

The role of gender-related factors in the geographic distribution of partner violence

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12-month prevalence of physical and/or sexual partner violence

WHO Multi-country Study on Domestic Violence & Women's Health



What are the key drivers for the global factors to the differences of population level risk?



Goals of the the exercise

- Catalyzing “population-level prevention thinking”
- Responding to “gender critics”

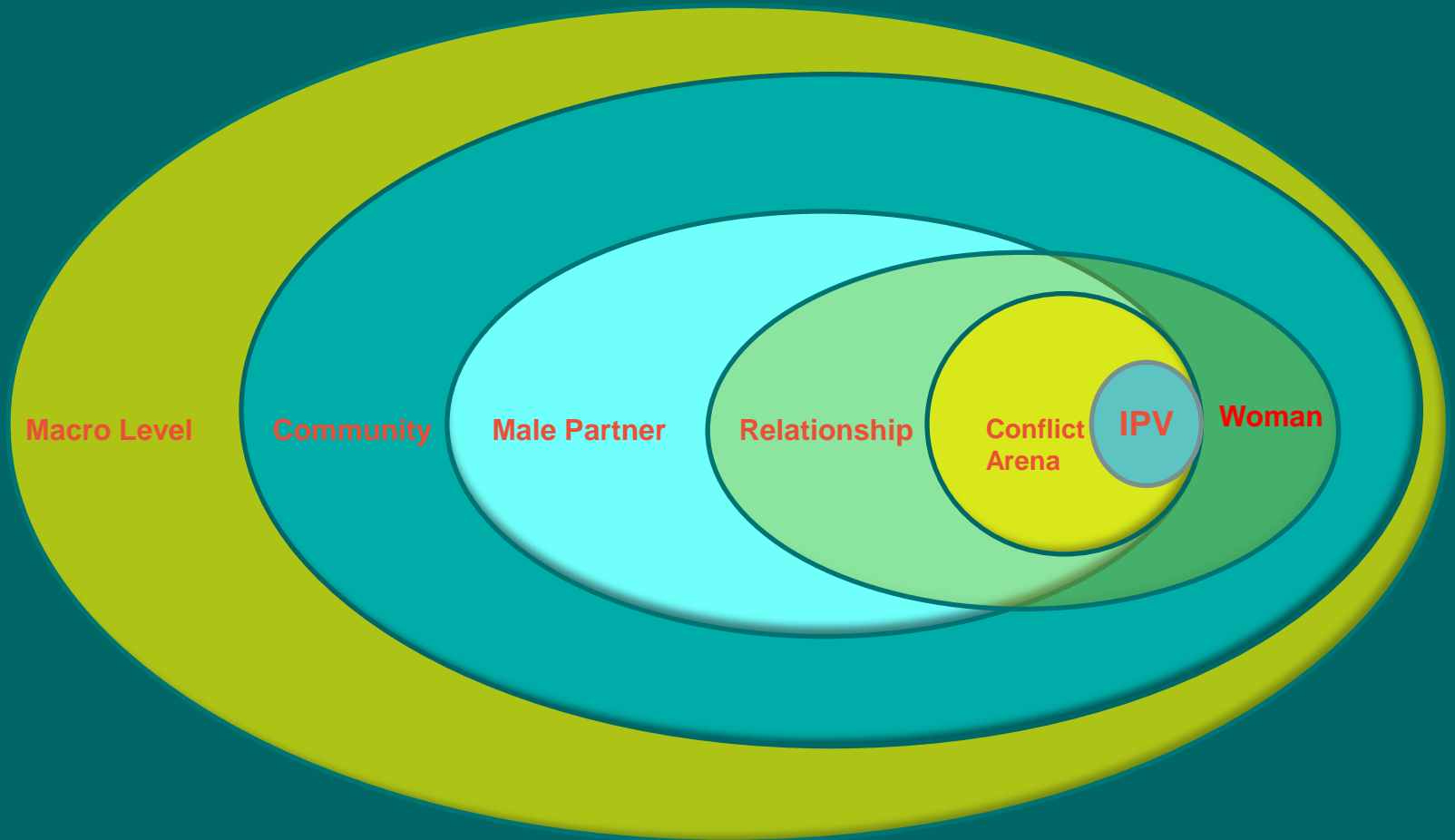
Population prevention thinking...

