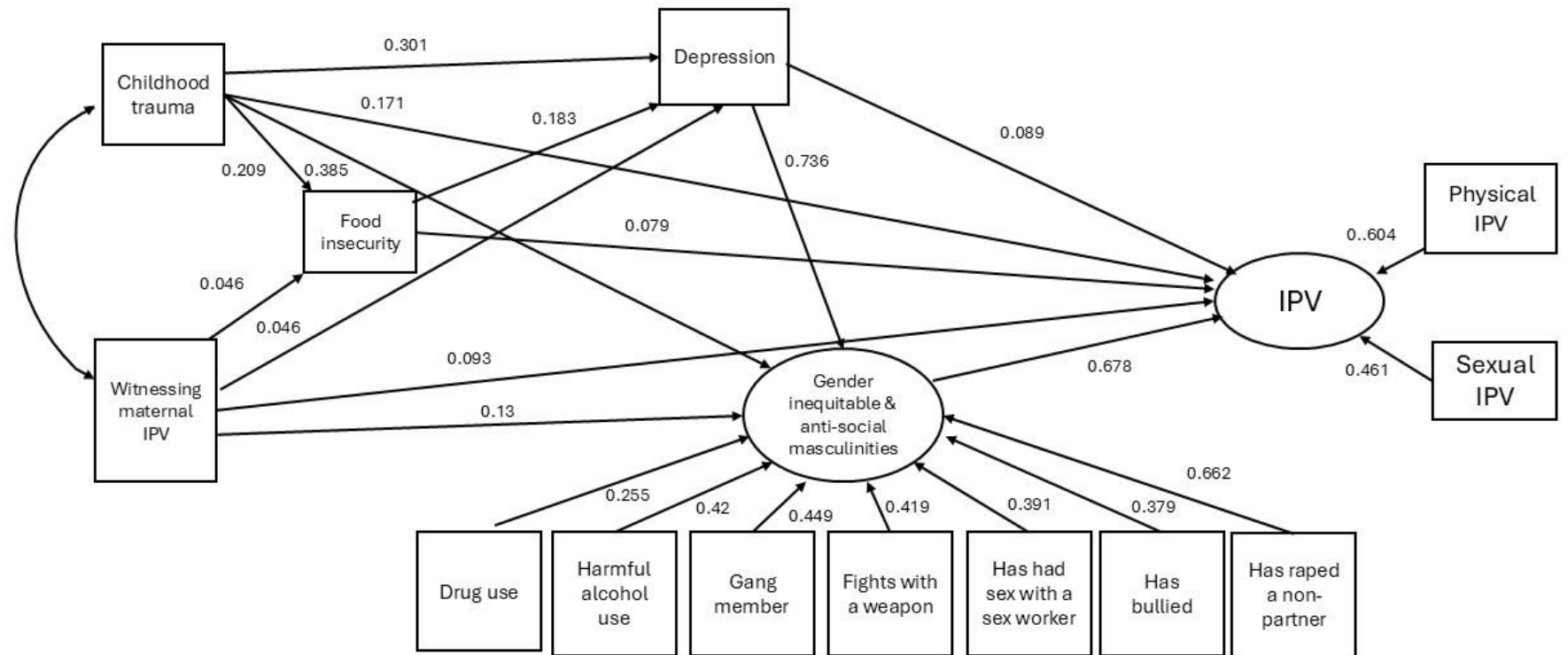


# Introduction

- Both witnessing IPV directed against one's mother and experiencing other forms of childhood trauma are key risk factors for women experiencing IPV and men perpetrating when adults
- The exposure has a **direct impact** – through social learning of the 'normativity' of IPV and women's subordination to men, and associating manhood, power and violence,
- **Also indirect impacts** – through vulnerability due to associated poor mental health, impaired neurocognitive development and lower education achievement, as well as the myriad of impacts of IPV on parenting



In men, evidence from the UN Multi-country Study in Asia and the Pacific shows **both childhood trauma and witnessing maternal IPV are important drivers of IPV** perpetration. Less is known about women's vulnerability.



