STRATEGIES TO TACKLE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN CUBA:
COMMUNITY-LEVEL EFFORTS AND CHALLENGES

by

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Abstract

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the most prevailing form of Violence Against Women (VAW). Due to this common occurrence, it is essential to develop effective measures to combat IPV. Through field research conducted in Cuba, this study explores the strategies used by Cuban community-level organizations to address IPV against women in Havana. Interviews with organization staff reveal that the strategies at the community level respond well to the existing factors that support IPV in Cuban society, such as gender sensitivity workshops, gender trainings for key officials to deal with abused women, individual counseling, occupational trainings, awareness-raising campaigns and edutainment. Yet multiple challenges are recognized by the interviewees that hinder more effective implementations of their programs to reduce IPV. In addition, further comprehensive analysis presumes there is room for improvement especially in terms of program content of gender workshops, trainings and edutainment.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Introduction

According to the UN's Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women violence against women (VAW) refers to "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life", which includes, but is not limited to, "physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere; trafficking in women and forced prostitution; and physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs"(Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993). One in three women has experienced sexual or physical violence in her lifetime (WHO, 2013). Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the most prevailing form of VAW worldwide. Recent estimates suggest that 30 percent of women with partners

experience IPV during their lifetime (Devries et al., 2013). IPV refers to physical, psychological or sexual aggression and controlling behaviors used against a current or former intimate partner (WHO, 2012) without any restriction to marital, heterosexual or homosexual relationship (Ali & Naylor, 2013). According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2012), the examples of IPV are physical and sexual violence; psychological violence, including insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation, threats of harm, and threats to take away children; and controlling behaviors, such as isolating a person from family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting access to financial resources, employment, education or medical care. Although the perpetrator of violence can identify as any gender by definition, women experienced violence in almost 85 percent of the cases in 2008; in fact, over 22 percent of women are estimated to experience IPV at some point in their lives (Wright, 2010). IPV is a public health and human rights issue, faced across the world. It has a negative impact on women's health through physical injury; mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and phobias; and sexual and reproductive consequences, including unwanted pregnancy, abortion and unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, pregnancy complications, pelvic inflammatory disease, urinary tract infections and sexual dysfunction (WHO, 2012).

VAW and IPV are ubiquitous around the world in all socio-economic, religious and cultural settings and have been a worldwide concern since the 1970s. The 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) required state parties to eliminate VAW (article 12); established a committee for the convention; and obligated member states to submit regular report on progress (article 18). By 2018, 189 countries had become party to the Convention (UN Women, 2018). Cuba was the first country to sign the 1979 CEDAW (United Nations, 2013). Many forms of VAW found elsewhere in the world are absent in Cuba, including female genital mutilation, trafficking in women, female infanticide, differentiated access to food, state coercion or control over reproductive rights; IPV was the most commonly reported form of VAW in Cuba (Proveyer, 2011). However, it was not until the 1990s that IPV gained public recognition and began to be studied in Cuba (Proveyer, 2011), because IPV was believed to be an issue of capitalism and therefore to be solved by social reforms implemented by the Cuban Revolutionary leadership in an attempt to bring equality to many aspects of the social life (Weissman, 2012).

1.2. Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to identify and understand the efforts of Cuban community organizations to tackle IPV. This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

'what strategies are used by community organizations working on IPV in Havana, Cuba and what challenges do they face to reduce IPV?' Looking at strategies elsewhere in the world, this thesis also seeks to explore the effectiveness of these tools. Due to the difficulty of conducting research outside of Havana, this study focuses on the capital city.

1.3. Significance of the Study

CEDAW report indicates that information on Cuban efforts to combat VAW is lacking despite a concern that the persistence of VAW in Cuba is perpetuated by deep-rooted stereotypes concerning the rights, roles and responsibilities of women and men (2013). One of the values of this study is filling a part of this knowledge gap by discovering Cuban community efforts to reduce IPV in Havana.

Furthermore, studying strategies at the community level is important to understand best practices. In order to eliminate any persistent gender-based discriminatory practices, policy-level intervention is never enough; ground-level intervention plays an indispensable role (Moser, 1993). Ground-level efforts could directly influence people's behaviors and culture relating to gendered roles, rights and responsibility.

Although my findings are specific to the Cuban context, especially the one of Havana, this study may offer insight into some of the potential ways to tackle IPV elsewhere. This study will contribute to the growing body of literature on prevention of IPV.

1.4. Research Methods

1.4.1. Primary Sources

This study relies on eleven semi-structured interviews conducted in Havana, Cuba (see APPENDIX A and B). Two groups of people were interviewed. The first group consists of Cuban academics who specialize in gender issues. I interviewed Professors Tania Caram León, Proveyer Clotilde, Mayrelis Estrada and Vilma Hidalgo, all from the University of Havana, and Professor Vivian Mercedes from the National School of Public Health in Cuba.

The second group consists of leaders from state-run community organizations who are involved in combatting IPV at the community level. These 3 organizations are Neighborhood Workshops of Integral Transformation (los Talleres de Transformación Integral del Barrio (TTIB)), Oscar Arnulfo Romero Reflexion Center (Centro de Reflexión Oscar Arnulfo Romero (OAR)), and Orientation Houses for Women and Family (las Casas de Orientación para la Mujer y la Familia (COMF)) of the Federation of Cuban Women (la Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC)).[1] From the OAR, I interviewed Amanda[2], a psychologist and a gender specialist[3] who forms part of a team called *Equality and Social*

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[1] See Chapter 5 for the details.
[2] I am using pseudonyms for all of the organization staff who I interviewed.
[3] She specializes in masculinity and violence for over 20 years, delivering capacity-building training to men. She is also a former researcher at the National Center for Sex

Development. From TTIB, I interviewed four specialists including Veronica, who is an

economist currently in charge of the TTIB in October Ten, one of the municipalities in

Havana, and trained in the fields of gender and violence, conflict mediation, cooperativism

and entrepreneurship, with 16 years of working experience; Carla, a speech therapist,

trained in gender and violence, currently in charge of outreach and promotion at the center,

with 16 years of working experience at TTIB; Samantha, a psychologist, trained in the

fields of self-esteem, communication, violence prevention, and sexual transmitted

infections and drug prevention, working for 12 years for TTIB, and Heidi, an accountant

and a dance instructor, trained in the fields of self-esteem and entrepreneurship. At the

national department of the FMC in Vedado in Havana, I interviewed Jacqueline, a

specialist in sexual education and community work. She is a manager who oversees

programs and activities that COFM implement all over Cuba, with 40-year experience of

working for the FMC including at the municipal level for 17 years, at the provincial level

for 6 years, and at the national level for 17 years. Organizational efforts to tackle IPV,

especially regarding strategies and challenges, are collected from the second group. The

focus of the study is on the community-level programs and professionals who work to

support women who have experienced VAW and IPV and prevent them.

Education (Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual (CENESEX).

I was in Havana, Cuba for almost four weeks in November 2017. I was based out of the Latin American Department of Social Science (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)) of the University of Havana, where I was able to access organizational assistance for my interviews with significant academics in the field of gender violence and major community organizations that work to reduce gender violence are located. Time was limited because the cyclone that hit Cuba before November prevented me from departing earlier. I did not have enough time to cultivate the relationships necessary to interview women who actually use the programs of community organizations.

1.4.2. Secondary Sources

This study is based on secondary information from multiple resources. The resources are past studies conducted in Cuba, publications from CENESEX, statistical data from National Office of Statistics in Cuba, official documents from the Ministry of Public Health (Ministerio de Salud Publica) (MINSAP). Secondary information is collected to better comprehend the prevalence, social backgrounds, and supporting factors of VAW and IPV in Cuba.

1.5. Chapter Outline

This study is organized into six chapters. The following chapter establishes two

theoretical frameworks that are used to analyze the data, Social Ecological Framework and

Gender and Development theory. The third chapter provides background information that

explains and analyzes some significant changes in Cuban women's lives that were brought

by social reforms instituted by the revolutionary government including social and legal

developments that were made in relation to gender equality and violence. The fourth

chapter details the prevalence and supporting factors of VAW and IPV in Cuba by studying

past research that was locally conducted. The fifth chapter engages with the findings of

this study, community organizations' strategies to tackle and prevent IPV. It also analyzes

the identified strategies as tools through the lens of the two theoretical frameworks, taking

into account the social background of IPV in Cuba such as the identified supporting factors

of IPV. The final chapter summarizes the findings, identifies their significance, and

provides some recommendations on what can be done for better tackling and preventing

IPV in Cuba.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter explores the Social Ecological Framework (SEF) and Gender and Development (GAD) theory. The following sections discuss the developments and approaches of these two frameworks. They explain how they are useful for this study and outline the major criticisms. This thesis seeks to identify and analyze the community organizations' strategies to reduce IPV in Havana, Cuba, which this chapter assists by offering the theoretical bases for conducting such analysis.

2.1. Social Ecological Framework

2.1.1. Introduction

It is a fact that human behavior is shaped by interactions between an individual and his or her environment. It is from this basic assumption that social ecological framework (SEF) stems (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1986; Dasgupta, 2001). SEF examines the human existence on multiple levels including individual, relationship, community and societal, as well as at the intersections of those levels (Dasgupta, 2002). SEF is beneficial for examining the causes of human behavior and, in fact, is one of the most frequently utilized frameworks to analyze the cause of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979, 1986; Flake, 2005; Heise, 1998; Yodanis, 2004). From the perspective of SEF, IPV is studied not as a single person or

couple's issue, but a social issue deeply embedded in larger societal structures (Heise, 1998; Yodanis, 2004).

2.1.2. Development of SEF

Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory is one of the most read accounts of SEF (Dasgupta, 2002). Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986), a developmental psychologist, emphasized the importance of looking into the impact of the environment on human development. Bronfenbrenner (1986) divided the investigated ecological environment into the following: (1) dyad or two person system (the relation between an investigated person and someone else who is directly involved in the person's life), (2) N + 2 system (larger interpersonal structures or third parties like spouses, relatives, friends, and neighbors), (3) microsystem (immediate surroundings that an examined person actually participates such as family, peers and school), (4) mesosystem (the relations between microsystems), (5) macrosystem (cultural context, belief system, and public policy that determine the specific properties of other systems), (6) exosystem (indirect to an person but influencing the situation that affects what happens in the person's microsystem such as the work situation of a spouse) and (7) chronosystem (transition over the life course such as vocational change). Those classifications of the environment evolved as a means to investigate a child's development by Bronfenbrenner. Later, adjusting to a new utilization, the

classification of the ecological environment was developed and re-organized into individual, relational, community and societal levels.

The individual or intrapersonal level is introduced to investigate personal context including personal developmental experience and personality that could be, especially in the context of examining IPV, childhood socialization, experiences of violence in the past, educational attainment, union formation, family background, disability and mental health issues (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Dasgupta, 2002; Flake, 2005; Heise, 1998). The relationship or interpersonal level, which encompasses what Bronfenbrenner called dyad and N + 2 system and microsystem, considers interactions and relationships with family members, intimate partners, friends and colleagues such as male dominance and control (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Heise, 1998). The community level, associated to Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem, takes into account the social roles and economic situation of a community where a person lives and interacts with others in the neighborhood, school and workplace including neighborhood socio-economic situation (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Heise, 1998). The societal level, stemming from what Bronfenbrenner referred to as macrosystem and exosystem, looks into the structures and systems of the society and cultural values that include, in the context of IPV, the criminal justice system, economic, social and health

structures, cultural values around gender and parental responsibilities, and societal norms around gender (Ali & Naylor, 2013; Dasgupta, 2002; Heise, 1998).

2.1.3. Risk Factors for IPV

2.1.3.1. Personal Level

A number of studies were conducted to identify social ecological factors that increase a risk of IPV at each level. At the individual level, one of the major risk factors that was identified wass witnessing IPV as a child (Gelles; 1976; Gondar, 2014; Downs et al., 1992; Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) reviewed 15 case studies that compare a group of women who experienced IPV and women who did not in order to analyze the correlation between women's witnessing IPV as a child. Seventy-three percent of the studies found a significant correlation. Hotaling and Sugarman concluded that this personal history put women at risk of experiencing IPV as an adult. Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) also found that 88 percent of 16 studies proved a significant relation of male's having the same individual history to the risk of becoming aggressors against their partners. Another risk factor, yet less strong than witnessing IPV in childhood, is being abused as a child. According to Hotaling and Sugarman (1986), a significant correlation between experiencing violence during childhood and becoming victims or perpetrators of IPV as an adult was found in 69 percent of 13 studies.

However, it must be noted that these personal histories are not causing factors but risk factors; that is, having these histories does not always make one a victim or an aggressor of IPV in the future. Caesar (1988) interviewed 26 men who engaged in IPV against their partners and found 38 percent of them did not have the history of witnessing IPV or being physically abused as children.

In addition, there are also studies that suggest being unemployed or being dependent on male partners increases women's risk of IPV, decreases women's help-seeking behaviors and increases the likelihood of women staying in an abusive relationship (Gelles; 1976; Roy 1977). Gelles (1976) interviewed members of 80 families, including 20 families where the police had been summoned to stop IPV, and found that 75 percent of the wives who did not seek external help had no job while 50 percent of the wives who sought external help were employed outside the home. In the same study, the wives who sought help reported that having a public life not only gave them economic stability but helped them notice IPV less "normal" compared to when they stayed at home.

2.1.3.2. Relationship Level

Risk factors at the relationship level encompass, but no are limited to, male dominance in the family (Coleman & Straus, 1990; Levinson; 1989; Yllö, 1993) and a sexist division of role (Gondar, 2014; Nergin, 2014). Levinson (1989) conducted a worldwide

comparative study of IPV against women and found a positive correlation between IPV

and men's having more economic and other decision-making power in the family, adding

that the correlation is stronger in a culture where physical violence is socially accepted as

a means to resolve conflicts. Levinson (1989) also suggested that this risk factor at the

relationship level reinforces and is reinforced by patriarchal cultural values that accept

male privileges at the societal level. Considering that male dominance in the household

increases the risk of the occurrence of IPV, it can be assumed that this relationship risk

factor also increases the possibility of a child witnessing IPV at home.