- As British epidemiologist Geoffrey Rose observed in his now classic article, “*Sick Individuals and Sick Populations*”:

“The determinants of variations between individuals within a population may be different from the determinants of variations between populations.”

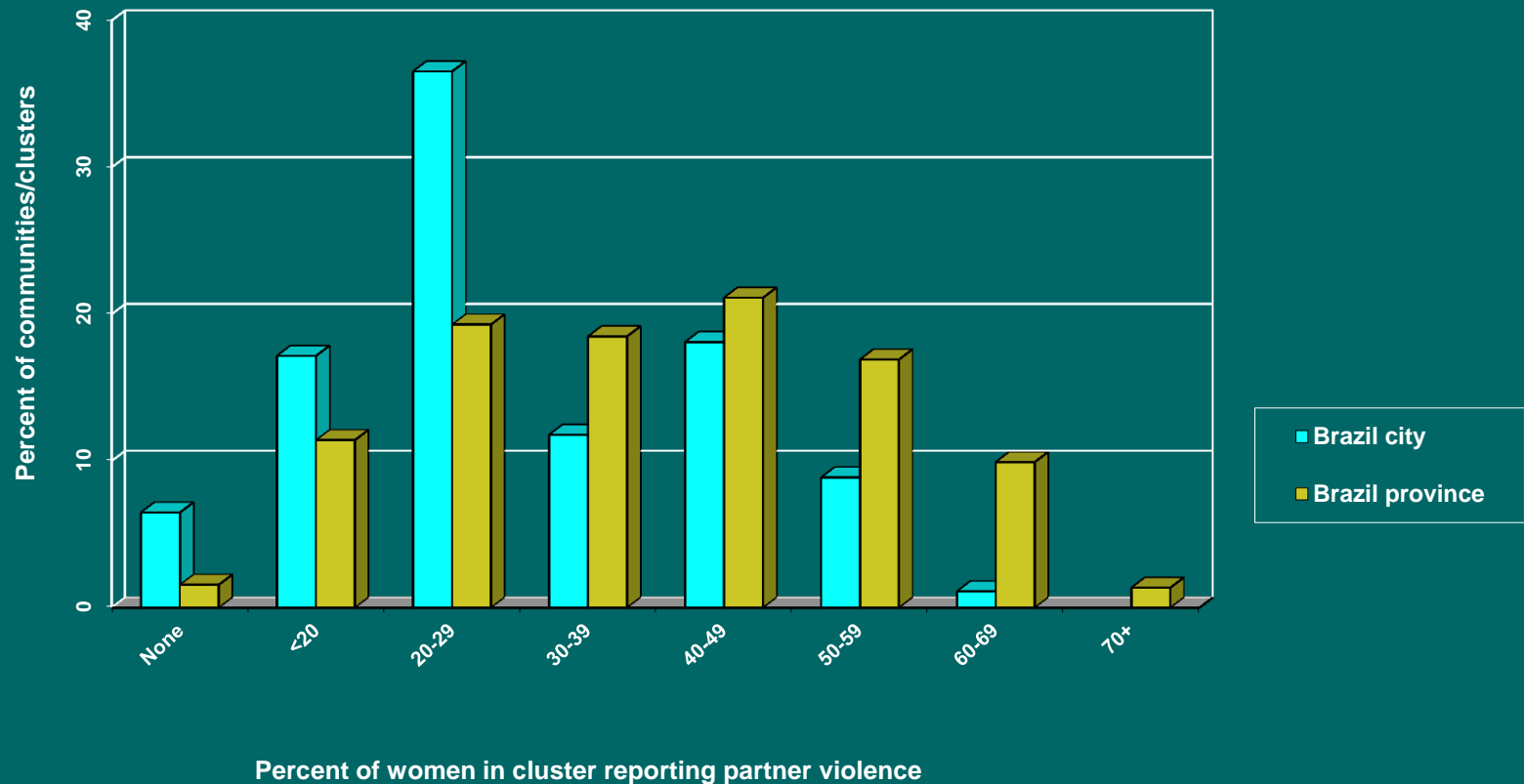
- Key question for research: “Why does this population have this particular level of partner violence?” as opposed to asking, “Why did this particular woman get beaten?”

