



Final Report

Intimate Partner Violence in the Sikh Community

Region of Peel

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By:

Principal Researchers

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This report is the product of sustained efforts of the Punjabi Community Health Services which decided to initiate the research on intimate partner violence in the Sikh community. The research has benefited from the expertise and efforts of a large number of individuals and organizations in the Region of Peel and Toronto. The women and men who participated in this study need to be specially thanked for providing the research team their personal and sensitive information. Without their support and contribution, this research wouldn't have been possible. We are thankful to all those who strongly believed in this initiative and worked with us to address the concerns of women.

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We are thankful to all women and men who participated in this research study.

Executive Summary

The Research study titled ‘Intimate Partner Violence in the Sikh Community’ was an attempt towards the development of a comprehensive service delivery system for this minority group to tackle violence in married couples. This participatory research is an exploratory study taken with the objectives of determining the complex issues surrounding the intimate partner violence amongst Sikh couples in Punjabi community, to initiate a process of discussion about many forms of abuse, to identify support measures, to involve couples into gathering more information about violence issues and to create and generate a momentum to talk about this issue in the community.

Methodology

The research team:

- Worked in a cooperative and collaborative manner from beginning discussions to the analysis of the data and the compiling of the report.
- Adopted the principles of participatory action research.
- Formed the steering committee which consisted of men and women who guided the research, reviewed the tools for the data collection and participated in approving the research report.
- The scope of the study involved Sikh women and men living in Toronto and the Peel Region. The sample comprised men and women who accepted to share with the interviewing team their personal experiences or those that they had witnessed. The research team worked in a cooperative manner to collect information on the research topic.
- Two focus groups, one for women and one for men was organized to elicit information on intimate partner violence in the Sikh community. In-depth information was sought to understand the issue and how it has impacted both women and men. Their understanding, comments, and suggestions were noted by “scribes” and no tape recorders were used.

Major Findings

All women and men who participated in the research study were aware about the issue of intimate partner abuse and most had experienced it themselves or reported about their near ones who were subjected to it. *The study has brought into light startling facts of how both women and men get abused by each other. Both women and men were dissatisfied in their marriages and both women and men identified as having “abuse” in their relationships. More women reported physical abuse while more men reported emotional abuse. Women also reported more sexual abuse and psychological abuse. More women reported calling 911 than men.*

The detailed findings are compiled in the report.

Major Recommendations

The study suggested that premarital counselling and education and awareness programs be developed in the community.

Detailed recommendations are compiled in the report.

Outcome

The research study helped identify the need to develop support mechanisms for Sikh women and men who experience in their marital life.

Focus Group Reports:

Focus Group for Women

12 women were selected to participate in this focus group. The selection criteria was their knowledge about intimate partner violence.

Issues identified:

1. Abuse was a concern amongst all participants.
2. All women shared stories about various forms of abuse.
 - a. Major abuse was identified as:
 - i. Emotional abuse – “torture”, taunting, sarcastic remarks
 - ii. Verbal abuse – lots of name calling
 - iii. Sexual abuse – men don’t recognize that they are abusing us sexually
 - iv. Physical abuse – slapping is very common, pushing, shoving, hitting
 - v. Psychological abuse – threats of all sorts (serious threats)
 - vi. System abuse – asking her to do “illegal things”, welfare and immigration “fraud”
 - vii. Spiritual abuse – not allowing to practice their preferred choice of religious practices (e.g. many women identified as being Radha Swami and Nirankari but their husbands opposed their practices)
3. Abuse is also perpetuated by in-laws predominantly by Mother In Law (MIL) and Sister In Law.
4. Men had difficulty expressing their emotions and feelings. Communication skills are needed to be able to express calmly about differences.
5. Often, MIL aggravates the situation by pointing out the deficiencies.
6. Partly, alcohol and drug use by men is also responsible for abuse.
7. Often, men refuse to seek outside help – counselling.

Focus Group for Men

15 men were selected to participate in this focus group. The selection criterion was their knowledge about intimate partner violence.