2.1.3.3. Community Level

Risk factors at the community level include isolation of women and family (Ali &

Naylor, 2013; Count et al., 1992). Counts, Brown, and Campbell (1992) conducted a cross-

cultural review on IPV against women and found IPV was related to the social isolation of

families and women. They found that in the communities in Papua New Guinea, Tanzania

and Belize, where IPV rate is low, neighbors are close and intervene in family issues. By

contrast, in the communities in Iran, India and Taiwan where IPV rate is higher, neighbors

do not intervene, and more abused women choose to be submissive or suicide. Counts,

Brown, and Campbell (1992) also claim that this risk factor is correlated with social

acceptance of IPV in the society, indicating that IPV forms a part of patriarchal society where male power over female is accepted in those communities with a high rate of IPV.

2.1.3.4. Societal Level

Lastly, at the societal level, risk factors include patriarchal values that relate femininity to obedience and masculinity to dominance and aggression (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2017; Nergin, 2014; Vanderende et al., 2012), which fuels patriarchal family structures and male dominance and control over females. Societal-level risk factors also encompass the cultural norm that regards a family matter as a private issue or non-intervention norms (Proveyer, 2011; Browning, 2002; Wright & Benson, 2010), which increases the risk of isolation of women and families that is a community-level risk factor.

The diagram below shows more of the potential risk factors of each level and how each level's risk factors interrelate. For instance, neighborhood poverty at the community level interrelates with lower socioeconomic status of a man and could be related to consumption of alcohol and large family size at the relationship level, and also at the individual level, to unemployment, lack of education and being illiterate. However, it must be noted that many of the potential risk factors that are included in the diagram, had conflicting results about the correlation with IPV in different studies. For instance, there are studies that found no significant relation between alcohol consumption and IPV or between income level and

IPV (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986; Jacobson, 1993). Level of education was found to have

no correlation with IPV by some studies like Caetano et al. (2010), who examined the

relation between high school diploma and IPV in the U.S. and Boyle et al. (2009), who

analyzed the relation between the number of years in school and IPV in India. The

difference of social status or occupation between partners was not found as a risk factor by

Nergin who analyzed IPV in the Cuban context (2014). Furthermore, some studies found

no significant correlation between neighborhood poverty and IPV (Gage, 2005; Caetano

et al., 2010; Cunradi et al., 2000; Lauritsen & Schaum, 2004, Ackerson & Subramanian,

2008; Boyle et al., 2009).

Figure 1: Interrelated Layers of the Social Ecology (Ali & Nalyor 2012)

2.1.4. Using SEF

This study uses SEF to synthesize the existing research findings that identified

supporting factors for IPV in Cuba into an intelligible whole by organizing multiple risk

factors for IPV into levels according to the proximity and relation to people engaging in

IPV. SEF also enables this study to conduct a holistic and dynamic analysis because it

promotes an understanding of the interactions between independent factors within and

across levels (Heise, 1998). This is what differentiates SEF from other theories, such as

circle of violence, learned helplessness and battered women syndrome theories that

primarily focus on the psychological aspects of women in relation to a cause of IPV, failing

to recognize other social, economic, and cultural factors (Ali & Naylor, 2013), while

patriarchy theory only looks at the cultural systems that justify power imbalances between

males and females (Ali & Naylor, 2013). This study utilizes SEF to analyze the social

factors and their interrelations that increase the risk of IPV in Cuba.

2.1.5. Criticism

Although the interdisciplinarity of SEF has many benefits, there are some critiques of

this approach. Some argue that SEF fails to consider human capacities to self-reflect and

consciously act and have agency (Lister, 2004, pp. 125, cited in Coulthard, 2012) by

largely focusing on social rules, material causes, and collective actions and influence

(Coulthard, 2012; Stojanovic, 2016). This point emerges as a limitation for this study

because instead of conducting interviews with individual women who experience IPV, this

study mainly relies on past research findings to identify the needs of Cuban women who face IPV.

Others argue that SEF fails to capture the potential mobility of society due to labeling social phenomena with terms that depoliticize and naturalize the phenomena (Welsh 2014). SEF loses its function in an event of contingency, for example, when objects or actors that consist in the ecological system fundamentally change such as a shift in political and economic regime (Welsh 2014).

2.2. Gender and Development (GAD) Theory

2.2.1. Introduction

Gender and Development (GAD) theory aims to fundamentally examine the structural causes of women's subordination, as well as analyze their economic and political situation (Rathgeber, 1990). GAD focuses on gender or "the socially acquired notions of masculinity and femininity by which women and men are identified" (Momsen, 2004, pp.2), gender relations or socially constructed patterns of male and female behaviors and relations between men and women (Momsen, 2004; Parpart et, al., 2000), and gender roles or "the household task and types of employment socially assigned to women and men" (Momsen, 2004, pp.2). Importance is placed on the search for the structural causes of the marginalization of women in gender relations (Rathgeber, 1990).

2.2.2. Development of GAD

GAD perspective was developed in part as a response to the criticisms against the Women in Development (WID) approach to gender/women and development in theory, policy and practice. In WID, gender equality is a natural consequence of guaranteeing women equal access to educational, political and economic resources (Jaquette, 2017) and integrating women into the process of social growth and change (Rathgeber, 1990). The focus was often placed on income generating for women (Momsen, 2004). The benefit of economic growth was assumed to be tricked down equally to women and men equally (Momsen, 2001). This idea was heavily influenced by modernization theory that assumed the benefit of economic development in a country, brought by massive expansion of education, would trickle down to other areas of the society, leading to eradication of poverty and gender equality (Jaquette, 2017). However, during the 1970s, it was revealed that economic growth affected men and women differently since the distribution of labor and financial benefits was not always fair (Boserup, 1970), and that the position of women was not necessarily improved even after economic and political inclusion (Jaquette, 2017). In fact, it could be worsened because productive work was added to women's burden while reproductive work at home, such as cooking, cleaning, and caring, remained a women's job (Chant & Sweetman, 2012). Criticism against WID focused on its narrow emphasis on

material resource and the productive aspect of life, and its unquestioning faith in the existing social and economic structure (Rathgeber, 1990).

Learning from such criticisms, GAD looks into the link between the productive and reproductive or private aspects of women's lives (Rathgeber, 1990), recognizing that understanding of gender roles within the household is also necessary in order to make sense of gender roles in production (Momsen, 2004). Criticizing WID for failing to recognize the heterogeneity of women's experience, GAD carefully examines the different influence by class, age, marital status, religion and ethnicity or race (Momsen 2004).

2.2.3. Gender Needs

GAD identifies gender needs that stem from socially constructed set of gender relations, gender roles and material practices. Gender needs are classified into two categories: practical gender needs (PGNs) and strategic gender needs (SGNs).

PGNs refer to items to improve women's everyday lives without challenging their subordinate roles and gender division of labor (Moser, 1993). These usually concern short to medium-term daily needs such as provision of water, shelter, medical care and employment, stemming from women's socio-economic context, class, ethnicity or religion (Moser, 1989, 1993). Tackling PGNs does not include gender equality as a goal in general (Molyneux, 1985); however, it could lead to challenging more substantive discrimination.

For example, women's access to education itself is a PGN, but women's education may increase self-esteem and decision-making power at home or may challenge the gender division of labor. However, tackling the PGNs could also be responsible for reinforcing existing gender relations and roles (Moser, 1993). For instance, teaching women how to sew so they can earn an income reinforces the traditional gender division of labor.

SGNs are long-term needs to improve women's subordinate position in society and to facilitate women's ability for taking on new roles and therefore empower them (Moser, 1993). These are identified by examining society's cultural, economic and political context and gender relations, including divisions of labor, power and control that make women's subordination and, ultimately, IPV acceptable. Tools to achieve SGNs could be awareness-raising; increasing women's decision-making power at the household level; improving women's control over their bodies; alleviating the burden of domestic work and child rearing, giving women rights to land, inheritance, credit and financial services; and ensuring equal wages for women and men (Moser, 1993; European Institute of Gender Equality). The state could tackle SGNs through policies that concern violence against women, reproductive rights, women's legal status and welfare (Moser, 1993).

2.2.4. GAD, Empowerment and Power

PGNs and SGNs are both significant for challenging gender inequality since the power structure of gender relations is difficult to challenge without PGNs, such as shelter and food, being satisfied. Nevertheless, tackling SGNs is directly related to achieving empowerment. Batliwala (2007) defined empowerment as the transformation of power relations between men and women within and across social categories of various kinds. McWhirter (1991) details the process of empowerment by phase, in which the powerless: (a) become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context, (b) develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives, (c) exercise this control without infringing upon the rights of others and (d) support the empowerment of others in the community. In these definitions, the transformation in power relations is identified as a core element of empowerment.

In order to analyze power dynamics and transformation in power relations, the useful conceptual tools are power to dominate (*power over*), power to cooperate (*power with*), power to act (*power to*) and internalized power (*power within*). While *power over* is controlling power with a negative implication that having power is equal to taking it from others (win-lose relationship of power), the other three types of power are non-dominating

powers and therefore ideal to promote in the public, private, intimate realms for empowerment (VeneKlasen and Miller, 2002).

Power within has to do with individual spiritual strength and conscientization, that is a person's sense of self-acceptance, self-worth and self-knowledge including the ability to recognize individual differences while respecting others (Rowlands, 1997; VeneKlasen and Miller, 2002). Enhancing *power within* enables individuals to gain aspirations about change (Pantazidou, 2012). This is as important as rendering women's opportunities and rights because empowerment must entail people perceiving themselves as capable and entitled to rights in order to change the quality of their participation (Moser, 1989; Oakley, 2001).

Power to refers to human's capabilities to act to generate new possibilities and actions without dominating others (Rowlands, 1997). For instance, citizenship education and leadership development for advocacy aim to awaken and increase individual power to change an oppressive reality (Pantazidou, 2012).

Power with refers to a collective strength or joint action with positive connotations of mutual support, solidarity and collaboration, which can be promoted by finding common ground among different interests (Rowlands, 1997; VeneKlasen and Miller, 2002).

These powers are closely related to tackling SGNs and empowering. In order to properly recognize the unfair power dynamics at work and gain control over one's own life, one needs to have a sense of self-worth and entitlement to human rights, that is, to have *power within*. To actually control one's own life without dominating others, one must be capable of acting to change the oppressive realities, or exercising *power to*. To help empower others, one needs to act and mutually support with others, or have *power with*.

2.2.5. Using GAD

In this study, GAD theory complements SEF, narrowing the focus of the study of ecological factors to those related to gender, gender relations, and gender roles. GAD theory is also utilized to explore the way that the organizations I am examining address practical and strategic gender needs, and the impacts of their programs on gender relations, roles and power dynamics. GAD theory is used in combination with the conceptual tools of power, which closely relates to the concept of empowerment, in order to detail the analysis by looking into what sorts of power could be enhanced by tackling gender needs for preventing IPV. Using GAD theory enables a holistic analysis because it examines the reality that women live in, by bringing into the light the reproductive aspects of women's lives (Rathgeber, 1990).

2.2.6. Criticism

Since the 1980s, GAD has been criticized as challenging to implement in practice for many reasons. Since GAD questions the fundamental social structures and institutions, integrating it into existing development programs and practicing it could ultimately lead to the loss of the powerful, and such challenge against power structure requires commitment (Rathgeber, 1990). This does not exclude socialist states that have interest in challenging class structures but less so in reforming gender biases (Rathgeber, 1990).

Furthermore, evaluating development programs based on GAD theory could be difficult as well. For instance, to evaluate the effectiveness of awareness-raising seminars, one of the examples that represent GAD practice, many depend on self-report, which could be inaccurate, prone to respondent and his or her biases, as indicated in a study of Abramsky and his colleagues (2016). This criticism is relevant because this research relies on the self-reporting of organizational members to examine the strategies these organizations have implemented.

2.3. Conclusion

This chapter detailed the frameworks used in this study to analyze the strategies of Cuban community organizations to tackle IPV. SEF will be helpful for synthesizing the existing research, conducted in Cuba, into a whole to identify its supporting factors on four

different levels. This will be useful in analyzing how the efforts of Cuban community

organizations reducing IPV are formed and are actually tackling the supporting factors and

the interactions of those factors beyond ecological layers. GAD theory will help the

analysis of ecological factors have more specific focuses, naming gender, gender relations,

and gender roles so this thesis could deeply study the strategies of community

organizations in Cuba, especially how they address Gender Needs and impact on gender

relations, roles and power dynamics.

Chapter 3 Historical Aspects of Gender Progress in CUBA

Despite being the first country that signed the 1979 CEDAW (United Nations, 2013), Cuba did not tackle VAW and IPV until the 1990s due to a belief that those issues would be naturally solved by social reforms implemented by the revolutionary leadership that improved women's welfare and social status (Proveyer, 2011; Weissman, 2012). This belief was also held by the largest women's organization in Cuba, the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) (Weissman, 2012). Although Cuba was not progressive when it came to tackling IPV in history, it was clear that the Cuban Revolution and certain social reforms significantly improved Cuban women's lives and from 1960 onwards contributed to women's social advancement in multiple ways. This chapter reviews the social reforms that took place in post-1959 Cuba and their positive impacts on women's lives. It also examines the history of the FMC, created by the revolutionary leadership, which served the Revolution and significantly contributed to the improvement of life conditions of Cuban women.

