

Sexual Coercion among Women in Thailand:
Results from the WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Life Experiences

(draft – not completely developed)

Wassana Im-em
Kritaya Archvanitkul
Churnrurthai Kanchanachitra

Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR)
Mahidol University

Abstract

Description of the problem: Sexual violence, including rape at first sex and intimate sexual violence, occurs with shocking frequency and consequences. However, existing information is inadequate to convince the policy planners to come up with solid strategy to deal with this issue seriously. Many women facing sexual violence are left out to deal with the situation alone. This study is part of the WHO Multi-Country study on Women's Health and Life Experiences participated by eight countries in Asia, Africa and South America. This paper focuses on first sex experience of young women (15-24 years old) and sexual violence committed by their intimate partners.

Objectives: 1) Obtain estimates of prevalence of sexual coercion at first sex and intimate sexual violence among young women; 2) Identify and compare risk and protective factors for sexual coercion and intimate sexual violence.

Methodology: A household survey of single and married women aged 15-49 years old was conducted in Bangkok and one other province in the year 2000. Multi-stage systematic random sampling was used to conduct questionnaire interviews of 2,818 women. The response rate at the household was 95% and at the individual was 89%.

Results: Of 2,078 ever partnered women interviewed, 29% reported ever had sexual violence by partners in a lifetime and 16% reported ever had experienced in the previous year. When looking at different age groups, young women aged 15-24 years old had experienced sexual violence in a greater proportion - 33% had intimate sexual violence in a lifetime and 23% had in previous year. Multivariate analysis suggested significant association of intimate sexual violence to partner's use of addictive drug, concurrent partnership of partner, women's lack of self-income, frequent quarrel with partner, ever experienced physical violence committed by partner, and ever experienced non-partner sexual coercion before and after age 15 years. We also found that 4.4% of the women had their first sex by force and the prevalence of forced first sex was doubled among women age 15-24 years old. Only 59% of women younger than 25 years old reported their first sex to be wanted. Bivariate analysis suggested significant association between young current age and young age at first intercourse were associated to women's experience with forced first sex. Those who experienced first sex by force were high likely to have experienced intimate sexual violence later on in their life. While 29% of ever married women reported ever had intimate sexual violence, between 63% to 69% of those who had first sex by force reported as ever had experienced intimate sexual violence later on in their life compared to only about 23%-27% of those who reported that their first sex was wanted.

Background

Based on the review of literature concerning the size and impact of domestic and intimate partner violence against women, it can be said that violence against women is indicative of the illness suffered by society at large with some direct and indirect implications upon women's health. It is an index of society's health and well being. Health activists and women's rights activists, therefore, deem violence against women a top-priority women's health issue. They have called upon all sectors to eliminate violence against women.

Sharing the views above, the World Health Organization (WHO) has initiated a multi-country research program on women's health and domestic violence against women. The findings from these research activities are to be used for public campaign to advocate responsive policy with regard to intimate partner violence against women and public recognition of intimate partner violence as a women's health issue needing serious and persistent policy commitment from all concerned organizations. In each of the 8 participating countries, a national research team was selected, consisting of academics and activists from women's NGOs concerned with violence against women. In the preparatory stage, a consultative meeting was convened of researchers from 8 participating countries to design research activities and research questionnaires together. The Thai study was conducted by the Institute of Population and Social Research, Mahidol University (IPSR) and the Foundation for Women (FFW). The study has the following specific aims:

- (a) to measure the prevalence of intimate partner violence against women by population-based survey
- (b) to assess the health impact of intimate partner violence on women victims
- (c) to explore the risk and the protection factors for partner violence
- (d) to examine the coping strategies of women experiencing marital violence
- (e) to use research findings to feed in a public campaign against violence against women towards appropriate solutions and action

This paper aims to: 1) estimate prevalence of sexual coercion at first sex and intimate sexual violence among young women; 2) identify and compare risk and protective factors for sexual coercion and intimate sexual violence.

Research Methodology

A population-based survey was conducted in two areas: Bangkok and one more province using a representative sample.¹ Data collection was obtained from both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A formative research using in-depth interviews of key informants as well as focus group discussion were conducted in 1999 to gain insight of the issues and to help develop a questionnaire for face-to-face interview. The quantitative data collection used a structured questionnaire to conduct Thailand's first population-based survey in the year 2000 to investigate issues around intimate violence against women in Thailand. After survey conduction, further in-depth interviews of women with experience of intimate violence and couples having violence problems were conducted in late 2000 and early 2001 to help explain the life experiences of

¹ This WHO Multi-country study aimed to contribute to a cross-country comparison of intimate partner violence against women in eight countries. Thus all participating countries conducted a survey in the capital city (including urban area only) and one more province (both urban and rural areas).

women facing intimate violence. This paper mainly focuses on the information obtained from the survey only.