# Time for a new measure of witnessing IPV

- A single-item measure of witnessing maternal IPV is often used. This deviates from good practice in IPV measurement
  - Acts are missing including emotional abuse
  - Violence against extended family?
  - The notion of 'witnessing' isn't problematised - – was it seen, heard or something they were told about, and does this difference matter?
- In South Africa, drawing on qualitative research, we developed a measure of witnessing IPV in childhood that:
  - follows **the WHO VAW questionnaire approach**
  - asks about IPV experienced by **mothers and other female family** members
  - starts to problematise 'witnessing'

## In this presentation I will:

1. Describe the measure and the prevalence of reports in our sample
2. Demonstrate the associations with physical IPV severity (score) and adverse mental health outcomes (PTSD and complex PTSD)

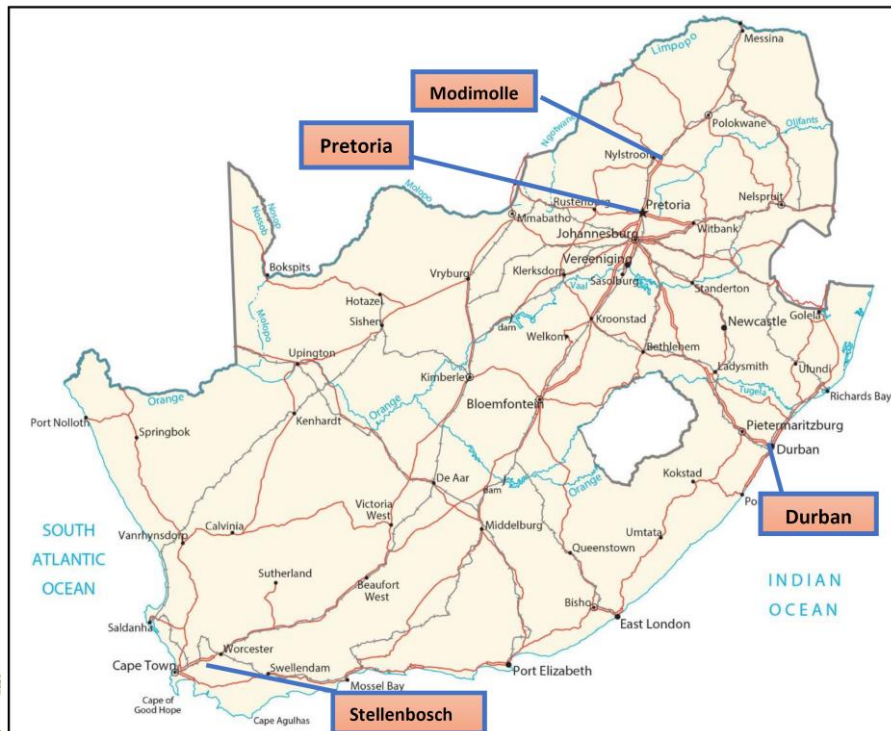


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# Fediša Modikologo Study Methods

- **Cohort study**, with planned recruitment of n=12 000
- **Non-probability sample** of women experiencing severe IPV
- Recruited through services or chain-referral with coupons
- Data are from the first **n=1463** interviews conducted



- **Four study sites:** Modimolle (Limpopo) Stellenbosch, Durban and Pretoria.



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# Eligibility criteria

- Women, aged 18-45 years
- Current male partner or had a relationship with a male partner that ended in the last year, and he is still feared
- Has experienced **severe IPV** from the partner:
  - Physical IPV – hit with a fist, or something that could hurt, strangled, kicked, dragged, beaten up, or threatened with/injured by a weapon, or
  - Raped or otherwise forced to have sex or do sexual things against her wishes, or
  - Threats to kill her, threats to kill himself, threats to harm children to hurt her, fears him, stalking, or
  - Controlling behaviour – prevented from going outside, or working, jealous surveillance (phone, checking up, accusations, etc) (multiple types, instances)





## Prevalence of witnessing: IPV against mother and female relatives is much higher than mother alone

		Mother's IPV (seen/heard)	Mother's IPV (seen/heard / told)	Relative experienced IPV
Emotional IPV	being insulted, belittled, humiliated or made to feel bad	41.2%	46.1%	49.4%
	controlled	31.0%	34.7%	42.7%
	partner did things to scare or frighten her or threw things at her	32.4%	35.9%	42.2%
	being threatened or yelled at	41.6%	45.0%	47.4%
Physical IPV	being slapped, kicked or beaten	35.6%	40.3%	49.6%
	being threatened with or hurt by a gun, knife or other object used as a weapon	19.9%	22.6%	32.4%
	severely injured or killed	19.3%	22.0%	32.9%
Summary measures				
	Witness emotional abuse	49.1%	52.9%	55.8%
	Witness physical abuse	37.6%	42.3%	51.9%
	Witness physical/emotional abuse	49.9%	54.2%	57.4%

