

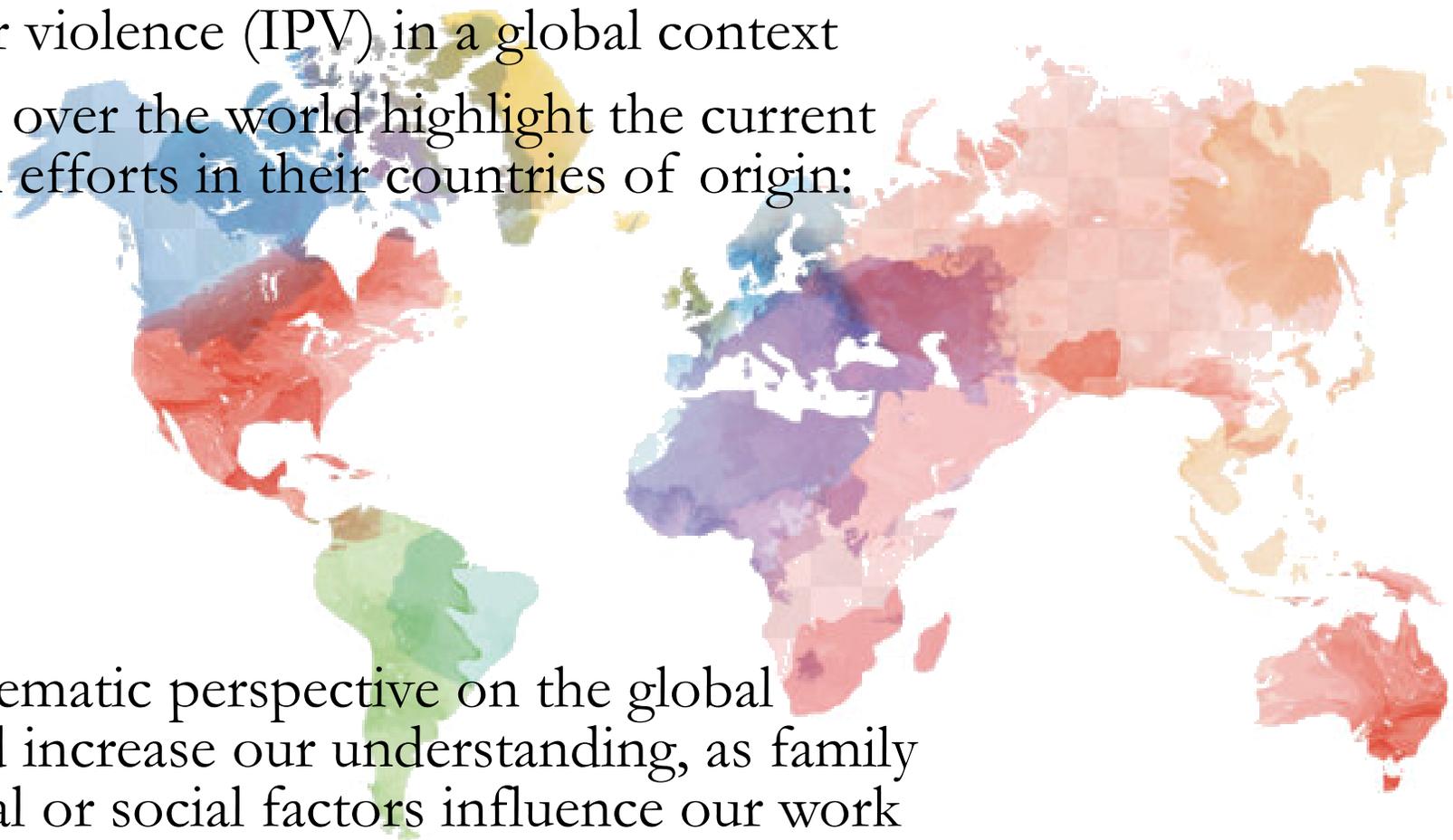


# **International Perspectives on Intimate Partner Violence: Challenges and Opportunities**

**Symposium Organizers:  
Sandra M. Stith, Ph.D., LCMFT  
Chelsea M. Spencer, Ph.D., LMFT**

# Introduction

- Examine intimate partner violence (IPV) in a global context
- NCFR members from all over the world highlight the current state of IPV intervention efforts in their countries of origin:
  - Colombia
  - Iran
  - Russia
  - China
  - India
  - United States
- Goal: to gain a more systematic perspective on the global phenomenon of IPV and increase our understanding, as family therapists, of how cultural or social factors influence our work with individuals or couples experiencing IPV.