Issues identified:

1. Abuse was a concern amongst all participants. Although, some men tended to minimize the abuse.
2. All men shared their stories about various forms of abuse.
 - a. Major abuse was identified as:
 - i. Emotional abuse – put downs by women
 - ii. Psychological abuse – will call 911
3. Manipulation – some women tend to manipulate the system to serve themselves
4. Women tend to share “everything” with their mother, including intimate things between husband and wife
5. Families tend to make things worse rather than making things better for the couple – they all agreed that “interference by families” should stop

Findings:

1. 100 women and 100 men completed the survey.
2. 78 women and 80 men were under the age of 40.
3. The majority of the respondents (both women and men) were from the City of Brampton.
4. The majority of the respondents (both women and men) speak Punjabi language.
5. The majority of the respondents (both women and men) were born outside Canada.
6. The female respondents who were born outside Canada immigrated between 1982 and 2009. The male respondents who were born outside Canada immigrated between 1980 and 2009.
7. 68 women respondents have masters and Ph.D. education compared to 65 males.
8. 55 women and 45 men respondents are married.
9. 4 women and 2 men are in same sex relationships.
10. 60% women and 55% men are leaning towards dissatisfaction in their marriage.
11. 72% women and 69% men identified as having abuse in the relationships.
12. 61% women and 22% men identified as having physical abuse in their relationships.
13. 82% women and 88% men identified as having verbal abuse in the relationships.
14. 71% women and 85% men identified as having emotional abuse in the relationships.
15. 55% women and 37 % men identified as having psychological abuse in their relationships.
16. 58% women and 15% men identified as having sexual abuse in their relationships.
17. 32% women and 12% men identified as having spiritual abuse in their relationships.
18. 26% women and 22 men identified as having system abuse in their relationships.
19. While abuse was taking place 37% of women and 11 % of men called 911.
20. While abuse was happening, 82% of women responded that their families were involved while 80% of men identified that their families were involved.
21. 72% of women and 86% of men responded that “in-law” interference cause their marriage breakdown.
22. Only 37% of men and 30% of women sought professional help during their ordeal.
23. More women and men (66% and 88% respectively) sought help after separation.
24. 63% women and 82% men responded that they should have ended their marriage sooner.
25. Fewer women 27% as compared to men 71% wanted to remarry.
26. 63% women and 39% men responded by say that social work profession was helpful.
27. 43% women and 13% men said that the legal system was helpful.
28. Overwhelming majority of women 92% and men 87% responded positively to premarital counselling for the Sikh community?

Recommendations:

1. Develop premarital counselling programs for the Sikh community.
2. Education and awareness programs:
 - a. Understanding the legal system
 - b. Understanding the social work system
 - c. Understanding the family involvement in marital disputes

ABOUT PUNJABI COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES

History of PCHS

Developed in the spring of 1990, the Punjabi Community Health Project in Peel was an innovative Health Promotion Project based on the principles of Community Development. It was incorporated as a community based agency and a resource centre in 1995.

Vision

PCHS strives to create a healthy and vibrant community which values the cultural mosaic of the Region of Peel.

Mission

The Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) will serve the Punjabi community through community development and outreach, culturally appropriate service delivery, partnership with other organizations, research and asset inventories, health promotion, resource development, developing volunteers from within the community, and consulting and promoting diversity.

Partnership

Punjabi Community Health Services works in partnership with other agencies, community groups, and stakeholders. It relies on sharing its expertise and penetrating the community by using grass roots community development principles.

Theoretical Principles of Operation

PCHS operates from a culturally relevant model of operation. It uses a framework of client centred approach and defines the approach as adjusting the clinical and other services to meet the needs of the client. The staff members are given the flexibility to meet at a space and time determined by the client. This approach is one of the many reasons why this agency has been so successful.

The clinical staff at PCHS is intertwined with community development approaches. The clinical staff is allowed to venture out of the office to meet and counsel clients.