3.1. Cuban Revolution and Welfare

The Cuban Revolution began on January 1, 1959 when Batista fled overseas, and a socialist leadership was established. It followed the rebellion against the Batista then-regime that was led by Fidel Castro, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara and Raúl Castro among others

and lasted from July 1953 when the attacks on the Moncada Barracks happened until December 1958 (Smith & Padula, 1996). Cuban revolution turned in the direction of Marxist-Leninist socialism, [4] which placed an importance on proletarian leadership/dictatorship to fix the class struggles although Cuba, proclaimed a socialist state in 1961, interpreted this international theory according to the local context of anti-imperialism and nationalism where the revolutionary leadership did not reject to include various classes in order to build up from the ground the social, economic and political bases of the country and guarantee Cuba's sovereignty (popular revolution) (D'Zurilla, 1981; Heredia & Pierce, 1991).

The revolutionary leadership enacted a number of social reforms. Schools were constructed all over the country, including rural areas. Primary education was made compulsory in 1967 and ninth-grade education by 1980 (Smith & Padula, 1996). A Literacy Campaign was carried out in 1961, reducing Cuban illiteracy from 23.6 to one percent (Cathcart, 2010). The impact on women's lives was noticeable. In 1959, women were poorly educated: merely eight percent had received a primary education, three percent a secondary education and 0.6 percent a university education and over 20 percent of them

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[4] Based on the work of noted scholars, William T D'Zurilla, Fernando Martinez Heredia and Janell Pierce.

were illiterate (Reca, 1992). By 1980, 50 percent of high school students, 44 percent of

technical school students, and over 50 percent of university students were female. By 1990,

female students occupied 57 percent of university students and 55.3 percent of graduate

students (Reca, 1992; Smith & Padula, 1996). The improved education among women later

led to an increase in women's influence within revolutionary Cuba, as they were more

qualified to take on more professional roles as well as those within the leadership (section

3.3).

In addition, some significant efforts were made to provide a cost-free healthcare

system to the population and improve health rates by increasing the numbers of medical

professionals as well as the numbers of polyclinics[5] and hospitals (Kirk, 2017). Despite

the fact that approximately 3,000 doctors left the island between 1959 and 1961 and only

17 of the 200 medical professors remained at the Cuban only medical school, the ratio of

doctors to people increased from 1 per 1078 in 1958 to 1 per 169 people in 1999 and the

number of polyclinics increased from zero in 1958 to 391 by the beginning of the 1990s,

and the hospitals from 97 to 264 (Kirk. 2017). Moreover, safe and free abortions were

legalized in 1965 after the FMC had long insisted (Kirk, 2017). As a result, women's

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[5] A polyclinic refers to a medical facility that provides outpatient services in general.

reproductive health and birth safety were drastically improved (Reca, 1992; Smith &

Padula, 1996).

3.2. Advancement of Cuban Women in the Paid Workforce

Incorporating women into the workforce was attempted, which was essential for

Cuban social and economic development (Reca, 1992). This was described in a public

speech made by Fidel Castro in 1974. He explained the importance of responding to

women's needs in the workplace because "at some point the male workforce will not be

enough, it simply will not be enough" (Smith & Padula, 1996, pp.102).

Various efforts were made to encourage women to work outside of the house. The

state established facilities such as day care centers, cafeterias, school lunchrooms and

laundry services in order to reduce reproductive responsibilities or what was regarded as

an obstacle for women to work outside the house (Smith & Padula, 1996). However, those

facilities were based on unstable funding that insufficiently responded to working women's

necessities (Smith & Padula, 1996). Daycare centers sent children home in the event of

sickness or interruption of water and electricity (Smith & Padula, 1996).

Since the 1970s, multiple reforms were also made on the legal system. The

Constitution of the Republic of Cuba, the nation's first socialist constitution, reformed in

1976, defines marriage as an equal partnership (Article 36), prohibits discrimination based

on sex (Article 42), and highlights equal economic, political, cultural, social and familial rights between wives and husbands (Article 44). In 1974, a maternity law was created to guarantee pregnant women six days off with pay to visit doctors, 18 weeks paid leave before the birth, and 3 months paid maternity leave, which was extended to the range from 6 months to 1 year in 1993 (Reca, 1992; Sarmiento, 2010; Smith & Padula, 1996). However, the maternity leave was only available for a female parent until 2003 (Sarmiento, 2010).

At the first Cuban Communist Party Congress in 1975, the struggle for women's equality including women's rights protection and political inclusion of women was one of the key issues that was debated based on a document entitled Thesis: On the Full Exercise of Women's Equality (Luciak, 2005). In the same year, the Family Code was made that urged husbands and wives to share household duties and childcare (Article 26), legalizing for a wife to file for divorce due to a husband's lack in fulfilling his responsibilities (Article 52 and 53). At the time, the Family Code was considered to be the most progressive and influential legal change that supported gender equality as well as challenged gender roles.[6]

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[6] In the last few years, the Family Code in Cuba was altered to be more inclusive of gender diversity. Among other changed, the definition of marriage as a consented union between a man and a woman was amended (Antón, 2018).

Although the establishment of the Family Code contributed to fostering a discourse around inequitable gender roles, it did not have any mechanisms to completely alter the tradition that women take more reproductive responsibilities than men (Daniel, 2011; Weissman, 2012). In 1979, while working men spent 1.03 hours (workday) and 1.31 hours (non-workday) on household duties, working women spent 3.54 hours (workday) and 5.45 hours (non-workday) on household duties (Reca, 1992). The situation did not improve by 1985 when working men spent 1.35 hour (workday) and 1.22 hours (non-workday) and working women 2.47 hours (workday) and 5.46 hours (non-workday) (Reca, 1992). As of 1999 the National Office of Statistics in Cuba (ONE) reported that women spent 36 hours on house chores a week, which is three times more than men (Sarmiento, 2010).

The number of women within the work force continued to increase especially through the 1970s. The 1953 census indicates that women constituted only 13 percent of workforce, mainly as domestic servants and servers at restaurants and hotels, accounting for only 5 percent of managerial positions and 16.2 percent of professional and technical fields, including elementary school teachers, nurses, social workers and pharmacists (Reca, 1992; Smith & Padula, 1996). In the beginning of the 1970s, only 24.9 percent of women of working age had paid work, which was equivalent to 434,000 women. By the end of the 1970s, this rate rose to 44.5 percent, after over 350,000 more women entered the paid

workforce, making up one third of the overall labor force (Smith & Padula, 1996). While

women occupied the overwhelming majority of administrative positions, such as

receptionists, secretaries, and food servers, they also entered into traditionally male fields

such as medical research, biotechnology, computer science, engineering, shipbuilding,

electrician, steel industry (Weissman, 2012). As of 1981, women made up 29.8 percent of

engineering and technology positions, 61.7 percent of teaching and scientific research

positions, 72 per cent of workers in medicine, and 37.7 percent of workers in the planning

and administration of the national economy (Reca, 1992). During the 1980s, over half a

million women newly begun working and female workforce came to make up almost 40

percent of the total labor force in the country (Smith & Padula, 1996). Women made up

the majority of workers in occupations like service workers (62.5 percent), teachers (66

percent), family doctors (64 percent), doctors (48 percent), dentists (69 percent),

electronics and information workers (52 percent) and researchers (51.6 percent). Over 30

percent of agricultural technicians were women including agricultural engineers (41

percent), forestry engineers (35 percent) and agricultural advisors (33 percent) (Proveyer,

2011). Most significantly, the social norm around working women also changed through

the decades. In the 1960s, it was often, although no always, regarded dishonorable to have

a wife working outside the household; however, the trend was reversed by the 1980s

(Smith & Padula, 1996). The physical change led to an alteration in cultural values about working women.

However, traditional female roles did not necessarily change. At the end of the 1980s, 53.8 percent of economically active women were divorced or separated and 35.4 percent of were single, which indicates that an increase in female labor force closely was related to a decrease or a difficulty in reproductive life, or caring works in the household (Reca, 1992). Despite the fact that women supplied almost 40 percent of the total labor force in the 1980s, women were underrepresented in director and other managerial positions - women occupied only 10.9 percent of directors and 12.6 percent of subdirectories in 1984 (Reca, 1992) and 26.5 percent of managerial positions in 1989 (Smith & Padula, 1996). This tendency applied to female-dominated roles as well (Proveyer, 2011). In 1986, only 39 percent of directors in the health sector were female as, where women accounted for 68.9 percent of the workers (Reca, 1992). Women are less likely to be promoted regardless of the fact that women who were willing to take leadership positions at work increased from less than 50% in 1974 to 65 percent in 1988 to 75 percent in 1992 according to a survey (Smith & Padula, 1996). As of 2015, twice as many men are still in managerial positions when compared to women, according to the report of the National Office of Statistics in Cuba (ONE).

Cuba had a history of sexist labor laws, including labor laws with gender-based restrictions that prohibited both men and women from working in certain fields.[7] For example, in 1965, the Congress passed the resolution 47 that identified 437 types of occupation as exclusive to women and 25,000 men were transferred to different jobs where more physical works were required (Smith & Padula, 1996). In 1980, a resolution was passed that identified female suitable occupations, such as social work and light industry, or small goods production, such as garment manufacturing (Smith & Padula, 1996). These resolutions had an immense impact. For example, before 1959 the majority of trained nurses were male but by 1990 men made up only 12.5 percent of nurses (Smith & Padula, 1996).

Although these social reforms were discriminatory against both women and men in some respects (e.g. sexist division of labor) and challenging for women with a greater portion of the reproductive work, a significant number of women entered the paid labor force, which is a noticeable change from the time before the Revolution when women usually remained in the home.

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[7] It is worth pointing out that gender-based restrictions often are understood as sexist in the developed North; however, in Cuba these were often viewed as a means of protecting women, so they could continue to participate in the 'revolutionary project' (such as in the case of them not allowed to be sugar cane cutters).

The inclusion of women in the paid labor sector promoted an optimistic atmosphere that IPV would cease with the improvement of the material condition that emerged as a consequence. Until the 1990s, the existence of domestic violence, including IPV, had been long denied by Cuban authorities, who claimed that it was a problem of only capitalist countries (Smith & Padula, 1996). Even the FMC believed that women's advancement in the public life and improvement in the material condition of Cubans would solve the problem (Weissman, 2012). While the problem of IPV did not go away, without such an uplifting in women's social status and without the creation of a women's national-level organization (discussed below) that eventually provided a place for women to voice, Cuban women's rights would not have increased significantly.

3.3. The Federation of Cuban Women

In 1960, the revolutionary leadership fused together all of the women's organizations that had been active for the Revolution into a single group, the FMC. The revolutionary leadership coordinated the organization at the neighborhood, regional, municipal, provincial and national levels and recruiters visited from door to door to increase the number of members (Smith & Padula, 1996). The main purpose of FMC was to "mobilize and monitor an important sector of society", that is, women (Smith & Padula, 1996, pp. 36) and to guide them to support revolutionary policies and socialist values. The

FMC members (*federadas*) had five minimum responsibilities including: to raise one's kids according to socialist precepts, to pay dues, to attend the monthly meetings, to contribute to the local delegation, and to attend study circle, which was an ideological training where ordinary Cuban women studied the revolutionary ideologies (Smith & Padula, 1996).

Equal participation in the revolutionary process was what defined feminism in Cuba particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, which differed from feminism elsewhere, although the term, feminism, itself was officially used in Cuban society (Kirk, 2017). The FMC contributed to the state's efforts to incorporate women into the labor force. To extend women's traditional caretaking role into the public, productive life of the nation, the FMC was funded to run several facilities including day care centers, laundries, cafeterias and take-out restaurants for working women and job training centers for young females such as sewing academies until 1980 (Reca, 1992; Smith & Padula, 1996; Weissman, 2012).

As described so far, one of the primary aims of the FMC, particularly during its early years, was to participate, nurture and protect the Revolution. However, the FMC also contributed to representing women's interests, increasing national debate on sexual and reproductive health (Kirk, 2017). This led to the legalization of safe and free abortions, facilitated access to contraceptives, and the development of sexual education in the country

(Kirk, 2017). Although there were mainly male political leaders until the 1980s, with a new generation of educated women, the FMC began to develop focus increasingly on gender equity (Weissman, 2012). At the Third FMC Congress, held from 5 to 8 March 1980, the first public complaint was made against a public institute, the Workers' Central Union of Cuba (Central de Trabajadores de Cuba) (CTC), for applying discriminatory resolutions that limited women's access to employment (Smith & Padula, 1996). At the Congress in 1984, the FMC made several requests of the government including: a creation of female union representatives at workplaces, an establishment of sanctions for violation against female workers' rights, closer attention to men's participation in domestic responsibilities, and an improvement of gender equality in the media (Smith & Padula, 1996). Since the 1980s, the FMC criticized sexist labor laws (discussed above in section 3.2 as "an obstacle to women's advancement") (Smith & Padula, 1996, pp. 123). The FMC's orientation towards representing women's interests attracted more and more women to become members and membership reached 3.1 million women in 1990, a dramatic increase from the four hundred thousand members in 1962, which made FMC the biggest women's organization in Latin America (Hernandez & Dilla, 1992; Smith & Padula, 1996).

The FMC also proposed some changes on the legal system. In 1997, decree No. 175 was established to increase the severity of punishment against running prostitution rings and sexual assault to up to 30 years in prison with an aim to reduce STI and HIV/AIDS infection rates (Gazmuri, 2014). In 1999, decree No. 87 added to assault related sections of the law a clause that increases the penal responsibility when the aggressor was a spouse or relative until the fourth grade of blood kinship or the second grade of kindship by marriage (Gazmuri, 2014; Weissman & Weissman, 2010). Although the FMC was not entirely responsible for these changes, it helped with the process of the creation of new legislations to improve the level of protection for women from sexual disease and violence.

