

Domestic violence in Beira city, Mozambique

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Little knowledge and awareness exists in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Mozambique about gender based violence. However, in recent decades the government and civil society have struggled to change prevailing patriarchal norms and attitudes against gender based violence, and on September 29, 2009 the Mozambican Parliament approved the Law on Domestic Violence Practiced against Women. This study examines factors associated with domestic violence among women and men over the 6 months to study.

Material and methods: Domestic violence data were collected during a 6 month period from 1,211 women and men who contacted the Forensic Services at Beira Central Hospital between July 1, and December 31, 2011. Interviews were conducted by forensic physician/pathologist, and data collected included socio-demographic variables, types of violence according to WHO, perpetrator and recurrence of violence.

Results: The overall experienced injury during 6 months by sex was 55% for men and 45% for women. Among women, the incidence of domestic violence was 28%, further; women experienced 88% of all domestic violence and 73% were cases of re-victimization. Among all cases of domestic violence, 78% was perpetrated by an intimate partner, and 71% of women were unemployed.

Conclusions: In our study, unemployed women and re-victimization were more important factors to explaining domestic violence. More investigation into gender based violence is warranted in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Mozambique.

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