Sampling Strategy

A multi-stage probability proportional to size sampling was used to select the survey population.² A total of 2,815 women aged 15-49 from Bangkok and the other province were interviewed from a sample of 4,900 households. Only one woman per selected household was randomly selected for interview regarding their life experience with domestic violence. If the selected woman was not at home when the interviewer arrived, the interviewer would make an appointment to revisit three times in order to interview the person initially selected. A substitution of other woman from the same household was not allowed if the selected woman was available for the interview after three callbacks.

Survey Questionnaire

The Women's Health and Life Experiences Questionnaire developed by the WHO core team in collaboration with all participating country teams was used in the face-to-face survey interviews. The questionnaire consists of two parts, the household and the individual woman questionnaire. Any adult member of the household capable of providing the information were interviewed for up to 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The women questionnaire has 12 sections which can be administered to any selected women regardless of their experience with domestic violence. The skipped pattern of the questionnaire allowed the interview to be made to both single and married women. The interview times were ranging from 30 to 90 minutes, depending on the participants' experience in cohabitation, intimate partner violence and violence during childhood. The key questions being explored using the questionnaire included:

1. What is the size and frequency of women older than 15 years old in the study sites who have experienced physical and sexual violence? How many had their partners as the perpetrators? How many and how often did the violence take place when they were pregnant?
2. When the physical violence broke out, how often were the children at the scene? To what extent other household and/or family members were aware of the violence?
3. What were the impacts of violence on women's physical, mental, and reproductive health? What were the impact on the women's daily life, work, and community status? To what extent?
4. In what ways the children were affected by the violence?
5. What were the contributing factors to intimate violence against women (e.g., the community, the family, the individual, and the personality traits of the male perpetrators)?
6. What were the means women used to end or improve the violence?

The questionnaire content was divided into 12 sections as follows:

² The targeted sample size recommended by the WHO core team was 1,500 women per site.

1. **Community data:** community's demographic information, community spirits, geographic proximity between the residence of the interviewee and her relatives, her membership in local groups, and her biographical data
2. **General Health:** inquiring about the interviewee's mental and physical health during the previous month and their health-related lifestyles such as drinking and smoking habits
3. **Reproductive health:** asking about the interviewee's history of pregnancy, miscarriage, contraceptive use, and male partners' shared responsibility in family planning practice and condom use
4. **Children:** seeking information about the interviewee's children, the time when she was pregnant with them and after delivering them, and the children's behaviors
5. **Current or most recent partner:** documenting information about the interviewee's partner, lifestyles (e.g., drug use and alcohol consumption)
6. **Attitudes towards gender roles**
7. **Conjugal experience:** specifically for ever-partnered women to inquire about their relationship, experience with intimate partner violence, e.g., sexual, physical, and psychological, victimization during pregnancy, types and frequency of violence perpetrated by male partners
8. **Physical injuries and treatment sought**
9. **Causes and situation** preceding the violence by male partners, the consequences of violence by partner, women's coping strategies, and escape from home
10. **Sexual violence perpetrated by non-partners** during the interviewee's childhood and adulthood, her awareness or witness of mother's violence by father, and her partners' childhood exposure to his parent's intimate violence and his sexual victimization during childhood
11. **Financial autonomy,** possession of property, and ability to use household resources
12. **Completion of interview and verification of data accuracy.** Upon completing the 11th section, the interviewer would ask the interviewee to look at two pictures, a woman smiling and a woman with a sad face. The interviewee was requested to mark next to the sad picture if, she had been touched sexually or made to do something sexual that she didn't want to before she was 15. If these incidences never happened to her, she was to mark the happy face. After the marking, the interviewer would put the marked picture in a bag along with many other women's responses to ensure confidentiality. The marked pictures would be used against the overall data on childhood sexual abuse, to verify the reliability of the data from the questionnaire survey.

Lessons Learnt from Field Experience

The research team gave primary importance to the interview process, as information about intimate violence against women is a highly sensitive issue for the women who experienced it. Society at large still deems this issue a private one not suitable for discussion with non-family members. Many people also blame the women for the violence that happened. Many women who lived and survived it are often ashamed to reveal her experience. The women's safety is also a great concern for this research. Therefore, all cautions were exercised in the design of this questionnaire and the recruitment of the interviewers.

To recruit the interviewers for this project, the Thailand research team placed a job ad in local newspapers for two weeks. Eligible candidates must hold a Bachelor's degree or an equivalent.

Two hundred women of 20 – 43 years old applied. Eighty were short listed for an interview. Thirty-two were selected for the job as they demonstrated the right qualifications and attitudes for the task.³ The selected interviewers were divided into 4 groups. In each group, two interviewers were chosen to supervisors; the remaining 6 were interviewers. Part of the selected candidate had interview experience.