The agency uses an integrated holistic model to provide intervention to the Punjabi Community. The integrated holistic model is defined by the agency as “a model which wraps the client and other loved ones in a variety of programs and services offered by PCHS”.



The survey was completed by 100 women and 100 men. Please complete the survey if you belong to SIKH faith.

Q1	Female	Male
Gender	100	100

Q2	Under 30 years of age	Between 31 to 40 years of age	Between 41 to 50 years of age	Over 50 years of age
What is your age?				
Women	52	26	13	9
Men	44	36	10	10

Q3	Female	Male
What community do you live in?		
Brampton	55	62
Mississauga	20	29
Caledon	5	2
Other	20 Toronto (18) Markham (1) Scarborough (1)	7 Toronto (7)

Q4	Female	Male
1. What is your preferred language? Only one should be indicated.		
Punjabi	75	87
Hindi	10	10
Urdu	5	1
Other	10 English (10) Markham (1) Scarborough (1)	2 English (2)

Q5	Yes	No
Were you born in Canada?		
Female	32	68 (Born in India 60, England 4, Singapore 2, Kenya 1, Uganda 1)
Male	28	72 (Born in India 67, England 5)

Q6	Female (68 participants)	Male (72 participants)
Which year did you immigrate to Canada?	11 – 1982 1- 1983 3 – 1984 14 – 1986 5 - 1988 20 – 2002 4 - 2003 2 – 2007 6 – 2008 2 - 2009	9 – 1980 18 – 1985 10 – 1986 9 – 1987 1 – 1988 2 – 1990 4 – 1991 2 – 1992 2 – 1994 4 – 1998 3 – 2001 2 – 2005 4 – 2008 2 - 2009

Q7	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
2. How many years of school have you completed? Please circle one.		
<Grade 12	17	25
Grade 12	15	10
College/University	51	40
Masters/PH.D	17	25

Q8	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
3. What is your marital status?		
Single	11	9
Never married	2	8
Married	55	45
Common law	1	5
Separated	15	12
Divorced	15	20
Widowed	1	1

Q9	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Are you in a same sex relationship?		
Yes	4	2
No	96	98

Q10									
On the following scale, how would you rate your satisfaction with your marriage?									
1 Complete dissatisfaction	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Complete satisfaction
Female				60% were leaning towards dissatisfaction in their marriage					
Male				55% were leaning towards dissatisfaction in their marriage					

Q11	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	72%	69%
No	28%	31%

Q12	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there physical abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	61%	22%
No	39%	78%

Q13	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there verbal abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	82%	88%
No	18%	12%

Q14	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there emotional abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	71%	85%
No	29%	15%

Q15	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there psychological abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	55%	37%
No	45%	63%

Q16	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there sexual abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	58%	15%
No	42%	85%

Q17	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there spiritual abuse in your relationships?		

Yes	32%	12%
No	68%	88%

Q18	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was there "system" abuse in your relationships?		
Yes	26%	22%
No	74%	78%

Q19	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was 911 called when abuse was taking place?		
Yes	37%	11%
No	63%	89%

Q20	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was your family involved while abuse was happening in your relationships?		
Yes	82%	80%
No	18%	20%

Q21	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Do you think, in-law interference is the cause of your marriage breakdown?		
Yes	72%	86%
No	28%	14%

Q22	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Did you seek professional help during the abuse?		
Yes	37%	30%
No	63%	70%

Q23	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Did you seek professional help after separation?		
Yes	66%	88%
No	34%	12%

Q24	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Do you feel you should have ended this marriage sooner?		
Yes	63%	82%
No	7%	18%

Q25	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Would you remarry?		
Yes	27%	71%
No	73%	29%

Q26	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was the social work profession helpful?		
Yes	63%	39%
No	37%	61%

Q27	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Was the legal system helpful?		
Yes	43%	13%
No	57%	87%

Q28	Female (100 participants)	Male (100 participants)
Would you suggest pre-marital counselling for the Sikh community?		
Yes	92%	87%
No	08%	13%