# Psychometric properties of the measure

## Key points:

1. Emotional and physical IPV indicators are all loading on a single factor
2. Maternal IPV and other female relative IPV indicators load on different factors
3. This is confirmed by examining discriminant validity in CFA

Using seen/heard/told				
		Factor 1	Factor 2	Uniqueness
<b>Mother being</b> insulted etc		0.1142	0.832	0.2947
controlled		0.1045	0.771	0.3946
scared or frightened		0.1117	0.8657	0.2382
threatened or yelled at		0.0952	0.8539	0.2618
slapped, kicked or beaten		0.089	0.8679	0.2388
threatened with or hurt by a gun etc		0.1275	0.6779	0.5242
severely injured or killed		0.0938	0.6656	0.5482
<b>Other female relative being</b> insulted etc		0.8321	0.1336	0.2897
controlled		0.8193	0.0927	0.3201
scared or frightened		0.8755	0.1049	0.2225
threatened or yelled at		0.902	0.1056	0.1752
slapped, kicked or beaten		0.8923	0.096	0.1946
threatened with or hurt by a gun etc		0.7251	0.0865	0.4667
severely injured or killed		0.7276	0.0646	0.4664



# HOWEVER, this is not the last word on how the measures operate

- 1. **having witnessed emotional and physical IPV are differently related to one's own risk of physical IPV** (models adjusted for age and childhood trauma)

Model with emotional and physical items combined	adj $\beta$	CI	p-value
witness abuse of mother	-0.03	-0.47 , 0.42	0.912
witnesss abuse of female relatives	0.34	-0.10 , 0.78	0.128

## Model with witnessing physical and/emotional IPV disaggregated showing associations with own physical IPV score

	adj $\beta$	CI	p-value
physical IPV(mother)	0.93	0.29 , 1.58	0.005
emotional IPV(mother)	-0.71	-1.35 , -0.07	0.029
physical IPV(female relatives)	1.38	0.57 , 2.19	0.001
emotional IPV(female relatives)	-0.89	-1.71 , -0.07	0.034



## PTSD & Complex PTSD : associations are strongest for own experience of violence, rather than witnessed violence

	PTSD		CPTSD	
	aRRR (95%CI)	p-value	aRRR (95%CI)	p-value
Physical IPV score	1.06 (1.01 , 1.11)	0.029	1.15 (1.10 , 1.20)	<0.001
Sexual IPV score	1.06 (0.99 , 1.12)	0.086	1.13 (1.08 , 1.19)	<0.001
witnessed physical/emotional abuse of mother	0.86 (0.59 , 1.26)	0.439	0.90 (0.66 , 1.23)	0.509
witnessed physical/emotional abuse of female relatives	0.98 (0.67 , 1.42)	0.896	1.27 (0.93 , 1.73)	0.135
Childhood trauma	1.03 (1.01 , 1.06)	0.022	1.07 (1.05 , 1.09)	<0.001



# BUT, having witnessed their mother being severely injured or killed by her husband or boyfriend is associated with complex PTSD

Model	NO PTSD (N=1040) n(col%)	PTSD only (N=137) n(col%)	CPTSD (N=280) n(col%)	PTSD aRRR (95%CI)	p-value	CPTSD aRRR (95%CI)	p-value
<b>1 witnessed severe injury of mother(seen heard)</b>	167(16.07)	26(18.98)	87(31.07)	1.05 (0.64 ,1.72)	0.839	1.49 (1.06 ,2.09)	<b>0.022</b>
<b>2 witnessed severe injury of female relatives</b>	306(29.42)	48(35.04)	125(44.64)	1.17 (0.76 ,1.78)	0.477	1.28 (0.94 ,1.75)	0.118



# Conclusions

- New measures open up new avenues for understanding the impact of witnessed IPV during childhood, and the analyses support the **value of measuring** emotional, physical and severe physical IPV **exposures**
- Findings show that **nuclear family-based assumptions** around exposure **underestimate impactful exposure** to IPV in childhood
- They suggests that the **type and severity of IPV** may be more important than **which woman** experienced it for intergenerational cycling of IPV, and may operate differently for different health outcomes
- Exposure to other childhood trauma is a very important co-occurring exposure and must be measured and adjusted for in understanding the impact of witnessed IPV



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The South African Medical Research Council

recognizes the catastrophic and persisting consequences of colonialism and apartheid, including land dispossession and the intentional imposition of educational and health inequities.

Acknowledging the SAMRC's historical role and silence during apartheid, we commit our capacities and resources to the continued promotion of justice and dignity in health research in South Africa.



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