Ecological Model of Partner Violence



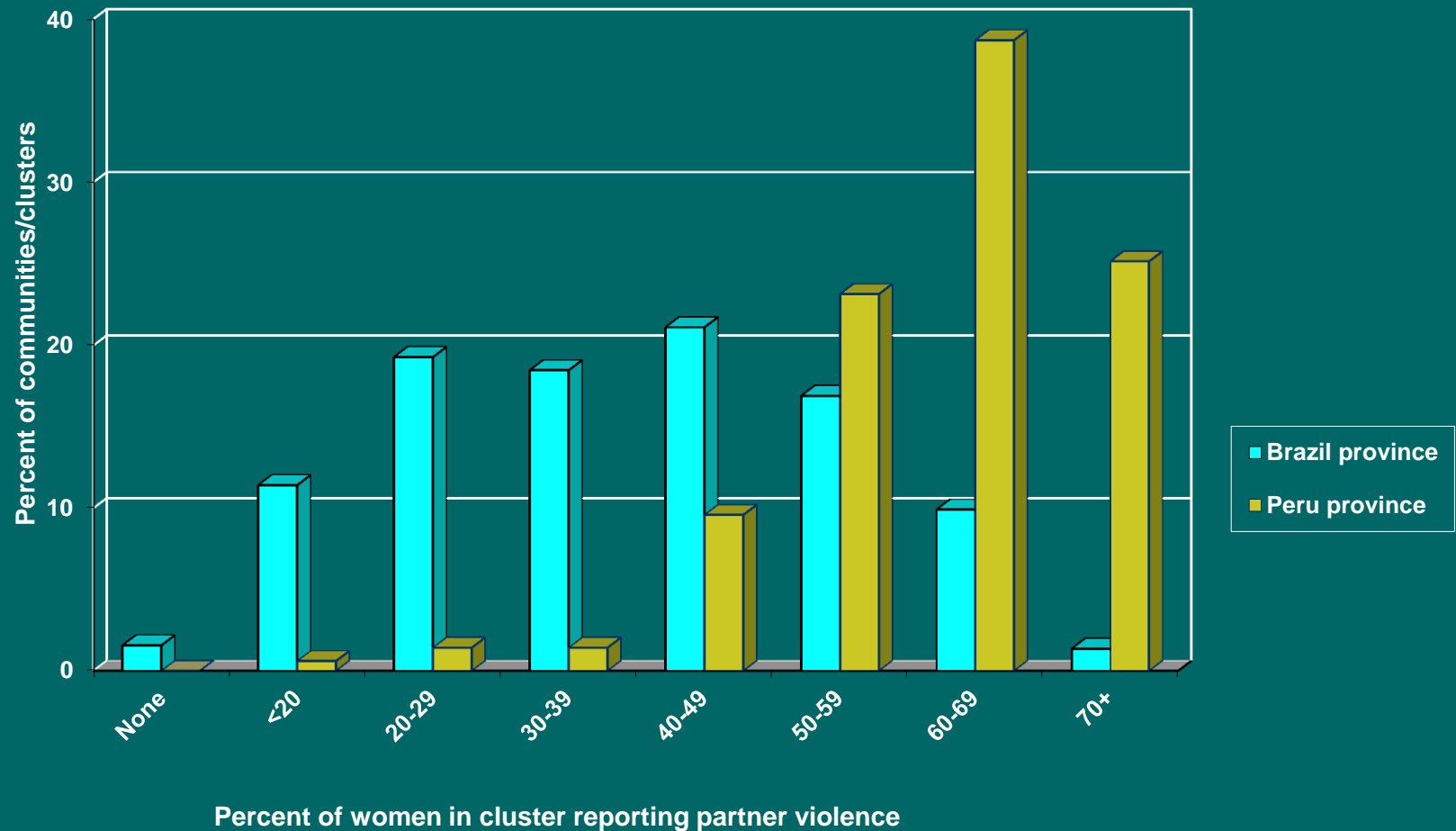
“The field appears to be developing toward an integrative, meta-theoretical model of violence that considers multiple variables operating at different times in a probabilistic fashion”