The selected supervisors and interviewers attended a three-week sensitivity and interview training. The first week of the training focused on gender, sexuality, and reproductive health and right as related to violence against women. In the remaining two weeks, the training gave the interviewers a thorough orientation to the survey project, the questionnaire, and its administration. The trainees had mock interview sessions in an urban block and a rural village. They were coached on proper roles and mannerism of the interviewers and supervisors when on duty. The interviewers received training on techniques to minimize the stress of the interviewees and to create and maintain privacy and confidentiality during the interview. With all due respect to the rights and dignity of the interviewees, the interviewers must accept the interviewees' refusal to answer any questions. During the interview, the interviewers were advised to crosscheck the data and must take extreme care to ensure safety for the interviewees and themselves. The interviewers were also equipped with knowledge and information about referring women who need help to service providing organizations. However, while the interviewers were prepared to be sensitive interviewers, they were not to give any advice to help solve the interviewee's life difficulties.

The interviewers were also prepared to respond to any unexpected happenings during the interviews. For examples, if an interviewee requested help, either for herself or for other women who lived with violence, the interviewer would be able to request help from concerned local organizations or arrange for FFW staff to assist as necessary. During the data collection period, two interviewees each from Bangkok and the Other Province asked for help. The one in the Other Province requested help for another woman in her community.

In rural villages in the Other Province local public health volunteers helped identify the location of selected households. They also introduced the research team to local residents to reduce any possible uneasiness. In the selected urban communities, the Provincial statistical officer helped identify and introduced the interviewers to selected households. In Bangkok, the research team was on its own, using a map of each block provided by the National Statistical Office.

All selected 1,500 households in Bangkok were notified about the interview two weeks in advance by mail. These written notifications were sent to the head of each household from the Director of IPSR, explaining the research project in brief, and requesting participation in the research. The letter also contained information about the time the interviewer would be in the blocks and the interviewers' contact information. The addressee was also told that the interview and data thus collected would not be used for taxation purposes. The letter was accompanied by a return confirmation form and the addressee was encouraged to request more information about the project from IPSR. Only one *per cent* of the letters did not reach the targeted households and only 10% of the confirmation forms was sent back to the research team. In general, the letter helped facilitate cooperation from the head of household very well.

Results

³ Two interviewers quit the research project as they received offers for a permanent job.

Response rate

Total household samples were 4,899: 2,800 in Bangkok (BKK), and 2,099 in the Other Province (TOP). A response rate was 95% (91% in Bangkok and 99% in the Other Province). Two thousand eight hundred eighteen women out of the sampled 3,173 women agreed to the interview (Table 1&2), that is 89% for the individual response rate (85% for Bangkok and 94% for the Other Province) and a mere 11% non-response rate which include both refuse to be interviewed and could not be reached after 3 contacts. A higher non-response rate was encountered in Bangkok, 15%, compared to 6% in the Other Province. Five *per cent* of the total samples were not reachable to set interview appointment.

The data collection in the other province was done during May-June 2000 followed by the conduction in Bangkok from July to August 2000. Despite excellent collaboration from the residents in selected blocks/villages, the research team continued to face a high percentage of absenteeism, as originally anticipated. Many women selected from the draw were not home during home visits. Appointment setting was used. Finding a private area for the interview was also difficult in Bangkok, more so than in the Other Province.

Table 1. Household response rate

Response rate of Households in sample		BKK	TOP	Total
Response rate of households in sample				
1.	HH Interview completed	76	87	81
2.	HH Interview rejected	7	1	5
3.	HH empty/destroyed/not found	17	12	14
Total: <i>per cent</i>		100	100	100
number		2,800	2,099	4,899
Responsive rate for eligible households (based on 1 and 2 only)				
1.	HH Interview completed	91	99	95
2.	HH Interview rejected	9	1	5
Total: <i>per cent</i>		100	100	100
number		2,334	1,856	4,190

Table 2. Individual Response Rate

Sampled women		BKK	TOP	Total
Women in sampled households				
1.	Women interview completed	72	70	71
2.	Women interview rejected	6	1	4
3.	Women selected but not home or unavailable for interview	7	3	5
4.	No eligible women in the 15-49 age group	15	26	20
Total: <i>per cent</i>		100	100	100
number		2,131	1,836	3,967
Eligible women (Based on 1, 2 and 3 only)				
Interview completed		85	94	89
Interview incomplete or rejected*		15	6	11
Total: <i>per cent</i>		100	100	100
number		1,807	1,366	3,173

The high response rate from the households and the women sampled owed largely to the efficient coordination support from local staff namely village volunteers and provincial statistic officer in the Other Province and postal service officers in Bangkok. The letter advised and helped locating the sample households about the interviewers' contact. It also helped informed the sampled households. When the sampled women were not home, the interviewer would leave an appointment letter and re-contacted again for at least three times. Eventually they were able to meet the sampled woman. The high positive response rate helped confirm that the samplings were representative of women in the 15-49 age group in Bangkok and the Other Province.