The organization served as a means for a number of women to participate in politics during the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century when women were politically underrepresented. In the most important decision-making body of the country, the Council of State, which consisted of 31 members, women made up only 16 percent of the memberships during the 1990s, increasing to roughly 20 per cent as of 2003 (Alarcón, 2003, cited in Luciak, 2005).[8] The nomination for the Council was under considerable pressure from the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), where female under-representation

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[8] This improved: there are 16 men and 15 women as the members for the period from 2018 to 2023 (Parlamento Cubano, 2018).

persisted for many years, although female delegates at the National Assembly accounted for 45.2 percent in 2012 (Aho, 2012; Luciak, 2005; Reca, 1992). The nomination of these delegates was greatly influenced by the PCC. Furthermore, Parliament did not have as much influence as the Council of State. The female underrepresentation at local and municipal assemblies, which employed direct voting, persisted due to gender stereotypes that assign leadership to men (Álvarez et al., 2000, cited in Luciak, 2005).

The initial role of FMC was to include women into the revolutionary process, as well as to promote socialist values among women. The advancement of Cuban women's organization was initially to perpetuate and advance the socialist revolution. During the early decades of the Revolution, IPV was believed to naturally disappear as a result of the social reforms taken place by the revolutionary leadership. However, a new generation of women, who received the benefit of education as a result of the revolutionary changes, sought to continue to improve women's right and promote gender equity. If it had not been for the FMC, the establishment of laws protecting against VAW and IPV during the 1990s could not have been realized.

3.4. Conclusion

The revolutionary leadership significantly impacted women's lives in the public sphere through various social reforms. It provided women with equal access to education

and health care and included women in the labor force through creating new regulations

that increased protection for women's rights at both workplace and home. The leadership

also created a women's organization, the FMC, which worked as a significant political

channel for women to participate in the Revolution as well as voice women's interests. The

FMC voiced for women's reproductive health, leading the legalization of safe abortions,

facilitating access to contraceptives, developing sexual education and suggesting other

legal reforms that more severely punished sexual violence. Although the reforms arguably

involved some sexist aspects such as some labor regulations and the initial female-only

parental leave form work, the series of social reforms contributed to the social

advancement of Cuban women.

Chapter 4 VAW and IPV in CUBA

In Cuba, the persistence of IPV was gradually recognized in the 1990s, as Cuban women's groups and academic researchers were publicly studying the problem (Proveyer, 2011; Weissman, 2012). A multidisciplinary team and, what is referred to in Cuba as "working groups" were created by the government with the aim to study and develop policies to address domestic violence, including IPV (Treto, 1992; Weissman, 2012). This chapter examines the current situation and causes of IPV in Cuba. The data for this chapter is based on previous studies and the interviews I conducted with Cuban academics and community organization workers. This chapter lays crucial background information for the next chapter to analyze the community-level strategies to combat IPV.

4.1. The Current Situation

VAW in Cuba commonly occurs in intimate relationships and in the domestic sphere (Navarrete, et al.; Proveyer 2003; Proveyer 2001, cited in Proveyer, 2011; Nergin, 2014; Proveyer, 2000). Women are most often the victims and their male partners the perpetrators (Proveyer, 2011, 2014). The majority of perpetrators are not violent in other social relations, only in their intimate relationships (Gondar, 2014; Proveyer, 2011). Although it is important to note that men also experience violence, women are more likely to be victims of violence in general. While Cuban women account for one-fourth of the victims in

reported violence incidence in society in general, they are only responsible for one-ninth of the aggressors (E. Pérez 2002; M. Oña 2002, cited in Proveyer, 2011).

There is no official record as to the rate of IPV in Cuba and studies indicate a wide range of the potential rate of occurrence. The Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research (2012) reports that 19.4 percent of 564 interviewees admitted that beatings had occurred in their last intimate relationship. This is higher than the rates of those who reported experiencing physical violence in their intimate relationship(s) in other Caribbean countries and lower than that in some Latin American countries (Demographic and Health Survey, 2012).[9] However, according to a public survey that was conducted in 2007 with 250 women by Lopez (2011), 64.8 percent of the respondents aged 15 to 59 have experienced psychological abuse and 55.2 percent physical abuse at home in which intimate male partners were referred to as the perpetrators by 92.6 percent of those who admitted experiencing violence.

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[9] Other Caribbean countries include Jamaica (2008, 2009) 17.2 percent, Dominican Republic (2007) 16.1 percent and Haiti (2005, 2006) 13.4 percent (Demographic and Health Survey, 2012). Some Latin American Countries include El Salvador (2008) 24.2 percent, Guatemala (2008, 2009) 24.5 percent, Nicaragua (2006, 2007) 27 percent, Ecuador (2004) 31 percent, Peru (2007, 2008) 38.6 percent, Colombia (2005) 38.6 percent and Bolivia (2003) 52.3 percent although these figures are the rates of women who reported physical violence by intimate partner ever (Demographic and Health Survey, 2012).

Prevailing types of IPV in Cuba are mainly reported as psychological, followed by physical violence. Mendez, an academic at the University of Havana and a researcher at the Judicial Investigation Center, confirms the result of the survey conducted by López (2011). Mendez (2006) interviewed 120 Cubans (74 women and 46 men), in family doctors' offices in three municipalities in Havana and found that 69 women reported they had suffered IPV including psychological violence (63), physical violence (39), and sexual violence (12), while 42 of the men admitted they caused psychological violence (39), physical violence (28) and sexual violence (14). However, it is noted that sexual violence is likely to be more frequent in reality than reported because women keep silent for various potential reasons: blaming themselves, the feeling of humiliation and shame, or the desire to not recount and relive the experience again in the medical service, the police and the courts (Mendez, 2006; Proveyer, 2011).

4.2. The Contributing Factors to IPV

4.2.1. Societal Level

At the societal level, machismo is criticized as supporting IPV in Cuba. Machismo is defined as "sexist attitudes and behavior coupled with masculine bravado" (Craske, 1999, pp.11), characterized by "exaggerated aggressiveness and intransigence in male-to-male relationships and arrogance and sexual aggression in male-to-female relationships"

(Steven, 1973, pp. 90). Amanda from Oscar Arnulfo Romero Reflection Center (Centro de Reflexión Oscar Arnulfo Romero, (OAR)), one of the interviewees of this study, mentions that machismo is deeply rooted in Cuban culture. She says, "... if a boy comes home [and tells] that someone hit him, his parents... say if they hit you, go you hit [them] too!... they might also make him show his genitals, (saying) look what you have down there! How many women do you have?" (November 10, 2017). Cuban men grow up being told that men are strong and courageous, that men always have to win, and that men should have sexual relationships with a lot of women. As part of machismo, Cuban society also maintains a prevailing conception of women as subordinate, obedient, submissive and dependent (Mendez, 2006; Proveyer. 2000). Men are assigned authoritative and superior roles as decision makers and economic providers in the family and women are rendered dependent and subordinate, as caregivers for the family (Gondar, 2014). Amanda highlights this point, saying, "women have received a mandate throughout history on the theme of traditional femininity... women should be submissive, delicate, and should endure. This is the base of violence" (November 10, 2017).

Machismo, combined with the traditional notions of "inferior" femininity and "superior" masculinity, applauds violence as a courageous way to cope with conflicts and promotes men's arrogance and sexual aggression in male-to-female relationships, which

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translates into VAW, especially IPV since partnered women, often rendered subordinate

positions in the household as caregivers, increase their "inferiority". Machismo also

justifies placing blame on women for the violence they suffer because women "provoke"

it by not obeying their partners or not being a "good woman" in Cuba (Mendez, 2006),

which makes IPV socially acceptable. This is not uncommon to observe in other Latin

American countries and also in other places of the world. Machismo and the traditional

construction of femininity and masculinity are key elements to understand women's acts

of obedience and silence and men's acts of control and violence (Nergin, 2014).

Cuban criminal legislation is criticized because it does not introduce a specific

clause for VAW including IPV that clearly defines the problem, as is recommended by

CEDAW (Heinse, 2011). CEDAW asks for specific legislation on violence against women

that criminalizes all its forms as well as contains a specific definition of domestic violence

as a criminal offence which covers both psychological and physical violence (CEDAW,

2013). There are debates about the lack of specific clauses for VAW. It must be noted that

the Cuban system does have multiple violence-related clauses such as article 264

(assassination by an intimate partner), 272 (physical and psychological abuse), 284 (threat),

298 (sexual abuse), 21 (self-defense) and 26 (insurmountable fear), all of which, according

to Professor Mayrelis Estrada, a Cuban lawyer and professor, are sufficient to combat IPV

(November 15, 2017). What could be more important than such legal reform, according to Professor Proveyer Clotilde, is to change people's attitudes and culture, especially of those who manage laws in real life (November 17, 2017). Professor Estrada also claims that what is needed is increasing sensibility of juridical officials, especially the police who are often the first to confront the situation (November 15, 2017). However, there is strong support for this criticism by CEDAW from within Cuba. Those who support the criticism believe that introducing concrete definitions of all forms of VAW is indispensable so that VAW would be taken seriously by the police and that women who hurt their partners to defend themselves from IPV could be recognized as self-defending from a crime at court (Zamora, 2016).

Professor Estrada noted that abusers are released to go home with no punishment in many cases, blaming the lack of processing speed at court besides the gender insensitivity of the judicial officer (November 15, 2017). She explained that there could be a month between the day a woman files a report and the actual court day, and many things can change during that time. For instance, women withdraw the charges or make statements in favor of their intimate partners at the court due to fear of their aggressor (Estrada, November 15, 2017).

4.2.1. Community Level

These attitudes regarding machismo extend to the criminal justice system. At the community level, the sexist attitudes of police officers are criticized by gender equality advocates for normalizing IPV. The police in Cuba, the majority of whom are men, sometimes re-victimize abused women by making them feel responsible for the violence (Amanda, November 10, 2017). The police ask women questions such as "but why did it happen?", "what were you doing?" and "did you give him any motivation?" (Veronica, November 23, 2017). This discriminative attitude by the police officer can stem from various factors such as lacking awareness around gender and violence, seeing IPV as a private issue that does not deserve the public help, and believing in traditional gender stereotypes that associate femininity with subordination and obedience, and masculinity with superiority and control.

Machismo and sexist attitudes among police officers are not uncommon elsewhere in the world. Insufficiently trained police officers and judicial employees are more likely to have victim-blaming biases and discriminatory attitudes towards women, which prevail in many societies (Gover et. al., 2011; Heinse, 2011; Neumann, 2017; Ortubay, 2015). In Nicaragua, Neumann (2017) observed that male police officers were re-victimizing abused women by charging them for fabricated crimes and by sexually harassing them in prison.

In Spain, Ortubay (2015) found the tendency of judicial officials to hold harsher attitudes towards women's aggressiveness than men's because those women were seen to be committing "another crime" of disobeying gender mandates that depict women as sweet caretakers of the welfare of others, who should be free from aggressive feelings. Ortubay (2015) also reported that women were charged for the injuries that they caused to their male partners in order to self-defend. These dysfunctions in the criminal justice system discourage women from reporting IPV or lead to withdrawals of complaints (Ortubary, 2015).

Sexist acts of school teachers are also blamed for facilitating such stereotypes as the base of violence. Professor Tania Caram León, a Cuban academic specializing in gender issues, points out that school teachers, who perceive femininity and masculinity the traditional way and believe in traditional gender roles, could treat girls and boys very differently. For instance, at the end of a class, a teacher could say "boys can go play outside, girls help me clean the classroom" (November 8, 2017). Existence of school education and socialization that differentiate boys and girls according to sexist stereotypes has been criticized for fostering the culture of machismo (Gondar, 2014). These attitudes that come from a lack of knowledge in IPV and uncritical acceptance of traditional values of femininity and masculinity, although do not always lead to VAW and IPV, certainly

support such acts of violence by helping naturalize and justify IPV in Cuba (Proveyer, 2011).

These traditional values that accept men's power over women also discourage intervention. Non-intervention norms around private issues, including IPV, are present in Cuban society. There is an expression "a dirty dust-cloth is washed at home", which means that any problems at home should not be out in public (Amanda, November 10, 2017). For instance, in South Africa, family issues are seen as exclusively private and therefore family members including abused women themselves are reluctant to look for an official help with a fear of exposing private problems to the public (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2004).

Furthermore, poorly trained officers tend to reinforce non-intervention norms and could be unwilling to deal with IPV, regarding it as a private issue unworthy of official attention (Gover et. al., 2011). For example, in Nicaragua Neumann (2017) observed that female police officers at women's police stations for domestic violence often pressured women to mediate instead of filing an official report, and also shifted the burden of investigation to women by requiring them to produce evidence against the aggressors such as photos, videos or other physical evidence on their own.

4.2.3. Relationship Level

At the relationship level, power imbalances between partners are a risk factor of IPV in Cuba. According to Proveyer (2014), unequal distribution of money, domestic work and decision-making power in the household all promote violence because these elements form concrete daily practices that diminish women's human rights and reproduce inequality. Other studies have drawn similar conclusions, finding women's economic dependence on men a significant contributor to IPV (Navarrete, et al.; Proveyer 2003; Proveyer 2001, cited in Proveyer, 2011). However, it is important to consider that IPV is not just a problem of economically disadvantaged women; economically independent women can also face abuse. For example, Jacqueline, from the FMC, believes that special attention must be paid to psychological violence in professional couples because it is very subtle. She explains that the psychological violence between professional intimate partners, which may stem from jealousy of occupational success, is not expressed in obviously violent words but in indirect expressions, which makes it difficult to detect such as being passive aggressive, constantly criticizing against the partner's career, and manipulating the other to feel bad over career success (November 22, 2017). Besides the economic aspects and power imbalances, partner's alcohol consumption and jealousy over female partners' having male

friends are also identified as potential facilitators of IPV (Navarrete, et al.; Proveyer 2003; Proveyer 2001, cited in Proveyer, 2011).