Cluster-level prevalence of lifetime physical and/or sexual partner violence **BRAZIL**



Cluster-level prevalence of lifetime IPV

Brazil & PERU provinces



Ecological Analysis

- What factors best predict differences in overall levels of partner violence in different countries and/or sub-national regions?
- To what extent do data support feminist hypotheses regarding factors important to the distribution of partner violence?
 - Women's achieved status
 - Gender inequality
 - Ease of leaving abusive relationships
 - Gender-related norms and expectations
 - Economic rights & resources
 - Political rights & representation
 - Culture of silence

Importance of gender in the etiology of IPV is being widely questioned

- Transforming flawed policy: A call to revive psychology and science in domestic violence research and practice (Dutton, D. 2006)
 - *“Simply put, the evidence for theoretical patriarchy as a ‘cause’ of wife assault is scant”*
- Intimate partner violence: Persistence of myths and implications for intervention (Ehrensaft, 2008)
 - *[The purpose of this article is] to challenge “the role of patriarchal social norms in the etiology and maintenance of men’s violence against intimate partners (p.277)*

Ecological analysis

● Analytic approach

- Assess association between macro-level factors and proportion of women experiencing physical or sexual partner violence in the past 12 months, by setting

● Methods

- Quantile regression (models association between the median value of an outcome--or any other quantile—rather than the mean, as in linear regression)
- Imputation of missing data (multiple imputation using chained equations)

Data sources

- **Outcome variable**

- WHO, DHS and other population-based studies that used similar questions and techniques to measure partner violence (n=40)
- All outcomes were made exactly equivalent (e.g. same definition of partnership, same age range, same definitions of violence included, etc.)
- Prevalence estimates were age standardized to control for demographic differences between countries

Data sources

- **Explanatory Variables**

- Data from the DHS and WHO studies aggregated at the country and/or site level (e.g. norms, education levels achieved)
- UN and World Bank data bases (e.g. GDP, school enrollment, participation in formal labor force)
- International Values Survey and Gallup polls (acceptability of divorce)
- Specialized academic data bases (e.g. Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights data base (CIRI))
- OECD SIGI (Social Institutions and Gender Index) sub-scales

Explanatory domains

- **Women's achieved status**
 - Secondary school completion
 - Rate of child marriage
 - Achieved political power
- **Level of gender inequality**
 - E.g., ratio of male to female completion of secondary school
 - SIGI ownership index
- **Male drinking levels**
- **Log GDP**
- **Norms**
 - Acceptability of wife beating
 - Male control of female behavior
- **Women's economic power & rights**
 - WECON measure of CIRI Human Rights Database
 - Proportion of women in formal waged employment
- **Ease of leaving relationship**
 - Acceptability of divorce (WVS)
 - Inequality in family law