The sampled women who could not be contacted were women working outside their home or those who were taking trips or hospitalized. The majority of interview respondents were women

who worked outside their home. By scheduling the interview in the evening or weekends, the interviewers were able to meet the sampled women and interview them.

It is noteworthy that about 15% and 26% of sampled households in Bangkok and the Other Province, respectively, did not have eligible women. Also, there were more unreachable sampling women and interview refusals in Bangkok than in the Other Province.

Characteristics and social conditions of the women surveyed

Of the respondents in both research sites, 58% were currently partnered and living together; another 10% were currently partnered but either not married or living apart; 7% were separated or widowed; and 26% were never partnered. Very small proportion of the sampled women never had received education and close to half had primary education, 30% had obtained secondary education and about one quarter were those with higher than secondary school education. About one-third of the women did not have own income and almost 60% of those in the youngest age group (15-24 years old) did have own income. About a quarter of them did not live near a member of their family of birth and about 6% said that they did not have a family member to turn to if help is needed. About 3% had hardly been in touch with family of birth. In terms of their first sexual debut, young women tended to have their first sex a few years earlier than those older.

Table 3 Demographic characteristics of respondents by age groups

	Age in years			
	15-24	25-34	35-49	Total
<i>Number</i>	702	859	1256	2815
Marital status (%)				
Never partnered	66	16	11	26
Currently married/living together	21	68	71	58
Currently living together, not married	8	9	7	8
Currently partnered, living apart	4	2	1	2
Separated/divorced/widowed □	1	6	10	7
Level of education (%)				
No education	0	2	4	3
Primary education	16	46	61	45
Secondary education	56	25	16	29
Higher than secondary education	28	27	19	24
Own income (%)				
Yes	42	81	83	72
No	58	19	17	28
Relative living nearby (%)				
Yes	80	72	73	74
No	20	28	27	26
Frequency seeing/talking to a member of family of birth (%)				
At least once a week	71	61	63	64
At least once a month	13	17	15	15
At least once a year	15	19	18	18
Never	1	3	4	3
Have a family member to turn to for help (%)				
Yes	96	95	92	94
No	4	5	8	6
Median age at first sex (age in years for those ever had sex)	18	20	21	20

Prevalence of Sexual Violence by Intimate Partner

The following questions were asked to ever partnered women to explore if they had ever experienced sexual violence committed by their spouse/intimate partner.

Has your current partner or any other partner ever.....

- a) *Physically forced you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to?*
- b) *Did you ever have sexual intercourse you did not want because you were afraid of what he might do?*
- c) *Did he ever force you to do something sexual that you found degrading or humiliating?*

If yes, the respondents were asked further if this has happened in the past 12 months and its frequency in a lifetime and past 12 months.

Between 28% to 33% of women had ever experienced intimate sexual violence in a lifetime and 14% to 23% of them ever had experienced the violence within the last 12 months (see Tables 4&5). Prevalence of ISV tended to be higher among the youngest age groups. About one-fifth of women younger than 25 years old reported as having had ISV in the last 12 months and 33% ever had experienced it in a lifetime. The majority of women reported that their experience with sexual violence occurred more than once. Only a small proportion (3% to 5%) of them ever experienced sexual violence reported that it happened only once and about one-third had it more than five times and the rest had it for a few times.

Looking at type of sexual violence, it was found that the majority of women claimed that they ever had sexual intercourse that they did not want because they were afraid of what their partner might do. However, the meaning of ‘*what women were afraid of which made them have sex even though they did not want to*’ needs some followed up investigation. Initial information emerged from a lengthy period of fieldwork suggested that some women had sex with their spouse/partner against their will because they were afraid that their partner may have other partners if they refused to have sex. Others felt that they or their children might be physically injured if they refused to have sex.⁴ About 8% of women reported as ever had forced sex by their partner in their lifetime and 4% reported that it happened in the last 12 months. The prevalence of forced sex by partner was greater among those in the younger age groups.

Table 4 Prevalence of lifetime sexual violence by type, age groups and frequency

Experience of sexual violence	Age groups			
	15-24	25-34	35-49	TOTAL
Never (%)	67	70	72	71
Ever experienced (%) (one of those listed below)	33	30	28	29
<i>Forced sex</i>	10	9	7	8
<i>Consent to sex out of fear</i>	28	27	26	26
<i>Forced to engaged in unwanted sex act</i>	7	5	4	5
Total: per cent	100	100	100	100
number	239	725	1114	2078

⁴ We found that nearly half of the women ever experienced sexual violence also had experienced physical violence by their intimate partner. This issue will be explored in details in another paper.