In terms of the relationship between aggressors and their friends, it is common to observe a sort of socialization based on machismo and stereotypical constructions of masculinity where violence is conceived as man's nature and a valid way of solving conflicts (C. Proveyer 2001; E. Espina 1999; S. García 1998; 2000, cited in Proveyer, 2011). The culture of machismo at the societal level deeply influences this sort of socialization between men. Likewise, this aggressive socialization is reinforcing the cultural beliefs in machismo and stereotypical gender roles that associate physical strength and aggression with masculinity.

4.2.4. Individual Level

At the individual level, internalized sexist stereotypes of women, combined with low self-esteem, have been identified as supporting factors of IPV in Cuba (Gondar, 2014; Proveyer, 2011, 2014; Negrin, 2014). In a qualitative study conducted by Mendez (2006) in Havana, 31 of 69 women, identified as victims of IPV, blamed themselves, not recognizing that they were victims of violence or that their partners were violent. In the same study, 38 of 42 men, identified as aggressors, blamed their female partners for provoking violence (Mendez, 2006). Amanda, a gender specialist of the OAR, highlighted

that Cuban women historically put up with violence because of beliefs that women have to be passive and must endure (November 10, 2017). Low self-esteem and self-blaming attitudes of abused women are closely related to machismo at the societal level. A qualitative study conducted by Proveyer (2000), interviewed physically abused women and non-abused women in Cuba and found that the prevalence of gendered stereotypes that perpetuate feminine subordination and inferiority were more common among abused women even though women, abused or not, had the tendency to relate femininity with delicacy, sensibility, intuition, and empathy and masculinity with rationality, control, competitiveness, and virility.

Self-blaming is not unique to Cuba. Condemning women for not complying to the conventional expectation by not being submissive, makes the problem invisible (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, 2004). Self-blaming attitudes also commonly promote non-help-seeking behaviors. Non-help-seeking behavior is facilitated by lack of knowledge about Cuban women's rights, available services, or legal procedures; the feeling of shame, and belief in myths around gender and violence (Navarrete, et al.; Proveyer 2003; Proveyer 2001, cited in Proveyer, 2011; Proveyer, 2014). Those understandings, developed in Cuba after nearly five centuries of Spanish Colonial rule, include: women are masochistic, women provoke aggression, abuse only occurs in poor,

less educated families, and abuse is due to a disease from which the abuser suffers (Mendez, 2006). Non-help-seeking behavior is commonly promoted by the perception of IPV as a private matter that is reinforced by non-intervention norms at the community level.

Furthermore, abused women often have a history of witnessing violence or being victims themselves during childhood at home in Cuba (Gondar, 2014; Proveyer, 2011, 2014; Negrin, 2014) as well as many other places.[10] Abuse as a child could also foster the development of low self-esteem, resulting in the greater possibility of women experiencing IPV as adults (Proveyer, 2011, 2014). Negrin (2014), another Cuban researcher, also refers to childhood homes as an influential factor and describes low self-esteem as the conjunction of personal history and feelings of devaluation that developed into the acceptance of violent relationships for women.

The household environment where an aggressor grew up is influential as well. Men who witnessed violence in childhood are more likely to accept and perpetrate violent behavior (Pollack, 2002, cited in Angelucci, 2008). Mendez (2006) found that 22 of 42 Cuban men who were perpetrators of IPV had witnessed violence in their families as children and also saw that women were held responsible as provocateurs and men were not blamed for hitting. A qualitative study conducted by Epina (2002) in Cuba also found that

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[10] See Chapter 2.

the majority of aggressors grew up in families where violence and or sexist division of gender roles existed (in Negrin, 2014). Class, educational level, age group, geographical zones, occupation, race, and social position, were not defining features among aggressors or victims of IPV (Navarrete, et al., Proveyer 2003, cited in Proveyer, 2011; Negrin, 2014; Proveyer, 2000, 2001).

The risk factors on every level are interdependent with one another. For instance, women could develop low self-esteem as a result of being socialized in Cuban culture of machismo, being assigned subordinate and secondary roles and responsibilities at home and school, which consequently promotes self-blaming attitudes among abused women. Non-help-seeking behavior could be fostered by self-blaming attitudes and non-intervention norms. One event could also affect multiple factors at different levels and lead to an increase in IPV. For example, an economic decline or crisis on the societal level could increase economic frustration at the relationship level and could lead to lowering self-esteem of a female individual who got fired or who gave up their education or career in order to support their families as many Cuban women did during the Special Period (Vega 2014).[11] The risk of IPV could also increase by men's low self-esteem and inferior sense

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[11] Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Fidel Castro introduced the phrase "special period in time of peace" in 1990 that describes the particularly hard time in Cuban economy. Some say that the Special Period was between 1990 and 1996; however, it is debatable when and whether it ended (Gordy, 2006).

of authority as an economic provider for being unable to provide his wife and children enough due to a lack of goods during an economic crisis.

4.3. Conclusion

IPV is the most common form of VAW in Cuba, the frequency of which has not been fully researched yet. Data collected for this research and other studies indicate psychological abuse is the most prevalent, followed by physical abuse. Factors that contributed to IPV were identified as: machismo at the societal level; sexist attitudes of key figures to support abused women, such as police officers, and non-intervention norms in the community; power imbalances between women and men at the domestic level; and internalized sexist values, low self-esteem, non-help-seeking behavior, and being abused as a child at the individual level of both men and women, which reinforce one another over multiple levels. This chapter identified supporting factors of IPV in Cuba by studying past research that was locally conducted mostly by Cuban academics. This data will be made use of within the next chapter. which aims to analyze the Cuban community organizations' strategies to combat IPV.

Chapter 5 Cuban Community Responses to IPV

This chapter outlines the strategies used by three community organizations that tackle

IPV and VAW in Havana, Cuba and analyzes the data through the lens of the SEF and

GAD theories. Based on interviews with organization employees and observation of one

workshop, the chapter also explores the challenges faced in trying to reduce VAW and IPV.

The data reveals that the community organizations in Havana have well composed

strategies based on workshops, training, individual supports, nation-wide campaigns, and

use of media, yet still face some difficulties in combatting IPV.

The first section details the community organizations I interviewed: Oscar Arnulfo

Romero Reflection Center (Centro de Reflexión Oscar Arnulfo Romero (OAR)),

Neighborhood Workshops of Integral Transformation (los Talleres de Transformación

Integral del Barrio (TTIB), and Orientation Houses for Women and Family (las Casas de

Orientación para la Mujer y la Familia (COMF)) of the Federation of Cuban Women (la

Federación de Mujeres Cubanas (FMC). These organizations are the main ones that tackle

IPV on the ground level in Havana, Cuba.

The second section explores community-based programs implemented by the OAR,

TTIB and COMF in order to reduce IPV. It also analyzes the programs in order to assess

whether the strategies used by the community organizations in Havana are effective tools

to prevent IPV.[12] Although I did not interview participants of community-based programs,

I have included examples from other parts of the world to compare strategies. I am also

including what I observed at a workshop that TTIB delivered in attempt to prevent VAW,

including IPV, in the Tenth of October district of Havana. This study is unable to provide

the voices of women who participated in workshops and campaign activities; however, it

does help evaluate the community-level strategies as tools to tackle IPV.

5.1. Community Organizations

The Oscar Arnulfo Romero Reflection Center (OAR) is a Havana-based, non-

governmental institute that has been working to promote social justice and a culture of

peace since the 1980s, in alliance with the Cuban state and various academic institutes.

The principal mission of the OAR is to promote equitable gender relations and work

against violence against women (VAW). The OAR developed a Strengthening Program

for Local Actors in Gender and Violence (*Programa de Fortalecimiento a Actores Locales*

en Género y Violencia) through which they provided other organizations, including

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[12] IPV, or violencia en las relaciones íntimas in Spanish, was an uncommon term to use
in speaking during interviews. IPV was often referred to as violence (violencia) or gender
violence (violencia de género) by interviewees. For the purpose of avoiding confusion
due to the use of multiple terms, violence (violencia) and gender violence (violencia de
género) are interpreted and translated as IPV in this chapter when it is obvious that the
interviewees were referring to IPV by those terms according to the context of their
remarks.

Neighborhood Workshops of Integral Transformation (TTIB) (discussed below), and community leaders with gender sensitivity workshops to train promoters (*promotores*) who go on to train other community members afterwards (Proveyer, 2014). In addition to training, the OAR also delivers workshops directly to communities all over Cuba, allying with a number of local organizations, including TTIB and Orientation Houses for Women and Family (COMF) (discussed below) and organizes conferences and a nationwide campaign that advocates for the prevention of VAW and IPV.

TTIB, created in 1988 as a secretary of municipal assemblies, consists of 20 local centers in Havana where various specialists, who reside in each locality, provide their community with various forms of workshops in an attempt to improve neighborhood lives. TTIB began working for women's rights in 1996 through self-esteem workshops, which was how TTIB specialists came to realize the gravity of IPV. However, TTIB lacked the theoretical and methodological tools to assist women in dealing with abuse at the time (Proveyer, 2014). Since 2007, TTIB officials have received capacity-building training from the OAR through the Strengthening Program for Local Actors in Gender and Violence and began delivering more structured workshop for those who suffered from violence (discussed further in the next section).

COMF, the municipal and local offices of the FMC, were established in 1990 all over the country in 168 municipalities (EcuRed, n.d.). The goal of COMF encompasses re-conceptualizing gender roles and supporting women who suffer from violence (EcuRed, n.d.). At each office, the FMC officials, collaborating with approximately 15 to 20 professional volunteers (*colaboradores*), work to prevent IPV and VAW and support abused women.

The next section reviews and analyzes how these organizations attempt to prevent IPV and support IPV survivors on the ground level, based on the information I collected through interviews on the community-level response to IPV in Havana.

5.2. Community Programs to Tackle IPV

5.2.1. Workshops for Community Members

The OAR. TTIB and COMF offer workshops for community members, aiming to both make IPV visible and prevent it. Through the interviews, I found various common functions of the workshops, as discussed below. Workshops are called various names depending on time and places, so I categorize them based on their function into gender sensitivity workshops and self-esteem workshops.

5.2.1.1. Gender Sensitivity Workshop

Educating communities about IPV and women's rights is one of the common functions at this type of workshop. The specialists explain different types of IPV such as physical, psychological, sexual, economic violence and controlling behaviors and why each of them are unacceptable. When available, they also distribute pamphlets with explanation of IPV and information on supporting centers for abused women. IPV is in many ways normalized and is often unseen in Cuban society, especially the non-physical kind according to Veronica of TTIB (November 23, 2017). For instance, psychological violence such as belittling, insulting, or yelling, occurs too often to even be recognized as abuse. To sexually satisfy male partners in intimate relationships is viewed as women's obligation and many women are unaware of their right to refuse sex (Veronica, November 23, 2017). Amanda of the OAR gave an account of a workshop on masculinity and violence where she explained that it is abuse to force a woman, even one's own wife, to have a sexual relationship and then a male participant, crying, raised his hand and said, "I… actually have done that a lot of times with my wife. But I did not know that I was abusing her" (November 10, 2017).

Community organizations also deliver workshops to facilitate discussion of the concept of gender and the construction of masculinity and femininity. These aim to convey the

social messages that: (1) the characteristics considered feminine (submissive, patient, gentle, pleasant, and delicate) and masculine (dominant, strong, and violent) are historically constructed; (2) the characteristics can be deconstructed and unlearned because they were constructed and learned; and (3) machismo, supported by the traditional construction of gender, is the base of gendered violence by creating power inequalities between women and men by privileging men's rights and opportunities (Amanda, November 10, 2017; Samantha, November 23, 2017; Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). Workshops address women's self-blaming attitudes and non-help-seeking behaviors by educating them about women's rights, deconstructing the image of a "good" woman, and denying the myths that justify IPV in circumstances in which "women provoke violence" for not being a "good" woman.

In the workshops, participants work in small groups to debate the concept of femininity and masculinity and its associated implications, followed by a facilitated discussion. For instance, at a workshop on masculinity and violence, Amanda usually has male participants debate how they view men and create lists of qualities that they regard as masculine (Amanda, November 10, 2017). Then in a debate, she asks which of the "manly" characteristics they believe that men were born with and, while the participants share ideas, brings up common sexist socialization and education in childhood, aiming to

make them realize how such socialization helped "manly" characteristics to be seen as innate in men. This is followed by a further facilitated discussion on other related topics such as IPV and parenting, depending on the overall theme of workshop (Amanda, November 10, 2017). Amanda revealed that, especially when they began delivering this kind of workshop, male participants were practically obligated to attend by their family doctors who knew they had violent characters and claimed that they did not need the workshop and sat disengaged for the first few sessions; however, as the sessions went on, an increasing number of them became active participants (November 10, 2017).

Machismo supports women's subordination and IPV in Cuba and are tackled in the efforts to deconstruct traditional notions of masculinity and femininity through discussions of common childhood education and daily interactions that frame how women and men should be and act. Such workshops as described above may help reduce men's feelings of superiority and the acceptance of male power over female and could decrease non-intervention norms that are fostered by the naturalization of IPV.

Discussing myths regarding the relationship between gender and violence is also a common strategy (Amanda, November 10, 2017; Veronica, November 23, 2017). Gender myths collude with the process of normalizing IPV and include "violence is natural to men", "men cannot control violence", "women like to be hit", "women provoke violence",

"women have to sexually satisfy their men", "no one should get involved in the problems between husbands and wives", "alcohol and drug consumptions cause violence", "being abused as a child makes the person violent", "abusers have mental illness", and "abuse out of jealousy is an expression of love" (Amanda, November 10, 2017; Samantha, November 23, 2017).