# Intimate Partner Violence in Colombia

**Karen J. Ripoll-Núñez, Ph.D.**, PhD from University of Connecticut

**Ana L. Jaramillo-Sierra, Ph.D.** from Virginia Tech  
Universidad de los Andes, **Bogotá**

# Colombia – Country Overview

- **Population and size:** About 41 million people live in 1,141,748 sq. kilometers (7th largest country in Americas)
- **Ethnic groups:** 86% White and *mestizo*; 10.6% African descent; 3.4% Indigenous; 0.01% ROM
- **Politics:** Colombia is a representative democracy with a President, two chambers of Congress, and Supreme and Constitutional Courts. The current party in government is “*Centro Democrático*”.
- **Economy:** Colombia is considered an *emergent economy*. It has the 4th highest GDP in Latin America, but second largest GINI (economic inequality) in the region.
- **Religion and culture:** 89% of Colombians are Catholic and 11% belong to other Christian churches. Predominant cultural beliefs are sexist (*machismo, marianismo*) and privilege the family unity (*familism*). However, urban, middle-class families demonstrate diverse patterns of gender organization (traditional, transitional, gender egalitarian)

# Introduction to IPV

- Family Commissaries: legal and administrative authorities
  - Initially focused on protecting children (1989), later mothers (1996)
  - Mediate conflicts, provide legal advice, refer to services, protective orders
  - Coordinate with police and other agencies
- Law 1257 of 2008: mandates protection of victims and prevention of Violence Against Women
- Homes for Equal Opportunities (*Casas de Igualdad de Oportunidades*)
  - Legal counseling (exceptionally, legal representation)
  - Psychosocial support

# Issues in IPV services

- Limited use of services because of normalization of IPV (DHS, 2015); lack of trust in government institutions; stigma regarding psychological services
- Limited budget and personnel
- Lack of coordination among different services (e.g. Family Commissaries and Homes for Equal Opportunities)
- Lack of systematic evaluation of service protocols and strategies for case follow-ups (Attorney General's Office, 2011)



# Issues in IPV research

- Limited research on IPV in Colombia
  - General risk factors (education, SES, substance use, intergenerational transmission of violence) (Barón, 2012; Friedmann-Sánchez & Lovatón, 2012; Klevens, 2001; Rueda, 2012; Tuesca & Borda, 2003)
  - Characteristics of female victims (Muñoz & Torres, 2014) and male perpetrators (Medina, Arévalo & Durán, 2014; Rodríguez, Fonseca, & Puche, 2002)
- Limited research on IPV intervention in Colombia:
  - Efficacy of emotion regulation and coping skills intervention for couples presenting IPV (González, 2016)
  - Clients' and therapists' theories of change in systemic therapy for IPV (Ripoll, Villar & Villar, 2012)
  - Relationship expectations and needs of men in IPV systemic therapy (Medina, Arévalo & Durán, 2015)



# **Intimate Partner Violence in Iran**

**Fatemeh Nikparvar, M.S., Shahid Beheshti University  
Kansas State University**

# Iran – Country Overview

- Iran is the 18th largest country in the world with over 82 million population in 2018.
- 74% of population is located in urban areas.
- Ethnic groups: Persian, Azeri, Kurd, Lur, Baloch, Arab, and Turkmen
- Iran has the 4th largest petroleum reserves and largest natural gas reserves in world.
- Iran is one of oldest civilizations in the world dating back to 3200-2800 BC.
- Most of the population in Iran (89%) is Shi'a Muslim, 10% is Sunni Muslim, and the remaining 1% are Christian, Zoroastrian, Baha'i and Jewish.