Table 5 Prevalence of sexual violence in last 12 months by type, age groups and frequency

Experience of sexual violence	Age groups			
	15-24	25-34	35-49	TOTAL
Never (%)	77	83	86	84
Ever experienced (%) (one of those listed below)	23	17	14	16
<i>Forced sex</i>	8	3	3	4
<i>Consent to sex out of fear</i>	18	16	13	15
<i>Forced to engaged in unwanted sex act</i>	4	3	1	2
Total: per cent	100	100	100	100
Number	239	725	1114	2078

Characteristics of Women with Experience of Sexual Violence

Bivariate analysis given in Table 6 showed several women's characteristics to be associated with their experience with ISV. Age at first intercourse, number of marriage, lack of self income, often quarrel with spouse, ever experienced physical violence committed by partner, ever experienced sexual coercion before and after age 15 years old⁵ were all associated significantly with having experience of ISV. According to multivariate analysis, the same variables except number of marriage remained associated with women's experienced with ISV.

Table 7 looks at the characteristics of husband/partner in association to women's experience with ISV. Unemployment, frequent alcohol drinking, using addictive drug, ever fought with other men, and had other women while living with the respondents were all associated to whether or not women had ISV or not. All except current status of being unemployed remained significantly associated to ISV in the multivariate analysis.

Table 8 shows multivariate analysis of characteristics of men and women in association to ISV and found that the husband's use of addictive drug, husband ever lived with other women while living together,⁶ women's lack of own income, frequent quarrel with spouse, ever had physical

⁵ In Section 10 of the questionnaire, two questions were asked to all women regarding their experience with sexual coercion by non-intimate partner. The two questions are:

S1002: *Since the age of 15, has anyone (FOR WOMEN WITH CURRENT OR PAST PARTNER: other than your partner/husband) ever forced you to have sex or to perform a sexual act when you did not want to? If yes, who did this to you?*

S1003: *Before the age of 15, do you remember if any one in your family ever touched you sexually, or made you do something sexual that you didn't want to? If yes, who did this to you?*

⁶ Out of 524 women who reported that their husband had sex with other partner while living with them, only 9% reported that these partners are commercial sex partners either direct and indirect types, 26% reported that their husband had sex with a minor wife (or stable partner), 54% with general women, 11% did not know. Note that the women's report of having sex with commercial sex partner may be lower than actual figure as Thai's culture allows men to pay for sex and the general public acknowledge this behavior without any strong objection. A question was asked to women if they knew that their spouse/partner paid for sex in the last 12 months, 4% said yes, 1.2% probably, 10% did not know and the rest 85% said no.

violence, and ever experienced sexual coercion by non partners before and after age 15 years old were significantly associated with women's experience with ISV.

Table 6 Background characteristics and experience of intimate sexual violence (ISV) among ever partnered women

	n (column%)	Ever had ISV n (row%)	Bivariate		Multivariate			
			Odds ratio	95%CI	Odds ratio	95%CI	p	
Current age								
15-24	239 (11.5)	78 (32.6)	1.22	0.90-1.65			.188	
25-34	725 (34.9)	215 (29.7)	1.15	0.84-1.57			.385	
35-49	1114 (53.6)	316 (28.4)	1.00					
Age at first intercourse								
<20 yrs	920 (44.3)	301 (32.7)	1.00					
20+ yrs	1155 (55.7)	307 (26.6)	0.74	0.62-0.90			.002	
Place of residence								
Urban	1283 (62.2)	379 (29.5)	1.00					
Rural	795 (37.8)	230 (28.9)	0.98	0.84-1.25			.767	
Education level								
None	67 (3.2)	22 (32.8)	1.33	0.75-2.33			.322	
Primary school	1152 (55.5)	346 (30.0)	1.21	0.77-2.08			.497	
Secondary school	493 (23.7)	142 (28.8)	1.14	0.67-1.92			.638	
Higher education	364 (17.5)	98 (26.9)	1.00					
Number of marriage								
One time	1745 (84)	493 (28.3)	0.73					
More than one	287 (3.9)	99 (34.5)	1.00	0.57-0.94			.016	
Lack of self's income								
No	1631 (78.6)	497 (30.5)	1.00					
Yes	444 (21.4)	112 (25.2)	1.29	1.02-1.65		1.56	.032	1.20-2.03
Relative living nearby								
Yes	1475 (71.0)	423 (20.3)	0.90					
No	603 (29.0)	186 (25.5)	1.00	0.73-1.11			.325	
Have a family member to turn to for help								
Yes	1922 (93)	552 (28.7)	0.70	0.49-0.99			.121	
No	145 (7)	53 (36.6)	1.00					
Frequency of quarrel with spouse/partner								
Rarely	1311 (63.3)	311 (23.8)	0.66	0.53-0.83		0.59	.000	0.43-0.82
Sometime	492 (23.8)	157 (31.9)	0.29	0.22-1.38		0.47	.000	0.35-0.63
Oftentimes	268 (13.0)	139 (51.9)	1.00					
Ever experienced physical violence by intimate partner								
Yes	586 (28.2)	279 (47.6)	3.17	2.58-3.88		2.54	.000	2.02-3.19
No	1492 (71.8)	330 (22.1)	1.00					
Ever had sexual coercion by non-spouse after age 15								
Yes	84 (4.0)	44 (52.4)	2.84	1.83-4.44		2.55	.000	1.58-4.12
No	1991 (96.0)	565 (28.4)	1.00					
Ever had sexual coercion by non-spouse before age 15								
Yes	116 (5.6)	61 (52.6)	2.91	1.98-4.24		2.38	.000	1.58-3.58
No	1959 (94.4)	548 (28.0)	1.00					