A workshop given by TTIB, that I observed, discussed these myths or "false beliefs… (that) were repeated from generation to generation and… (that) we repeat, and (that) naturalize a phenomena (violence) which is not natural" (Samantha, workshop, November 23, 2017). The workshop was given as a part of the "You Are More (Eres Más)" campaign (discussed below) to raise awareness around violence in the family setting, where three female and one male specialists from TTIB facilitated a group of about 30 female participants and one male participant.[13] Samantha and Carla, from TTIB, made use of statistical data to reinforce their arguments. They introduced a dataset indicating that about 40 percent of abusers were not abusing substances to emphasize that alcohol or drug consumption could support, but does not necessarily cause, violence and that a violent response to conflict is a learned behavior through cultural interactions based on machismo. Similarly, they use data suggesting that fewer than one fifth of abusers actually suffered

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[13] He was brought by his wife who was also participating in the workshop.

from abuse as children and emphasized that those, having been abused as children, could grow to be more motivated to avoid violence in order not to repeat the same history in their own families. Samantha indicated that fewer than 25 percent of abusers have psychiatric problems, countering the myth that blames mental illness for violence. Debunking myths of gender and violence that denaturalize IPV could improve women's self-blaming attitudes and sense of power and, therefore, may promote help-seeking among women.

However, some arguments presented were not supported by any data or study and were logically weaker than others. To explain why it is incorrect to believe that no one should get involved in the problems between husbands and wives, Carla explained "it is true that in many cases we would look bad (by intervening in IPV between husbands and wives) but we have to intervene because we could give advice or we could teach them the right way to deal with the situation...". Although this argument deals with non-intervention norms, which exist in Cuba as an obstacle for preventing IPV,[14] it did not discuss in depth how non-intervening norms or non-help-seeking behaviors are actually harmful to abused women or to how individuals could actually act when witnessing IPV.

Concluding the discussion, facilitators emphasized the importance of spreading the messages in families and of avoiding raising their children according to these myths or

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[14] See Chapter 4.

sexist values. Facilitators referred to education because the majority of the participants were middle-aged and supposed to have children or grandchildren. To reach youth and adolescents, TTIB goes to schools (Carla, November 23, 2017). She also emphasized the importance of working with young people, "we must incorporate (people) from a young age because once they are adults, it is difficult to change (mentality)" (November 23, 2017). This must be a reasonable strategy since childhood education and daily interactions based on sexist values are closely related to the promotion of machismo and the naturalization of IPV as previously reviewed.

Most of the 30 female participants disagreed with the myths, except an older female participant, who stated that "women can be provocateurs (of violence)". There were many times that multiple people were shouting at the same time, so voices were ignored at times by the facilitators. The comment, "women can be provocateurs (of violence)" did not lead to any further discussion. This indicates that the workshop was little organized in terms of participation and facilitation. The only male participant, sitting at the edge of the room, seemed indifferent throughout the workshop. He kept silence and had no reaction to the debate. Facilitators did not pay any special attention to him either. The way the discussion was organized could have been more regulated so there was better communication between facilitators and participants and they could receive individual facilitation. The facilitated

discussion was followed by a video reflection screening an episode of a series "Breaking the Silence (*Rompiendo el Silencio*)" that showed common types of VAW in a family setting.[15]

5.2.1.2. Self-esteem Workshop

COMF and TTIB provide self-esteem workshops to assist women in confronting IPV (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017; Veronica & Carla, November 23, 2017). At the workshops, a facilitator asks participants to list on a piece of paper their positive and negative qualities, (Carla, November 23, 2017). Participants are given a mirror to speak to one's reflection, affirming their positive qualities, and then repeat the same in front of other participants at workshop (Carla, November 23, 2017). These activities attempt to raise self-confidence through affirming and appreciating oneself, but Carla commented that it is a slow process because changing the mentality is not easy (November 23, 2017).

In response to being asked about changes that they observed in women who participated in the workshops, Samantha said "they become other people. When they came to the workshops, they were shy, they did not want to talk, but, after spending some time, they are different people because there (at the workshops) they articulate with other women, start going out together to the beach, theater… celebrate birthdays. (The group of women)

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[15] This will be discussed in the section 5.2.6.

turns into a self-help group in case of illness" (November 23, 2017). Whilst this personality change is certainly positive, it is hard to tell what extent the content of the workshops themselves contributed to this change, not the fact that female participants became friends. Workshops function as an opportunity to socialize with others.

These strategies may achieve women's strategic gender needs (SGNs) by improving women's sense of power, which is indispensable to change attitudes and behaviors to realize more equal relationships with their partners and to confront IPV. Overall, gender sensitivity and self-esteem workshops for community members are well-structured based on the Cuban socio-cultural realities and individual tendencies, as those reviewed in Chapter 4, that contribute to IPV.

Gender sensitivity and self-esteem workshops in Havana have some characteristics in common with what are known as gender transformative programs. Gender transformative programs are defined as programs that promote critical understandings of gender roles and norms through participatory learning techniques, such as group workshops, where learners discuss non-equitable aspects of gender norms and reflect on alternative behaviors for improving gender relationships (Heinse, 2011). The difference between the Cuban programs and the general definition of gender transformative programs is that the community programs in Havana largely focus on critically understanding gender

norms and roles, rather than thinking about alternative ways to behave and use power. The workshop I observed debunked gender myths that naturalize IPV and criticized men's unacceptable actions in a video-reflection; however, the discussion did not go into the possible ways that women could behave confronting IPV or how men could alternatively use their power to increase equity in gender relationships. Gender sensitivity and self-esteem workshops in Havana are more centered on promoting women's sense of power (*power within*) than on fostering power to make change (*power with* and *power to*), unlike other gender transformative programs. For example, SASA! in Kampala, Uganda, is a community organization that seeks to reduce violence and HIV-risk behaviors. Its strategies include discussing consequences of misusing power and alternative ways of using power and encourage participants to develop their own community activities to challenge attitudes and behaviors towards VAW, such as transformative seminars, drama playing, door-to-door discussions, film and soap opera shows, and poster discussions (Abramsky et al., 2014, 2016). As reviewed in Chapter 2, the three kinds of power - *power within*, *power with*, and *power to* - are closely related to the process of empowerment and, therefore, crucial to promote when combatting all forms of VAW. Therefore, discussing alternative ways to behave and use power that could foster power to make change could be a step to take to promote transformation.

5.2.2. Training for Community Officials

Nationwide, the FMC provides gender sensitivity training for hospitals and polyclinic workers, including hospital guards, doctors and nurses, to whom abused women often turn first in the event of violence. The training consists of human rights, violation of human rights, and discrimination and violence against women, including IPV. In order to emphasize the importance of filing a report to the police as soon as they realize they are dealing with a case of abuse, facilitators emphasize that psychological violence, including threats and yelling, can escalate to physical abuse and even death (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). They also explain the tendency for a woman who is accompanied by her partner to lie about the cause of injury in a medical consultation due to a fear of further abuse (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017).

The FMC, OAR and TTIB provide such awareness-raising activities for police officers and judges, among others (Amanda, November 10, 2017; Jacqueline, November 22, 2017; Samantha, November 23, 2017). For instance, TTIB invites police officers, especially the heads in each department who also attend political assemblies, to the workshops where they attempt to debunk the myths related to the relationships between gender and violence in order to prevent re-victimization of abused women at the police stations. TTIB, as a secretary and an advisor of municipal assemblies, includes politicians in their gender

sensitivity activities and also visits local schools for teachers to deliver gender-sensitivity workshops, such as the workshops discussed above.

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, sexist attitudes of key community officials, which result in a lack of gender sensitivity and non-intervention norms, are identified as contributing for IPV as they blame and re-victimize women for "provoking" IPV and reinforce notions that IPV is normal and the right of men. The strategy of raising awareness among key officials is well suited for the Cuban society and may increase women's trust in these public structures and decrease non-help-seeking behaviors of abused women.

5.2.3. Individual Counseling

COMF provides individual counseling for those women who access the centers. Through counseling, women who come to discuss their intimate relationships, or even a seemingly unrelated topic, such as economic distress, are sometimes detected as being abused by their partners, either physically, psychologically sexually or economically (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). In such cases, the counselor provides women, based on their needs, with counselling that teaches them why the treatment they are receiving from partners is abuse. They may also receive an invitation to workshops and debates that deal with related topics; advice on how they could help their partners to change or how to establish collaborative relationships in family; and a meeting with a lawyer and a judge for

legal advice in case they want to press charges (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). This counseling could increase women's knowledge about rights and potentially their sense of power (*power within*), which could, in turn, decrease women's self-blaming and non-help-seeking behaviors. As a result, non-intervention norms in the community could be reduced.

What distinguishes COMF's counseling from medical attention at polyclinics is that they build trust with women and keep the counseling room private, so women could feel safe sharing their personal lives and could cry if they want to, which they cannot do at polyclinics where they are seen by other patients or medical residents (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). Different from polyclinics, COMF do not report to the police without consent, which is important for those women who do not want to separate from their partners, but to work on improving the relationships (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017).

The OAR offers individual counseling once or twice a week. The OAR delivers two sorts of counseling according to women's needs. For those who are in a violent situation, they provide what is similar to COMF's program: counseling to assist women in comprehending their circumstance and their rights, and, if they desire, to help them put an end to their abusive relationships by offering legal assistance (Amanda, November 10, 2017). The OAR also offers counseling to assist women who left their abusive partners, planning to achieve independence (Amanda, November 10, 2017). This could help reduce

one of the risk factors at the relationship level - women's economic dependence on men. Individual counseling by itself does not necessarily challenge women's subordination or power imbalances with men; however, women's economic independence could lead to an increase in their decision-making power in the household and a decrease in concrete daily practices that reproduce gender inequality.

5.2.4. Occupational Training for Abused Women

Occupational training tackles women's economic dependence on their male partners, which could impact whether or not women seek help for IPV. COMF has been offering occupational training since the 1990s for the general public, including abused women who are looking for an independent life. Training is primarily available in traditionally female fields such as sewing, hairdressing, typing, massage, florist, executive secretary, accounting, nutrition, food hygiene, and culinary art, although there are some in non-traditional fields such as computer, business management, marketing, goldsmithing, agriculture, carpentry, winemaking (COMF, 2014; Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). The training is composed of two or three sessions a week. The cost for a month is generally 25 Cuban Peso (1 US dollars) or 75 Cuban Peso (3 US dollars) for three months, if it is an advanced course such as a special type of massage (COMF, 2014). In every session of this training, instructors dedicate the first 15 minutes to lecturing on diverse gender-related

issues including VAW, sexually transmitted diseases, the different types of IPV, and where to turn for help in case of violence (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). The occupational training at COMF, since they include non-traditional areas of occupations, could be challenging more substantive discrimination such as the gender division of labor that exists in Cuba.[16]

TTIB offers traditional occupational training in collaboration with the FMC. They support women in starting their own businesses as a group (Carla & Samantha, November 23, 2017). They have established a support program called Entrepreneurship and Women Entrepreneurs (*Emprendimiento y las Mujeres Emprendedoras*) that assists women with the necessary resources for businesses such as selling handmade clothing and dolls or beauty salons (Carla & Samantha, November 23, 2017). The occupational training at TTIB, which is solely in traditionally female fields, could be reinforcing existing gender relations and gender roles, fostering sexist attitudes that are responsible for making IPV socially acceptable. This does theoretically contradict their attempt to decrease machismo. While referring to the possibility of integrating traditionally male fields into their occupational training program, Carla expressed concern that women might not choose to be trained in those fields because of the popularity of traditionally female occupations such as

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[16] See Chapter 3.

hairdressing and sewing (November 23, 2017). This deters TTIB from incorporating

traditionally male occupations into their training program. Offering occupational training

in traditionally male fields depends on the availabilities of material resources such as

computers and human resources in such professions as construction, mechanics, plumbing,

etc.

This strategy, job training, often forms a part of a more comprehensive women's

economic empowerment (WEE) program. These types of programs attempt to decrease

women's vulnerability and dependency through job training, but also microfinance,

conditional cash transfer and property ownership (Hughes, 2015). These other strategies

were not observed in the community-level efforts to reduce IPV in Havana. Attempts

elsewhere to increase women's economic stability have had some success in reducing

IPV.[17] When male partners, with strong traditional beliefs, think that women's increased

income and stability are threatening their powerful position as economic providers in the

household, IPV could worsen as a backlash in an attempt to demonstrate and maintain their

power over women; therefore, economic empowerment must be a part of overall awareness

raising efforts to combat VAW (Maldonado et. al., 2005, cited in Angelucci, 2008). As a

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[17] See for example the Chars Livelihoods Program, in rural Bangladesh (Haneef et al.
2014), CCT in Peru (Perova, 2010), and property ownership programs in India (Panda et
al., 2005).

result, since occupational training for women in Havana is not necessarily an integrated part of the overall community-level attempt to reduce IPV, it could, in fact, increase the vulnerability of women to IPV.

5.2.5. Awareness-raising Campaign

The OAR has run an awareness raising campaign since 2006 called "You Are More" (*Eres Más*), a short version of "you are worth more than to obey" (eres más que obedecer). The campaign consists of various functions including interactive workshops, talks, poster competitions, conferences, and community festivals that include one-hour plays, poem readings, and singing on the theme of no violence against women (Amanda, November 10, 2017). Every year the campaign has a different focus. In 2017, the campaign focused on psychological violence, which is the most invisible and the least known form of violence. According to Amanda, abusive behaviors, such as shouting, humiliating, degrading, controlling a cell phone, and controlling behaviors (e.g. preventing a woman from seeing her own family) are too common to be recognized as violence (November 10, 2017).

The principal term of the campaign is generally from October to December. During this time, the frequency of the activities generally intensifies. The OAR is allied with numerous community organizations all over Cuba, including TTIB and COMF, which plan and execute campaign activities in their own communities with the OAR's material and

physical support (Amanda, November 10, 2017). The OAR also collaborates with newspapers, movie theaters, television, and social networks for advertising purpose.