# IPV Introduction

- There is no official social, legal or financial support for IPV victims in Iran
- Currently, there are 2 codes in Iran defending women's rights
  - Code 1103: Couples are required to offer good companionship to another
  - Code 1115: If a woman is at risk of losing her life, honor or finance, she can leave the home and receives alimony
- Currently, there are no laws to protect women against violence (Safae & Emami, 2012)



# Social Issues Related to IPV

- Women who use the law to remove violent husbands from the home may be ostracized by their community/blamed for undermining family stability (Ezazi, 2005).
- Social stigma surrounding divorce makes it difficult to leave a violent relationship (Amin, 2000).
  - There is a prevailing belief that divorce is against the children's best interests
  - The woman's reputation, and family of origin's reputation is damaged by divorce
  - Women may lose custody of children



# Resources for IPV Victims

- In 2015, a group of lawyers & advocates drafted a bill to protect women against violence. This law includes:
  - Criminalization of all types of violence against women
  - Emphasis on the need for shelters
  - Investigation of violence against women as a public issue/not a family issue
- The Iranian government has provided 22 shelters for women and provides psychological services
- Progress is slow, but extensive movements by women's rights activists are underway in Iran.



# Intimate Partner Violence in Russia

**Tatiana Glebova, Ph.D., LMFT**, Fuller Theological Seminary  
Alliant International University

# Russia – Country Overview

- Russia (officially the Russian Federation, a successor state of the former Soviet Union since 1991) is the largest country in the world by territory (spans eleven time zones) and the 9th most populous (over 144 million people) with a ratio of about seven women for every six men
- 81% of the population are ethnically Russian, and 160 other ethnic groups and indigenous peoples
- Dominant religion is Russian Orthodox with the state alliance supporting social conservative views
- While legal and social equality of men and women was proclaimed after the Bolshevik Revolution (1917), Russia is ranked # 53 (out of 188 countries) on Gender Inequality Index
- Divorce rate is over 50% mostly due to drug or alcohol abuse

# IPV Introduction

- The current Constitution of the Russian Federation declares gender equality, yet gender inequality has increased in Russia (Rimashevskaja, 2011).
- Russia does not have a law criminalizing IPV and IPV is not recognized as an offense by the Russian Criminal Code.
- IPV is considered a private family matter by the state.



# Social Issues Related to IPV

- Last year, legislation decriminalizing IPV was signed, which now classifies only repeated instances of battery as criminal.
- Under Article 116, battery against close relatives is considered an administrative offense, punishable by a fine or detention.
- IPV victims must collect evidence themselves before filing a complaint.
- This has made the phenomenon worse. The number of calls for help to social services agencies drastically increased – from 8,000 in 2014 compared to 26,000 in 2017.



# Resources for IPV Victims

- In 2013, there were 42 shelters providing services to IPV victims (ANNA, 2015). Today, there are 95 shelters in Russia (God spustya, 2018).
- Services provided to victims of IPV vary across regions of Russia, but include crisis consultations, safety recommendations, shelter, legal support, medical referrals, hotlines, and psychological counseling.
- In 2017, Russia's Commissioner for Human Rights called for adopting a law on prevention of IPV



# **Intimate Partner Violence in China**

**Jingshuai Du, MSW., Peking University**

**Yanqun Peng, M.S., LMFT, Abilene Christian University**

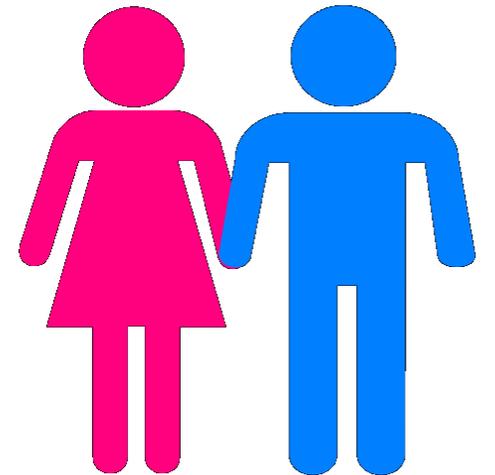
**Kansas State University**

# China – Country Overview

- **Population and Size:** The world's most populous country. The third or fourth largest country in the world (depending on the source).
- **Ethnic groups:** 56 Ethnic groups with 91.5% Han and 55 minorities.
- **Politics:** China, officially the People's Republic of China (PRC), is a one-party sovereign state. The country is ruled "under the leadership" of the Communist Party of China.
- **Economy:** Since economic reforms in 1978, China's economy has been one of the world's fastest-growing in the world, and this has dramatically changed family structure and people's life.
- **Religion and culture:** To be a member of the Communist Party of China, an individual must not have religious affiliation. The majority of Chinese people are non-religious or practice Chinese folk religion. Chinese folk religion is significantly shaped by Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism (Chinese Buddhism). Approximately 25% are Buddhist, 3% are Christian, and less than 1% are Muslim. Religion still deeply influences family and society: strong patriarchal values and beliefs.