Table 7 Background characteristics of women's spouse/intimate partner and their experience with intimate sexual violence (ISV)

	N (column%)	Ever had ISV n (row%)		Bivariate		Multivariate		p
		Odds ratio	95%CI	Odds ratio	95%CI			
Spouse's age								
Up to 24	116 (5.6)	40 (35.3)	1.00					
24-34	565 (27.3)	166 (29.4)	0.64	0.42-0.98				.041
35-44	825 (39.8)	252 (30.8)	0.84	0.65-1.09				.200
45	566 (27.3)	144 (26.0)	0.79	0.62-1.00				.052
Education level								
Primary school (or none)	1055 (50.9)	297 (28.2)	0.89	0.68-1.16				.375
Secondary school	593 (28.6)	188 (31.7)	1.05	0.82-1.34				.712
Higher education	426 (20.5)	124 (29.1)	1.00					
Current work status								
Currently work	1922 (92.5)	552 (28.7)	1.00					
Unemployed/retired/student	156 (7.5)	57 (36.5)	1.43	1.01-2.00				.040
Frequency of alcohol drinking								
Every day or nearly every day	498 (29.7)	181 (36.3)	1.77	1.36-2.30			1.45	1.09-1.93
Once or twice a week	379 (20.0)	122 (32.2)	1.57	1.17-2.12			1.27	0.94-1.73
1 - 3 times a month	248 (11.0)	67 (27.0)	1.53	1.09-2.15			1.14	0.83-1.56
Occasionally, less than once a month	363 (15.9)	97 (26.7)	1.23	0.92-1.63			1.08	0.76-1.54
Never	580 (23.3)	142 (24.5)	1.00					.664
Ever used addictive drug								
Yes	52 (2.6)	31 (59.6)	3.70	2.11-6.50			3.31	1.82-6.01
No	1981 (97.4)	564 (28.5)	1.00					0.000
Ever fought with other men								
Yes	315 (15.4)	144 (45.7)	2.34	1.83-2.99			2.07	1.58-2.69
No	1736 (84.6)	458 (26.4)	1.00					.000
Ever had concurrent partnership with other women								
Yes	439 (21.2)	190 (43.3)	2.29	1.96-3.09			2.29	1.78-2.95
Not sure or don't know	266 (12.8)	92 (34.6)	1.45	1.02-2.04			1.68	1.22-2.32
No	1369 (66.0)	377 (23.9)	1.00					.001
Visited commercial sex in last 12 months								
Yes	80 (3.9)	30 (37.5)	1.00					
Not sure or don't know	233 (11.2)	81 (34.8)	0.11	0.66-1.91				.660
No	1761 (84.9)	498 (28.3)	0.15	0.97-2.47				.065

Table 8 Significant Correlations of Relation – Ever had intimate sexual violence in a lifetime

Characteristics	Adjusted odds ratio	95% CI	p
Partner ever used addictive drug	2.00	1.08-3.70	.027
Partner ever fought with other man	0.87	0.75-1.01	.065
Concurrent partnership with other women	1.65	1.29-2.13	.000
Lack of self's income by woman	1.46	1.12-1.89	.004
Often quarrel with partner	1.34	1.16-1.56	.000
Ever had physical violence committed by partner	2.15	1.69-2.73	.000
Ever had sexual coercion by non-partner as a child (before 15)	2.23	1.47-3.40	.000
Ever had sexual coercion after age 15	2.71	1.67-4.40	.000

Prevalence of Women's Experience at First Sex

A question was asked to all respondents if their first sex was wanted as phrased below. Three categories of answers were given regarding the respondent's first sex as: a) wanted to have sex; b) not want but had sex (or ambiguous); and c) forced to have sex.