Factors significant in bi-variate analysis

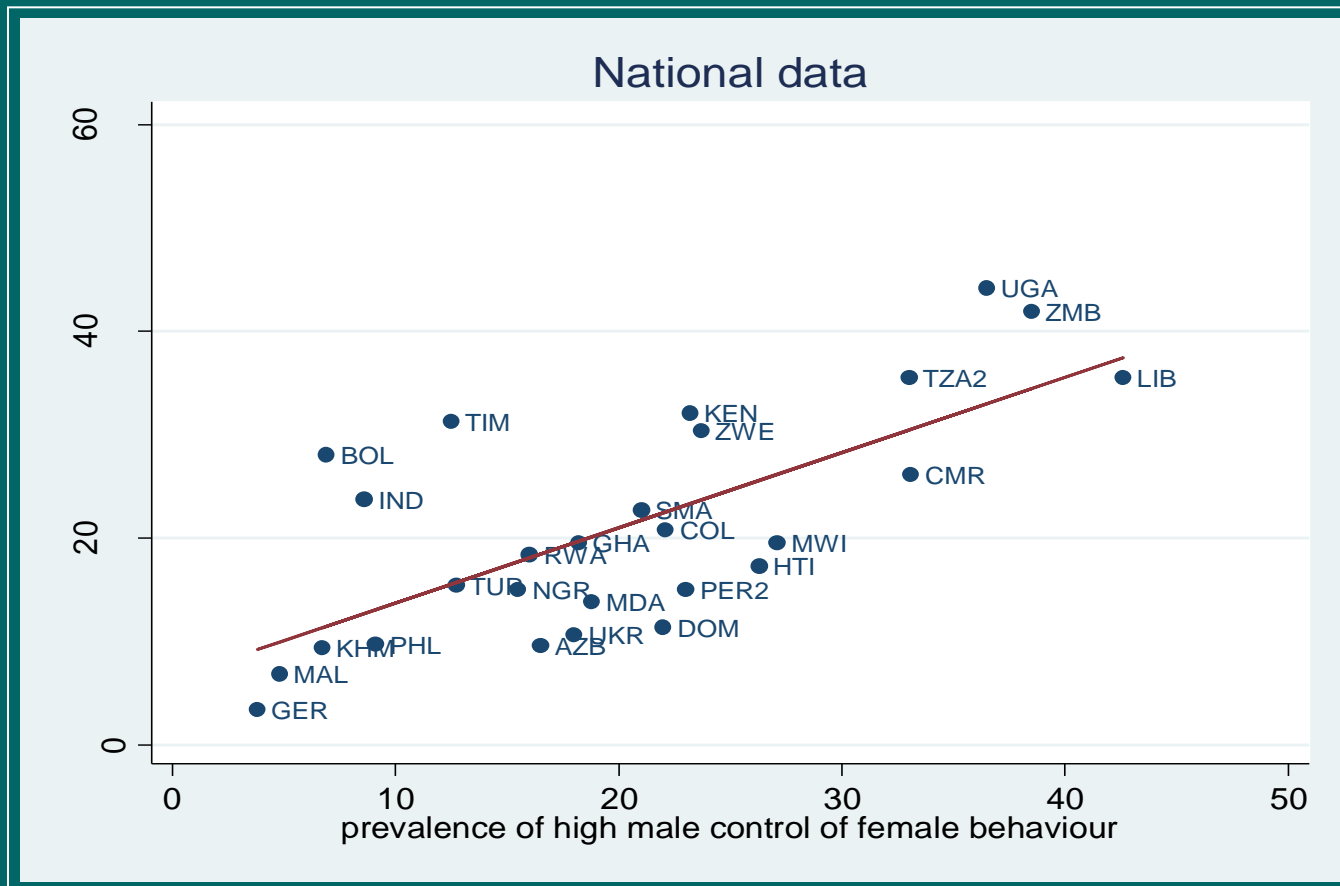
- GDP**
- Women's status
 - Secondary school completion**
 - Early marriage
- Women's economic rights
 - Participation in formal waged labor**
 - Women's economic entitlements by law
- Norms
 - Approving of wife beating**
 - Male control of female behavior**
- Gender inequality
 - Ratio M/F secondary school completion and tertiary enrollment
 - Inequality in ownership rights (land, property, credit)**
 - Discriminatory family law
- Ease of leaving
 - Stigmatization of divorce
 - Discriminatory family law**