# IPV Introduction

- IPV in China is a multi-faceted issue that is intertwined with traditional Chinese beliefs favoring gender inequality, family unity, and societal conditions that devalue women (Zhao & Yuhong, 2001).
- In China, women often take the subordinate role in the relationship and obey their husbands
- China also holds strong traditional values that place family unity over separation, putting demands on women to tolerate IPV.



# Social Issues Related to IPV

- China's government prioritizes social stability, so when IPV is present within a family, mediation is often used by the courts and police (Su, Tang & Lai, 2017).
- IPV experts in China criticize the use of mediation when IPV is present, as it fails to punish or hold abusers accountable (Min, 2009).
- Women often fear that the abuse will escalate after police involvement (Min, 2009).
- Although IPV has gained more public attention and awareness, it is still considered a private matter for people.



# Resources for IPV Victims

- The first shelters and hotline for battered wives were set up in the 1980's (Tang & Lai, 2008).
- In 2001, a revision was made to the Marriage Law prohibiting domestic violence explicitly, making IPV grounds for divorce (Palmer, 2017).
- In 2012, Beijing launched “Speak Out Against Domestic Violence”
- In 2015, the Chinese parliament passed the country's first law against domestic violence:
  - Prohibits any form of domestic violence (including psychological abuse)
  - Covers married couples and unmarried couples who cohabit
  - Allows victims to gain a restraining order.
- Since 2015, the Women's Federation, ACWF, has been increasingly vocal as an advocate for Chinese women who have experienced IPV (Su, Tang & Lai, 2017)



# Intimate Partner Violence in India

**Mona Mittal, Ph.D., LMFT**, Texas Tech

University of Maryland, College Park

**Manjushree Palit, Ph.D.**, Virginia Tech

Jindal Institute of Behavioral Sciences

# India – Country Overview

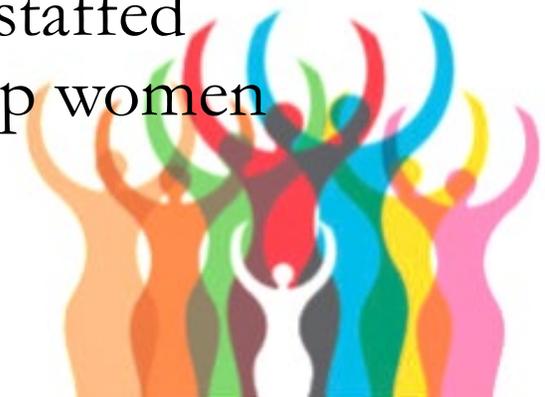
- 7th-largest country in the world and the 2<sup>nd</sup> most populous country.
- Largest democracy in the world. Unique mix of traditions and modernization.
- Ranks 5th among nations, with the most skewed ratio of girls to boys at birth due to cultural preference for a son.
- No national database of shelters and shelter homes are not inspected. Recent news has highlighted abuse and sexual exploitation of girls in some shelters.
- In 2017, Childline India Foundation, a NGO conducted a survey. According to this report, there are 477 shelters for women with children in India.
- Divorce rate was 1 in 1,000 ten years ago, and is still a relatively low 13 per 1,000 - as compared to the US average of 50%. The number of divorce applications has doubled and even tripled in some cities over the past five years

# IPV Introduction

- The Protection of Abuse from Domestic Violence was enacted in 2006 in India.
- IPV is also perpetuated by family members (Kalokhe, etal, 2017)
- According to a Crimes in India report (2016), 29% of cases were registered under “cruelty by husband or his relatives”.
- Most women do not disclose violence or seek help (74%) (IIPS, 2016).
- NFHS-4 (2016) revealed attitudes towards wife beating in the age group 15-49 years; 52% of women and 42% of men surveyed agreed with at least one reason for wife hitting/ beating listed in the survey (IIPS, 2016).

# Resources for IPV Victims

- Nari Adalats, informal women's courts staffed by women who receive basic legal information, were created by women's empowerment groups in rural areas to promote justice (Kethineni et al., 2014).
- Since 2001, 481 Nari Adalats have presided over 30,000 cases (Joshi et al., 2009).
- However, there is a lack of funding and stigma associated with Nari Adalats (Joshi et al., 2009).
- In the state of Haryana there are 21 police stations that are staffed by women officers, and hotline numbers are provided to help women (Verma et al., 2017).