S1005 How would you describe the first time that you had sex? Would you say that you wanted to have sex, you did not want to have sex but it happened anyway, or were you forced to have sex?

About 45 of ever partnered women reported that their first sex was forced followed by 19% of those who did not want but had first sex and only 77% who wanted first sex. Over 60% of women who had first sex by force also had experienced ISV compared to 37% of those whose first sex was ambiguous and 25% of those who was not forced at first sex (see Table 9). The same table gives total percentages of ever partnered women by their first sex and ISV classified by age groups. It was found that 65% of women who had first sex by force also ever experienced ISV which is more than two times higher than the average prevalence at 29%. About 40% of women who did not want but had first sex also experienced ISV. From total percentages given in Table 9, about 3% of ever partnered women had first sex by force and also experienced ISV, 7% had ambiguous first sex and experienced ISV and 19% did not had sex by force but experienced ISV. Table 10 shows that young current age and age at first sex were significantly associated with having first sex by force.

Table 9 Total percentage of women's first sex experience by age groups and experience with intimate sexual violence of ever partnered women

	All col%(n)	Ever had ISV (tot%)									
		All ages – row%(n)		Yes				No			
		Yes	No	15-24	25-34	35-49	All	15-24	25-34	35-49	All
Was forced at 1st sex											
Yes	4.4 (92)	65.2 (60)	34.8 (32)	0.6 (12)	1.2 (24)	1.2 (24)	2.9 (60)	0.3 (7)	0.5 (11)	0.7 (14)	1.5 (32)
No	76.7 (1590)	25.3 (403)	74.7 (1187)	1.8 (38)	6.4 (133)	11.2 (232)	19.4 (403)	5.0 (103)	20.2 (419)	32.1 (665)	57.3 (1187)
Ambiguous	18.9 (391)	37.3 (146)	62.7 (245)□	1.4 (28)	2.8 (58)	2.9 (60)	7.1 (146)	2.4 (50)	3.8 (78)	5.6 (117)	11.8 (245)
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>100</i> (2073)	<i>29.4</i> (609)	<i>70.6</i> (1464)	<i>3.7</i> (78)	<i>10.4</i> (215)	<i>15.4</i> (316)	<i>29.4</i> (609)	<i>7.7</i> (160)	<i>24.5</i> (508)	<i>38.4</i> (796)	<i>70.6</i> (1464)

Table 10 Characteristics of women with first sex by force (ever partnered women only)

	n (column%)	1 st sex was forced	Bivariate		
		n (row%)	Odds ratio	95%CI	<i>p</i>
Current age					
15-24	238 (11.5)	19 (8.0)	1.00		
25-34	723 (34.9)	35 (4.8)	0.41	0.23-0.72	.008
35-49	1112 (53.6)	38 (3.4)	0.70	0.43-1.11	
Age at first intercourse					
<15 yrs	52 (2.5)	10 (19.2)	9.92	4.51-21.82	.001
15-19 yrs	867 (41.8)	55 (6.3)	3.51	1.67-7.38	.000
20+ years	1153 (55.6)	27 (2.3)	1.00		
Place of residence					
Urban	1279 (61.7)	54 (4.2)	0.88	0.57-1.34	.545
Rural	756 (38.3)	38 (4.8)	1.00		
Education level					
None	67 (3.2)	4 (6.0)	1.00		.080
Primary school	1148 (55.4)	56 (4.9)	0.38	0.17-0.85	
Secondary school	493 (23.8)	25 (5.1)	0.31	0.08-1.09	
Higher education	363 (17.5)	7 (1.9)	0.37	0.16-0.86	

Conclusion

The overall research findings suggest that ISV happened to a significant number of women. About 29% of ever partnered women age 15-49 years old ever had sexual violence committed by their male partners and the majority of them had faced the incident more than once in their lifetime and 16% of the women had faced ISV in the last 12 months. About half of the women ever had ISV also had experienced physical violence committed by their partner. About 4% of the women were raped at first sex and another one-fifth had their first sex when they did not want. Young women particularly those younger than aged 24 years old were high likely to be raped at first sex and also to experience ISV in a greater prevalence than those in older age groups. Unlike women who had faced physical violence, the women who lived with ISV did not have many coping strategies. Thai society expects couples to sort out domestic violence issues on their own, in particularly if this is related to sexual relations between the couples. Therefore, women victims opted to suffer silently. When they sought advice, the suggestions especially from non-family members were not often useful. Alone, the women had to cope with the problem.