Cuban awareness-raising campaigns, such as "You Are More" (*Eres Más*), convey a social message that shows disapproval of IPV and potentially contribute to reducing self-blaming attitudes and non-help-seeking behaviors as well as acceptance of male control over females. Awareness-raising campaigns are one of the most common strategies in fighting IPV, often initiated by the United Nations encouraging local organizations to take actions such as advocating through social media or marching on streets (Heinse, 2011). For instance, the UNiTE to End Violence Against Women, which has taken place in Cuba and elsewhere, led by UN Women and the office of the Secretary General, locally promotes the slogan "Say No to Violence against Women!" and designates the 25th of every month Orange Day, when campaign materials are distributed to local women's organizations and the campaign message is spread through talk events or social media (United Nations Secretary-General's Campaign UNiTE). UNICEF reports that, although they help bring the discussions into the public sphere, awareness-raising campaigns alone generally lack in the intensity of activities and theoretical grounding necessary to transform social norms and change behaviors (2010). In order to shift social norms and behaviors, more than a mere criticism of local cultures is required, such as proposing alternative values and

behaviors, framing discussion around the issue in a non-threatening way and creating an environment that facilitates change.

"You Are More" (*Eres Más*), developed by the Cuban organization, the OAR, is not just a criticism against Cuban culture or merely the delivery of a message through the media or a brochure. It is combined with various interactive activities that are planned and implemented by local women's organizations across Cuba in collaboration with the OAR. The TTIB's workshop that I observed in Havana was implemented as a part of "You Are More" (*Eres Más*) campaign and was a combination of a gender sensitivity workshop and distribution of campaign materials with information on VAW and IPV. Because the campaign is developed by Cuban specialists, it also has a cultural appropriateness, such as 2017's focus on psychological violence in the Cuban socio-cultural context where psychological violence is rarely recognized as abuse in Cuban society.

5.2.6. Edutainment

Edutainment is a combination of education and entertainment, aiming to convey social messages and to shift social norms and behaviors (Heinse, 2011; Pham, 2015; Solorzano et. al., 2008; Usdin et al., 2005). This approach has been applied to IPV prevention in many parts of the world through TV dramas and radio programs that role

modelling alternative, positive attitudes and behaviors, including help seeking and help giving actions (Heinse, 2011; Usdin et al., 2005).

Cuban Television, which is responsible for all the channels, is currently broadcasting a series "Breaking the Silence" (*Rompiendo el Silencio*) that deals with all kinds of violence towards women and girls in family settings. It stems from the OAR's campaign and the series components were constructed through a careful discussion among gender specialists from multiple organizations including the OAR. The aim of the series is to raise consciousness and foster discussion of VAW. The OAR and TTIB recently began utilizing the series' episodes at workshops as a part of educational materials. The series is useful for promoting discussion around VAW, (Heidi, November 23, 2017). Amanda also contends that mass communication is powerful in conveying social messages, because to see one's own experience screened on TV helps a woman reflect on what is occurring in her life (November 10, 2017). "When television reflects something negative [that actually happens in real life], people speak out... point that out… This makes it easier for us to indicate the [concrete] criteria of how things should be" (Carla, November 23, 2017).

Carla and Heidi also point out that since Cuban Television, the principal television channel in Cuba, is broadcasting the series, many people in workshops are familiar with it and become more engaged in discussion (November 23, 2017). They add that since the

series is the first television program originally from Cuba that reflects the Cuban reality around VAW, using it in workshops evokes more sympathy and helps promote active engagement. According to Carla, the previous year's TV program dealing with VAW and IPV was not helpful because it dealt with a foreign context, rather than Cuban; it was transmitted through an unpopular channel, so that many people at the workshop were unfamiliar with the program (November 23, 2017). Since this format for educating the public about VAW and IPV is new, it is too early to tell how effective it is in changing people's attitudes (Heidi November 23, 2017).

For instance, the first episode of "Breaking the Silence" (*Rompiendo el Silencio*) is about a husband who psychologically abuses his wife by disapproving that she works outside of the house, condemning her for not caring for the house properly, and telling her to stay home to cook to be a "good" woman. He also controls her behavior by not allowing her to go sleep and forcing her to stay up when she is exhausted. The main female character obeys the husband's orders, never arguing with him. Although she does eventually end the relationship, it was only when she found out that he was cheating on her. The whole episode did not contain any criticism towards machismo, demonstration of help-seeking or giving behaviors, how to confront psychological abuse from a husband, or how her community could have intervened it.

While "Breaking the Silence" (*Rompiendo el Silencio*) portrays the reality of IPV in Cuba, it does not model actions that should be taken in witnessing IPV, such as a collective strong disapproval of IPV in the community, help-seeking and giving behaviors, or appropriate support and attention by police officers. In this way, "Breaking the Silence" (*Rompiendo el Silencio*) differs from edutainment programs in other parts of the world, such as the Soul City program in South Africa that role-models community actions to combat domestic violence. Soul City shows how existing toll-free helplines are helpful and demonstrates how to implement the Domestic Violence Act (Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication, 2001; Usdin et al., 2005). Similarly, the Meeting Points (*Puntos de Encuentro*) program in Nicaragua encourages interpersonal and public discussion around matters that are perceived as taboo to traditionally talk about publicly, such as sexual abuse and domestic violence (Heinse, 2011).

5.3. Challenges

While the interviews with the gender specialists at TTIB, the OAR and the FMC revealed that the community-level strategies to tackle IPV and VAW in Havana are varied and thoughtfully composed, they also face some challenges. While most respondents regarded the workshops as positive experiences, all the specialists referred to the difficulty of including men. They remarked on the lack of group-work culture, macho attitudes, and

lack of appropriate appreciation of gender workshops. Amanda from the OAR said, "working with men is difficult, very difficult because men do not have much culture of working in groups like women do" (November 10, 2017). COFM has a program for men who perpetrate IPV; however, Jacqueline confessed that it had been challenging to get men to participate in the program, saying "not many men come...because they feel ashamed or they believe that they do not have to change… that men have power and control at home" (November 22, 2017). Similarly, Veronica from TTIB commented, "men do not come… Men are losing. Women …are learning a lot. Men see this as a waste of time" (November 23, 2017).

Only Amanda from the OAR told a successful story about including men, in which the OAR asked family doctors to collaborate by obligating their male patients, who had a history of violence, to participate in the OAR's workshops on masculinity and violence. The OAR and their male participants created a platform for Cuban men advocating for gender equality and against gender-based violence. Participants in these workshops, which are held two or three times per year, include men from diverse backgrounds - university students, office workers, farmers, doctors, lawyers, as well as different religious backgrounds.

According to Jewkes, Flood and Lang (2015), who examined a number of attempts

to include men in similar efforts around the globe, it is not helpful to merely portray

stereotypical or traditional masculinities, but important to enable men to reflect on their

related experiences, acknowledge the differences that exist among men, address

similarities between men and women, and to critically analyze men's privilege and power.

Discussing differences that exist among men and among women promotes a critical

understanding of the variety and flexibility of gender identities. These are not strategies

incorporated in the organizations I studied in Cuba.

The frequency of such workshops for community members is insufficient, according

to the interviewees. Workshops specialized in VAW and IPV for men and women tend to

be infrequent because they depend on material and human resources, such as pamphlets,

papers, available workers and the financial resources to put workshops on more frequently;

and because the organizations also tackle other social issues, such as youth and drugs

(Amanda, November 10, 2017). Samantha and Carla also confirm that TTIB does not have

fixed dates for such workshops because workshops are delivered when they see the need,

which could be once every three months (November 23, 2017). In general, gender

transformative programs tend to bring positive outcomes when the programs are offered

on a regular basis and include women and men (Gibbs, 2016; Jewkes et al., 2015).

Improvements in the frequency and gender inclusivity of the workshops can still be made.

According to Jacqueline, the training for hospital workers is of insufficient length

and frequency. While discussing the program design, she did not comment on the

effectiveness of the training program, but rather talked about the duration: "they are short.

Sometimes they are three or four sessions… although training is given all over the

country… after being trained, they (the hospital workers) can go to other countries on

international missions or change jobs… we always have to start training again because

people are new" (November 22, 2017). Such training is delivered inconsistently, generally

when they know that a number of new employees have begun working (Jacqueline,

November 22, 2017). Professor Vivian Mercedes from the National School of Public

Health in Cuba, who is also a former official at the FMC, also mentioned that the FMC's

training for hospital workers is not delivered on a regular basis and emphasized the

importance to do more on the community level as well as on the policy level.

The importance of community-level efforts to raise awareness of IPV among

hospital workers is significant. The curriculum at medical school addresses IPV only as a

subtheme of alcoholism and drug addiction and, as a result, many doctors do not recognize

IPV, especially non-physical violence, as a health issue (Mercedes, November 21, 2017).

There are doctors who ignore their ethical responsibilities as community leaders, only care for physical problems and are indifferent to patients' social or family issues, which is crucial for doctors to detect IPV (Mercedes, November 21, 2017). Gender training for teachers faces the same sort of challenge. The school curriculum for teachers, according to Tania Caram León of FLASCO, does contain IPV, but rather an elective postgraduate course (November 8, 2017). It is important to raise the awareness of teachers on the community level; however, again, the frequency of such workshops is not satisfactory. In addition, gender sensitivity training for judicial, medical and educational workers could be improved if VAW and IPV were fully integrated into the curriculum of their schools and required topics of study (Heinse, 2011).

It is also challenging to sensitize the police and council members. According to Veronica from TTIB, the police of Havana have a strong culture of machismo (November 23, 2017). Carla adds that gender issues are not always taken seriously because the Cuban socialist ideology does not necessarily view inequality in society, including gender inequality, which serves to further render gender violence invisible (November 23, 2017).[18] However, the culture of machismo among police officers might not be the only

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[18] Other than the community organizations discussed in this thesis, there is the Union of Cuban Judges (La Reunión de Juristas de Cuba), to which all lawyers, judges, and prosecutors, as well as the police who possess a law degree, belong. The Union delivers gender issue workshops across the country; however, participation is not obligatory, so

reason why TTIB faces difficulties in training them. Heinse (2011) found that such training

tends to be successful when trainers are higher ranking than the officers. As a result,

community-level organizations struggle in attempts to train them. TTIB is the only

organization among the three community organizations that does not have a higher-level

structure than the community-level, although its funding comes from the government, and

its strategies must be approved by members of the state. COFM is a part of the FMC, which

is a national institute; and the OAR has a national-level status as a leading organization

and as a consulting organization for other women's organizations across Cuba.

There are some challenges in counseling as well. Counselors never force women

to leave or sue their partners for the abuse since they see their job is to make women realize

that the treatment they are receiving by their intimate partners is a violation of their human

rights (Jacqueline, November 22, 2017). But this also partially stems from a practical

reason – some women simply have no choice but to continue to live with their partners due

to a serious lack of housing in Cuba. Jacqueline says, "housing is a serious problem…

sometimes they have no choice but to live together, so we have to find a way that she is

not … assaulted" (November 22, 2017). There is an insufficient number of shelters in Cuba

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the efforts to raise gender awareness has not reached all police, lawyers, judges, or
prosecutors (Estrada, November 15, 2017).

as a result of this housing issue: "… a lot of women are surrounded by violence because they have nowhere else to go" (Samantha, November 23, 2017).

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the strategies used by community organizations to combat IPV in Havana. Implementing these strategies – outlined above –, community organizations are facing multiple challenges: insufficient resources are available to consistently and frequently implement their workshops for community members and leaders; the inclusion of men in gender sensitivity programs is difficult because of their unwillingness to participate; engaging the officials in the criminal justice system and health professions is challenging due to their attitudes and lack of understanding of gender inequality and IPV as serious health problems; and finally, it is often challenging for women to leave their abusive partner due to a lack of housing.

The community-level response to IPV in Cuba addresses many of the issues identified by a social ecological analysis of the interrelated layers that increase the risk of IPV in Cuba. At the societal level, Cuban machismo are tackled through gender sensitivity workshops that critically expose the traditional construction of masculinity and femininity and discuss the cultural relationships of gender and violence. At the community level, the sexist attitudes of key officials, including the members of criminal justice system, health

workers and teachers are dealt with by delivering training that attempts to raise gender awareness among those workers. Working with police officers and judges could help decrease IPV by reinforcing legal support for abused women. Raising awareness among teachers may help decrease youth socialization based on sexist beliefs. Through these workshops and training, non-intervention norms surrounding IPV could be reduced. At the relationship level, there are attempts to decrease women's economic dependency on and financial vulnerability to their male partners through various means such as individual counseling, occupational training and organizational supports for female entrepreneurs. At the individual level, internalized sexist attitudes, low self-esteem and non-help-seeking behaviors are tackled mainly through gender sensitivity and self-esteem workshops, where self-reflective activities take place. Those workshops can help strengthen women's *power within* and potentially enable women to meet their practical and strategic gender needs by promoting a critical understanding of the cultural causes of IPV. This process is indispensable for abused women to become aware of gender-based discriminatory practices and to alter their attitudes and behaviors to confront IPV.

Community response to IPV in Cuba addresses some of the contributing factors for IPV in Cuba and, as illuminated by examples from other parts of the world, their strategies correspond to a number of those that are generally regarded as having positive impacts in

reducing IPV. However, looking more closely, there is room for improvement. For instance, gender sensitivity workshops for community members are infrequent and not inclusive of men. The workshops largely focus on traditional concepts of femininity and masculinity and do not entail discussion of different identities that exist among men and women or similarities between women and men. Approaches that employ these strategies foster a critical understanding of the variety of ways of being a woman and a man (Jewkes, Flood and Lang, 2015). The focus of the gender sensitivity workshops in Cuba is not on discussing and finding alternative behaviors to improve gender relationships in order to confront IPV. Job training for abused women is recommended to be an integrated part of gender sensitivity programs, and vice versa, in order to prevent the backlash of actually increasing IPV by threatening men's identity as economic providers. This was observed in Mexico, a context which has a similar culture to Cuba, in terms of machismo. The Cuban series "Breaking the Silence" (*Rompiendo el Silencio*) is centered on depicting the realities of VAW and IPV in Cuba but does not sufficiently demonstrate alternative attitudes and behaviors for women and men as well as police officers to confront IPV, unlike other successful edutainment programs elsewhere.