** *Strongest factor in relevant domain*

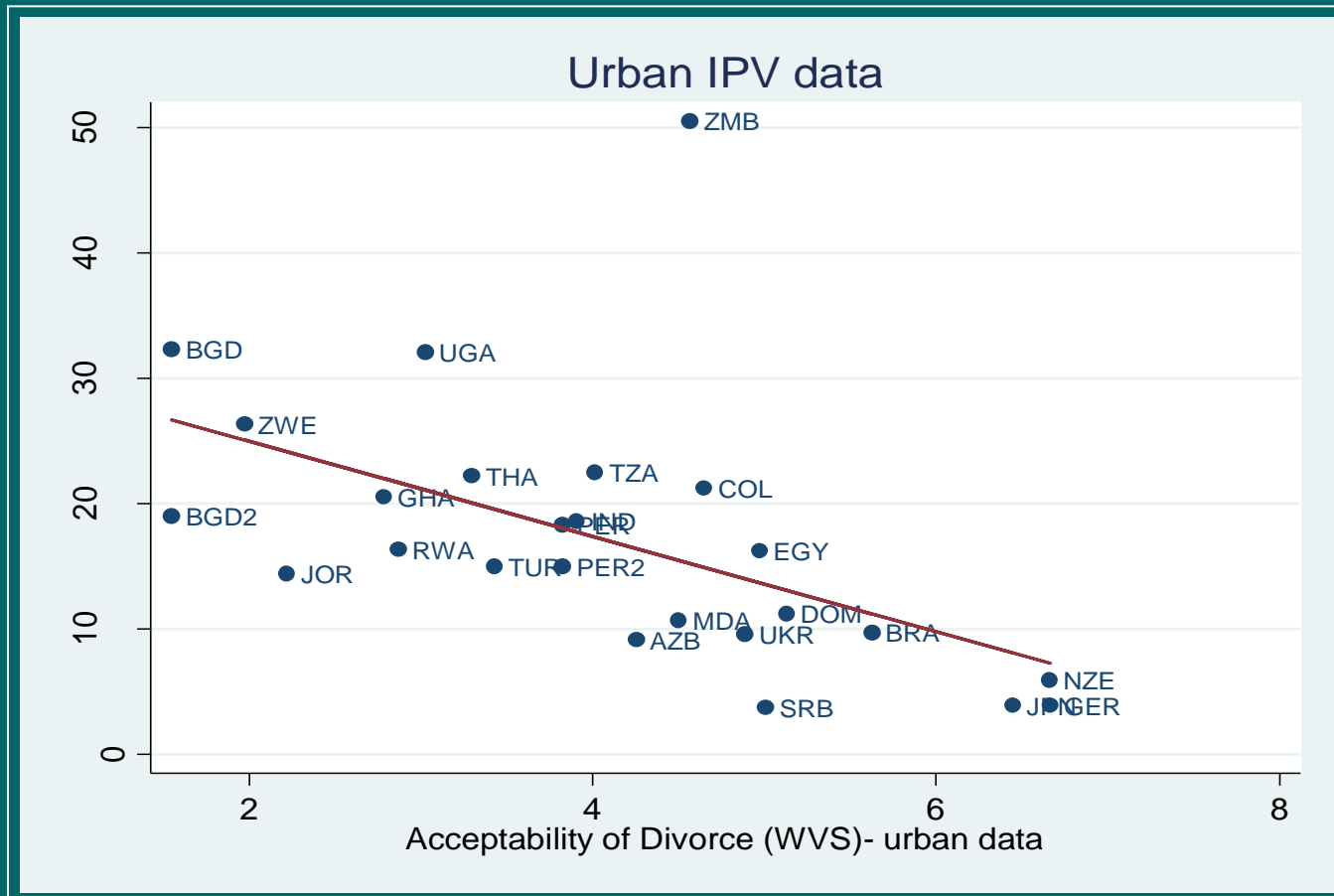
Factors not significant in bi-variate analysis using quantile regression

- **Women's status**
 - Proportion of women who use a modern form of contraception
- **Women' political power**
 - Proportion of women in parliament
 - CIRI political rights index
- **Culture of silence**
 - Proportion of women who told someone about abuse
- **Male drinking levels**
 - Average per capita consumption among male drinkers
 - Proportion of men who binge drink
 - Proportion of male drinkers who are binge drinkers
- **DHS vs. WHO study**