The finding of this paper suggests it is important that women should have their own income to protect themselves from ISV. Importantly, men's sexual relation with other partner is associated to women's experience with ISV. The overlapped of women facing both physical and sexual violence suggests that it is important for those providing help to the women such as health care workers to take care of them not only for their physical health but also to find out if they had faced ISV as well or not. Sexual coercion by non-partner was quite prevalent at about 4-5% both before and after age 15 years old. To alleviate problem of ISV, it is important that the general public does not turn blind eyes but to work together with related GOs and NGOs in reducing the prevalence of ISV in Thai society.

References

- Achara Sakuntaniyom. 1998. *patjai thi mee kawm sampan kab kaantamrai koosomros (Factors associating with violence in marital couple)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Nursing
- Bussarin Klongpayabaan. 1999. *kwamrunrang nai krobkrua: patjai thi mee kwam sampan kab kaan thuk tamrai rangkai khong panraya nai khed ampua maung jandwad sakaew (Family Violence: the study of wife abuse in the provincial district of Sakaew Province)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Public Health, Mahidol University.
- Chotima Kaanjanakul. 1997. *kwamrunrang nai krobkrua: kaan sukka kaan tamrai rangkai panraya (Family Violence: a study of wife abuse)*. Unpublished dissertation, Education Development Program, Srinakharinwirot University.
- Chotima Kaanjanakul. 1997. *kwamrunrang nai krobkrua: kaan sukka kaan tamrai rangkai panraya (Family Violence: a study of wife abuse)*. Unpublished dissertation, Education Development Program, Srinakharinwirot University.
- Foundation for Women. 2002. 'kawm kuanwai (In the movement)' *Newsletter of Women's Information Center*. March: 20.
- Gender and Development Research Institute (GDRI), the Promotion of Women's Status Association. (1998). *soo chiwit thi prassajaak kwamrunrang: koranee sukka baan pak chukchern (To reach the life without violence: a case study of the Emergency Home)*. Unpublished report of GDRI
- Methanee Pongwej and Sutteera Thompson Wijitranon. 2000. *kaan pattana rabob khormoon lae tuaa bongchee daan kwamrunrang nai prated thai (Information system development of violence indicators in Thailand)*. Bangkok: GDRI, the Promotion of Women's Status Association.
- Mertus, J., M. Dutt, N. Flowers. 1995. *Our Human Rights : A Manual for Women's Human Rights*. A draft distributed for comments at the Fourth UN World Conference for Women, Beijing, China. New York: The Organizing Committee for the People's Decade for Human Rights Education.
- Montip Darasrisak. 1985. *moomhed joongjai nai kaan kha samee (Factors motivating wives killing husbands)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Social Welfare, Thammasat University.
- Mutjarin Cholarat. 2001. *sathana ong-kawmroo kieaw kab sukhapab lae bodbaad ongkorn kolakai thi kieaw kong (State of knowledge on violence and health with special reference to related organizations)*. A research report submitted to Health System Research Institute.
- Panchalee Chotikut. 1998. *kaan chai kwamrunrang thor koo somros (Violence against intimate partners)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasat University.
- Pasathanee Sithideth. 1999. *patjai thi pen phol plugdun hai panraya kha samee (Factors influencing wives killing husbands)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Chulalongkorn University.
- Prasith Pattana-amorn. 1981. *kawm pit thaen komkuien kratham chamroa (Rape punishment)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University.
- Salinee Poorungriengphol. 2000. *wikroa khob khed kawm pit thaen komkuien kratham chamroa lae anajaan (An analysis on a scope of punishment of rape and sexual assaults)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University.
- Suwanna Jarutassanee. 2001. *matraakaan tang kodmai pur kumkrong lae pongkan ying thi tuk samee tamrai: sukka priebtiap kab kodmai taang prated (Legal measures for protection and prevention of wife abuse: a comparative study between Thai and international laws)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University.
- Salinee Poorungriengphol. 2000. *wikroa khob khed kawm pit thaen komkuien kratham chamroa lae anajaan (An analysis on a scope of punishment of rape and sexual assaults)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University.
- Suwanna Jarutassanee. 2001. *matraakaan tang kodmai pur kumkrong lae pongkan ying thi tuk samee tamrai: sukka priebtiap kab kodmai taang prated (Legal measures for protection and prevention of wife abuse: a comparative study between Thai and international laws)*. Unpublished MA thesis, Faculty of Law, Thammasat University.
- World Health Organization. 2000. *Fact Sheet: Violence against Women*. June 2000.
- United Nations. 1995. Platform for Action, United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Reprinted in *Women's Studies Quarterly*. Vol.26 (1 and 2): 159-287.