The community-level strategies that tackle IPV in Havana certainly are based on a careful examination on the Cuban socio-cultural realities. The community efforts to

reduce IPV in Havana have some effective aspects although there is room for improvement.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

This study identified and analyzed the strategies that community organizations use to reduce Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Havana, Cuba at the community level. My main argument has been that community-level strategies in Havana respond well to the existing factors that support IPV in Cuban society, many of the strategies that attempt to combat IPV are used elsewhere effectively, but they simply do not go far enough in Havana due to the host of challenges I have outlined.

I conducted a field work in Havana, interviewing 5 academics, whose specialties concern gender and violence, as well as 6 community organization staff who engage in programs to combat IPV in order to learn their organization's strategies and challenges in tackling IPV.

The following was argued as to supporting factors for IPV in Cuba. At the societal level machismo reinforces social and individual tolerance of men's power over women, including IPV. At the community level, sexist attitudes of key figures, such as police officers and hospital workers, who fail to recognize IPV as a social health issue, create an environment where women who suffer from IPV do not feel safe to seek help. Non-intervention norms in the community further promote such non-help-seeking and -giving behaviors and therefore reinforce IPV. At the relationship level, power imbalances in terms

of finance, domestic work distribution and decision-making rights, can lead to concrete daily practices that can diminish women's self-esteem and reinforce internalized sexist values of men and women at the individual level. Women's economic dependence on men can also relate to low self-esteem. Besides these supporting factors, witnessing violence or being abused as a child for both men and women were identified as factors reinforcing IPV at the individual level.

Through the interviews with organization staffs who tackle IPV at the community level, I found that the community organizations address many of the above mentioned problems by various strategies, including workshops for community members where they attempt to increase women's self-esteem and critical comprehension of IPV, machismo, traditional concepts of femininity and masculinity, and gender myths about the relationship between gender and IPV; workshops that attempt to increase gender sensitivity for community workers including police and health workers who are in positions that can contribute to decreasing IPV in the community; individual counseling that assists abused women in learning their rights and finding solutions to cope with or leave the abusive partner and to plan independent lives; occupational training in both traditionally male and female fields for women who seek to establish an independent life; a nationwide awareness raising campaign allied by a number of community organizations and media, which

focuses on psychological violence that is the most prevalent followed by physical violence in Cuba; and the use of Cuban television to transmit TV series that reflect Cuban realities around VAW and IPV in the family setting, which aims to increase discussion about gender and violence among the population. These strategies are thoughtfully composed, based on an examination of the culture of machismo and the lived realities of Cuban women. The community organizations' programs potentially strengthen women's sense of power (*power within*) and help them meet their strategic gender needs to better confront IPV, by raising awareness, tackling low self-esteem, and promoting a critical understanding of gender and violence, all of which are necessary for women to alter their tolerance towards their partners' power over them. Their programs also can help women meet their practical gender needs by economically empowering them. However, the community organizations also face some challenges in implementing those strategies. They face the difficulties of including men in gender sensitivity workshops; delivering workshops for community member as frequently as they want due to a lack of material and human resources; engaging the police and health workers due to their lack of understanding of IPV as a social and health issue, and helping women who wish to leave their abusive partners due to insufficient housing.

The strategies of the community organizations are similar to those used elsewhere,

which had positive effects in reducing IPV. However, there are significant differences, which could be leading to less than effective results, as identified by the interviewees of this study. Gender sensitivity workshops in Havana mainly demonstrate and criticize the traditional models of femininity and masculinity without fostering discussion of the variety of female and male identities respectively as well as the differences that exist among women/men and the similarities between women and men, which is recommended to further improve a critical understanding of gender and violence. Moreover, unlike some other successful gender transformative programs, those workshops are not designed to search alternative positive attitudes and behaviors and foster people's abilities to take actions for change, that women and men can apply to their lives when witnessing IPV between other people and when having conflict with their partners regarding issues like decision-making and distribution of domestic duties. Job training for women who suffered from IPV is not integrated into other gender sensitivity programs, which can be crucial so that financially empowered women do not experience increased violence from their male partners as a backlash. The Cuban edutainment succeeds in demonstrating the realities of IPV that Cuban women live yet does not role-model the attitudes and behaviors such as help-seeking and -giving actions that should be taken by women, men, the community members, and legal and health workers.

Some pre-existing views were challenged during the course of the research. Cuban criminal laws were criticized by Weissman (2012), who claimed that a regulation relating to self-defense was absent, thus legislation was insufficient to protect those who suffered from IPV. However, this study revealed that Cuban laws have two pieces of legislation that concern self-defense. CEDAW (2013) reported that the Committee urges that Cuba raises public awareness of gender through media and educational programs, which gave me an impression that Cuba does not have such programs; however, there exists a TV series developed by Cuba gender specialists, which was analyzed in this study.

The significance of this study lays in providing detailed information regarding community-level efforts to combat VAW and IPV in Havana, Cuba, which according to CEDAW (2013), was lacking. The new knowledge, produced by this study, is that community organizations' strategies to reduce IPV in Havana holistically tackle the interrelated layers of supporting elements for IPV in Cuban society yet have room for improvement such as increasing the frequency, gender inclusivity and theme ranges to discuss of the gender sensitivity workshops that they deliver in the community. It must note that the findings presented in this study are for Havana only since they are based on my field work in the Capital, which is not representative of Cuba as a whole country.

The primary limitation of this study is that I stayed in Havana for only a month and

this time was insufficient for me to establish any kind of relationship to interview female

participants of the programs provided by the community organizations. This study is

unable to provide the opinion of abused women regarding the effectiveness of the

community organizations' programs. Therefore, this study is limited to providing an

analysis based on information provided by the organizations themselves and comparisons,

through the secondary literature, of programs and strategies elsewhere. Further research

clearly needs to be conducted with such women in order to evaluate the effectiveness of

these programs.

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Interview Questions and Procedure

Los Procedimientos y las Cuestiones de la Entrevista

1. Introducción

- Soy una estudiante japonésa de maestría en la universidad canadiense que se llama Dalhousie.

- Estoy estudiando sobre las ayudas ofrecidas por las organizaciones comunitarias a las mujeres víctimas de violencia en sus relaciones íntimas. Me gustaria aprender de su programa (que brinda el apoyo para las mujeres maltratadas, los agresores, la familia/ o el nombre específico del programa) en la casa de orientación para la mujer y familia.

- Antes de empezar, me gustaría pedirle su permiso para grabar la entrevista con una grabadora de audio, al cual solo yo, la investigadora principal, tendré acceso. Es porque el español no es mi lengua materna y puede surgir la necesidad de que repase la entrevista. ¿Estaría bien para usted?

(grabar)

- Consentimiento Verbal: Antes de realizar las preguntas, me gustaría aclarar algunos aspectos técnicos sobre la entrevista:

- Confidencialidad: la informacion personal sobre usted van a ser confidencial. Solo la investigadora, quien soy yo, y mi supervisora tendremos acceso a los datos que brinde. Alguna información que usted diga puede ser usada de modo literario identificada bajo un seudónimo.

- Sobre la entrevista: A usted se le va a preguntar sobre el programa en lo que trabaja, sus experiencias y opiniones relacionadas con el programa. Puede rechazar o contestar las preguntas que se le presenten en la entrevista, y usted está libre de finalizar la entrevista en cualquier momento por cualquier motivo sin repercusiones.

- Riesgo: aunque yo haga todo lo necesario para asegurar la confidencialidad máxima, podrían haber situaciones donde personas cercanas a usted puedan identificarle por el carácter de sus comentarios.

- mi estudio es solamente para propósito académico (no para los medios de comunicación) y los entrevistados participan de modo voluntario en el estudio.

2. La Entrevista para el Nivel de la Implementación

- ¿Puede mencionar su nombre y sus responsabilidades actuales en su organización?

- ¿En que programa está dedicada del momento?

- ¿por cuánto tiempo ha sido dedicada al programa y cuál ha sido su rol?

- ¿Como comenzo usted a trabajar en el programa?

- Sé que en su organización se brindan (tipos de programas). ¿ hay más actividades para las mujeres maltratadas y los agresores que no conozca?

- ¿Qué sucede exactamente en el programa? Puede guíame sobre lo que experimentan las personas que acceden a su programa?

- Una vez que una accede a su programa, ¿por cuánto tiempo formaria parte del programa?

- ¿Hace cuanto tiempo empezó el programa si lo conoce?

- ¿Cuál es el objetivo de esta actividad?

- ¿Cuál es el medio para lograr este objetivo?

Seminarios:

- ¿Cuales son los mensajes que se intentan transmitir y porque?

- ¿Cómo narra su programa sobre la razón por la que la violencia contra esposas y parejas no debería suceder?

- ¿Que se habla de los roles de las mujeres en la relación, la familia, la sociedad?

Debate y Reflexión grupal:

- ¿Cuales son los temas que se discuten?

- ¿Caules son los roles de los facilitadores en el debate?

Video Debates:

- ¿Cual es el tema del video?

- ¿Qué son los mensajes que intenta transmitir en el video?

Asesoramiento:

- ¿Quienes se benefician del servicio (las mujeres, los hombres, las familias)?

- ¿Cuales temas se hablan constantemente con cada grupo?

- ¿Cuantas personas usan su programa approximadamente por una semana?

- ¿Hay algunos características comunes que observó en los participantes? ¿hay algunas características demográficas, por ejemplo el sexo, la edad, etnia, nivel de educación u ocupación?

- ¿Que tal sobre la ideología sobre los géneros y rol de cada género, y el nivel de la autoestima?

- ¿Hay gente que deja de venir al programa justo después de que empezó o en medio de las sesiones?

- ¿Qué retroalimentación recibe desde los participantes sobre el acceso, los beneficios y desventajas del programa? (durante y después del programa)

- ¿Cuales son su opiniones personales sobre programas?

- ¿Qué opina sobre la importancia del programa en lo relacionado a la prevención de la violencia contra esposas y parejas?

- ¿Cree que esos medios son apropiados para lograr el objetivo? Si hay algo que te gustaría cambiar en el programa o añadir al programa para hacerlo más efectivo, cuál sería?

- ¿No puede realizar ese cambio ahora mismo? Porque?

- ¿Cree usted que sus opiniones pueden influir en las directivas de la organización?/ ¿Podría usted influir sobre los que toman las decisiones sobre los programas?

- ¿Podría usted explicarme como funcionan las jerarquías (el orden organizativo) en la organización? (¿Se pueden influir desde abajo a arriba?)

- ¿Cuál cree que es el impacto de su programa?

- ¿Cual es la razon de su éxito, o por el contrario, hay algo que necesita mejorar?

- ¿Cómo impacta su programa en la vida diaria de los usuarios?

- ¿Hay seguimientos para las mujeres/ los hombres/las familias después de que completan su programa?

- ¿El machismo afecta la efectividad de estos programas?

- ¿Su programa influye en la cultura machista?

- ¿Hay algún desafío al implementar su programa?

- ¿Hay algún esfuerzo que se hace en general para informar a la gente sobre el programa?

- ¿Colaboran con otras organizaciones en el proceso de implementación?

- ¿Cuáles son los puntos fuertes de eso?

Appendix B

Consent Form / Formulario de Consentimiento

Tema del Proyecto: Las Respuestas en el Nivel Comunitario a la Violencia en las Relaciones Intimas

Invetigadora a Cargo del Proyecto:

Misaki Ishibashi (La universidad de Dalhousie, Canadá) Misaki.ishibashi@dal.ca

Sobre la Entrevista: Estoy estudiando sobre las ayudas ofrecidas por las organizaciones comunitarios a las mujeres víctimas de violencia en sus relaciones íntimas. La realización de la entrevista es para obtener mejor entendimiento de los programas que se brindan para prevenir la violencia contra las mujeres en sus relaciones íntimas aquí en la ciudad de Habana Cuba. El propósito del estudio es solamente académico (no para los medios de comunicación). Mi investigación no está relacionada con ningún otro estudio de investigación gubernamental o institucional, pasado o presente. Los participantes se piden participar de modo voluntario en el estudio. A usted se le va a preguntar sobre el programa que participa/ trabaja, sus experiencias y opiniones relacionados con el programa. Puede rechazar o contestar las preguntas que se le presenten en la entrevista, y usted está libre de finalizar la entrevista en cualquier momento por cualquier motivo sin repercusiones.

Confidencialidad: la información personal sobre usted van a ser confidencial. Solo la investigadora, quien soy yo, y mi supervisora tendremos acceso a los datos que brinde. Alguna información que usted diga puede ser usada de modo literario identificada bajo un seudónimo.

Riesgo: Aunque yo haga todo lo necesario para asegurar la confidencialidad máxima, podrían haber situaciones donde personas cercanas a usted puedan identificarle por el carácter de sus comentarios.

Firma

Yo he leído y escuchado la explicación acerca de este estudio. Se me ha dado la oportunidad de hablar del proyecto y mis preguntas han sido contestadas para mi satisfacción. Estoy de acuerdo en participar en este estudio.

- Estoy de acuerdo en que la entrevista será grabada en una grabadora de audio.

      Si □   /   No □

- Puedo ser citado directamente en los informes resultantes de este proyecto,

bajo un alias: Sí □ No □   /   usando mi nombre real: Sí □ No □

Nombre:_____   Firma:_____

Fecha_____