Your Name

Instructor Name

Course Number

Date

Spouse Abuse

**Summary**

The existing research on the dynamics of violence experienced by women which increased the probability of a life-threatening injury or even death, did not probe into the identification of risk factors paving the way for such situations. The purpose of this study is to identify all those concerned groups of people who specifically help women who are stuck in relationships in which their partner is physically abuses them, and there have been frequent incidents of this nature. The risk patterns are chiefly examined in this study with the aim of enlightening field practitioners so they can respond adequately in high-risk scenarios.

The methodology of the study made use of longitudinal data on abused women and those offenders / victims who either killed their intimate partner or had been killed by him. The hospital sample conducted the violence screening for 2,616 women and the corresponding homicide sample included the data on 87 intimate partner homicides during the years of 1995 or 1996. Active role was played by researchers, community members, advocates, academics, and activists in the development of study instruments over a long period of intense work and brainstorming. A combination of factors was revealed in the findings of this study which alluded to the possibility of serious injuries or death for a woman who was in an abusive relationship. History of violence, the intensity of the first incident, and the victim’s attempt to end the relationship were some of the risk factors identified. Finally, implications of the study for the researchers and field practitioners were discussed.

**Meanings and Implications of the Results**

The Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study took a leap beyond conventional wisdom and found three distinct aspects of a history of past violence that increases the possibility of making a victim’s situation riskier than other scenarios of the same nature. The type of incidents of past violence, their recency, and frequency resulted in a greater risk of severe injuries and fatalities. It was established from the findings that a significant minority of the participants of the study found the first episode of violence to be life-threatening or fatal. Most frequently, the reasons of triggering such behavior in the offender were extreme jealousy, drug usage, and the tendency of the offender to display violent behavior outside the home. The findings of the study also demonstrated that if a victim tried to leave or end the relationship, the resulting gains or risks from this decision were equal in magnitude. The attempts from women trying to leave or end the relationship are conspicuous from the interviews conducted but it implied that leaving can lower the chance of future violence and can also prove to be fatal simultaneously. In case of a fatal accident, physical manifestations were more conspicuous. For instance, the victim or offender were more likely to die if one or both the partners were heavily drunk, or if there was an attempt to choke or strangle the woman. The results also exhibited that whenever the woman killed her partner, it was an outcome of enduring violence for a long period of time. Upon further investigation, the factors for such behavior were reported. Factors such as having fewer resources, feeling confined by a traditional relationship, and experiencing severe violence for several months slowly resulted in the transformation of the abused woman into an offender. Reflecting on these findings, my perspective is that the mental state of the offender matters a lot when the risk factors are identified. When the offender is a woman, there is a greater need to dwell into her past history and level of education corresponding to her occupation and level of income.

**Future Research**

The future research on this subject matter can focus on the deeper investigation of the complex issues and problems that women have to encounter in their daily lives. Women should be asked about their ideal relationship and the effects of couple counselling can be examined on the potential improvement of the relationship. Conduction of further studies determining the specific scenarios and mental states of the victims and offenders should be done in the pursuit of fully understanding the underpinnings of such incidents. The author can expand the results through the identification of various other risk factors by taking a deeper look at the dynamics of the relationship between the victim and offender. Sometimes, the superficial observations of a relationship are in sheer contrast with the deeper analysis of the power play between two people in a bond.

**Contradictions between the Two Sources**

The statistics present in both the studies had some differences but some of the reasons identified as risk factors or the true causes behind the assault were more or less similar in nature. In the Chicago Women’s Health Risk Study, it is reported that 30-41% of the women do not seek any formal help from any consultant agency or even the police. In the other source, it is established that more than 50% of the cases go unreported. 25% of women signified that they endured various forms of physical violence in the Chicago Women’s Health Study which comprised of head injury, broken bones, or being choked or burnt by their partner. On the other hand, the ‘spousal abuse’ section of the book delineated that 60% of assaults sustained by the women in a marriage included pushing and slapping and 40% reported choking, punching, stabbing, and kicking as more sever forms of physical violence. The similarity between both the studies was that wives are more likely to be killed by their partners or spouses as demonstrated by the findings of both sources.

**Michigan Penal Code**

I agree with these enhanced penalties because all kinds of assaults, for instance, physical, aggravated or sexual, constitute a felony across all the states. These acts of violence indicate that the offenders need some help to improve this behavior and these acts successfully establish aggressiveness and hostility which automatically pave the way for enhanced sentencing and penalties. The fight against such crimes and acts needs potentially forceful and rigorous measures, therefore I agree with the enhanced penalties in the Michigan Penal Code. As long as there are no state procedural systems and facilities provided by the governments to improve the mental health of offenders and proffer free couple counselling for partners who are experiencing domestic problems, enhanced penalties are the only options left to restrict the deviant behaviors of the physical offenders and spousal abusers. Spousal violence is a matter criminal in nature and has great impact on the society and on the children of the victims. A billion dollars every year are paid for the costs of serious injuries and other health problems which result from spousal abuse or physical violence. Apart from the financial cost, there is a huge social cost which has grave consequences and poses barriers in the smooth functioning of the society. Enhanced penalties portray the collective efforts and responsibility of the community to prevent domestic violence, therefore the role of enhanced penalties is righteous in its capacity to prevent victims from being abused or offended by their intimate partners. It is justified that a person who assaults someone is subject to enhanced penalties even if the victim is not the same person in the subsequent assaults.