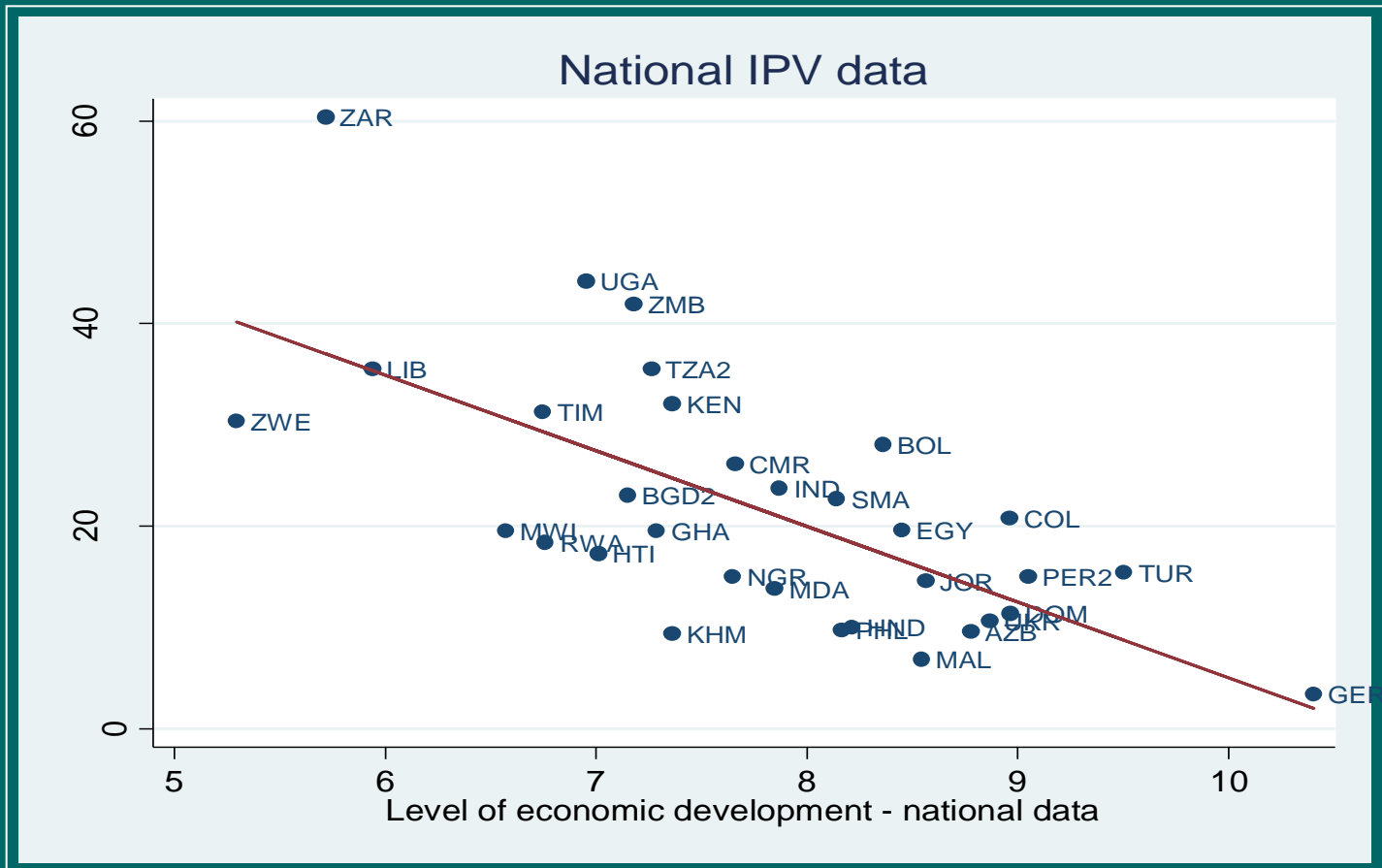
Strong positive association with prevalence of male control of female behavior



Negative association with acceptability of divorce, urban samples



Strong negative association with level of socio-economic development (ln GDP)



	Age-adjusted crude coef.	Model 1	Model 2
Social norms	B (p value)	B (p value)	B (p value)
Acceptability of wife beating	11.4 (0.001)	6.7 (0.006)	6.7 (0.008)
Male control of female behavior	0.70 (≤0.001)	0.37 (0.028)	0.38 (0.028)
Women's economic power			
Percent women in formal salaried employment	-0.27 (0.001)		-0.06 (0.61)
Gender inequality			
Women's ownership index (1=high inequality; 0 = low inequality)	22.8 (0.003)	8.8 (0.25)	
Level of Development			
GDP per capita (nat log)	-5.5 (0.007)	-0.45 (0.81)	-0.34 (0.89)
Constant	----	6.9 (0.7)	10.7 (0.58)

Conclusions

- Strongest and most consistent associations were between current IPV and norms that approve of wife beating and that grant men authority to control female behavior.
- IPV consistently lower in countries where more women participate in the formal wage economy and where laws and practices facilitate women's employment
- IPV is higher where women are discriminated against in terms of inheritance law or they have unequal access with men to divorce or child custody
- Gender-related factors have a stronger influence in countries with higher levels of partner violence