# Resources for IPV Victims

- In 2002, Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women (MASVAW) was initiated in India (Das et al., 2012).
- This awareness campaign promotes gender-related changes on both individual and community levels.
- Evaluations of MASVAW show the program has been helpful in changing men's gendered attitudes and IPV perpetration (Das et al., 2012).
- Coaching Boys Into Men has been adapted for middle school boys in Mumbai with promising results (Miller et al., 2014).





# **Intimate Partner Violence in the United States**

**Sandra M. Stith, Ph.D., LCMFT, Kansas State University**  
**Chelsea M. Spencer, Ph.D., LMFT, Kansas State University**  
Kansas State University

# United States – Country Overview

- **Population and Size:** 325 million people live in the US
- **Ethnic groups:** The majority identify as white (72.4% in 2010), followed by African American (12.6%), “other” (6.2%), Asian (4.8%), Two or more races (2.9%), Native Americans/Alaska Natives (0.9%), and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders (0.2%).
- **Politics:** Currently, the US faces many difficulties and challenges regarding the political climate of the country. The US is divided on many political issues, and remains divided into two main political parties: Republicans and Democrats, “Red States” and “Blue States”
- **Economy:** The US has a rich and diverse economy with a GDP of 20 trillion, however income inequality has increased significantly since the 1970’s.
- **Religion and culture:** The majority of individuals in the US report being Christians (73.7%).

# IPV Introduction

- The first laws against wife beating were enacted in the 1920's.
- In the 1970's, the battered women's movement began advocating for resources for abused women. Since this time, access to hotlines and shelters has increased throughout the US (Dugan, Nagin & Rosenfeld, 2003).
- The Violence Against Women Act, (VAWA) first enacted in 2000, provides funding for violence prevention, prosecution and victim services.
- In the U.S., the most common interventions for IPV include shelter/victim services for women and Batterer Intervention Programs (BIPs) for men (Homgren, Holma & Seikkula, 2015).

# Social Issues Related to IPV

- BIPs are mandated in most U.S. states, but research on the effectiveness of these programs are discouraging (Babcock, Green & Robie, 2004).
- BIPs may be ineffective in truly reducing rates of recidivism (Arias, Ramon & Vilarino, 2013)
- There has been limited funding for randomized control trials for interventions beyond BIPs to reduce rates of IPV in the US.



# Social Issues Related to IPV

- The US has the highest rate of gun-related deaths among industrialized countries (Stark & Shah, 2017).
- IPV abusers having direct access to a firearm increases the likelihood of an intimate partner homicide by over 1000% (Spencer & Stith, 2018).
- According to 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(9), an individual convicted of a misdemeanor of domestic violence is prohibited from possessing a firearm.
- This law is not always be enforced
- Gun violence research is substantially underfunded and understudied in the US, especially related to intimate partner homicide.



# Discussion – Overall Findings

- IPV prevalence rates from international research strikingly similar.
- While US, India, China & Colombia have laws against IPV, Iran and Russia have no laws criminalizing IPV.
- Stigma, shame and under-reporting occurs all over the world.
- Limited funding for services and research prevalent all over the world.
- NGOs and advocate groups play a key role in maintaining awareness of issue and providing services all over the world.



# The Role of NCFR and its Members

- 2018 conference, organized by Dr. Bahira Sherif Trask, University of Delaware, encourages us to make a difference in the lives of families all over the world:

“Families and Cultural Intersections in a Global Context: Innovations in Research, Practice, and Policies”

- Conference includes research from more than 30 different countries:
  - Presentations from China, Nepal, Colombia, Iran, Russia, India, Turkey, Ghana, Cambodia, Qatar, South Africa, Mexico, Barbados, Grenada, Trinidad, Tobago, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Australia, South Korea, Finland, Canada, New Zealand, Malawi, Brazil, Jamaica, Sweden, Tanzania, Nicaragua, El Salvador and the experiences of immigrants to US from many different countries.

# The Role of NCFR and its Members

- Conference includes 32 different presentations on IPV including symposiums, posters and papers.
- As family therapists, researchers and system-level advocates we need to learn more about cultural factors and issues that can prevent or eliminate IPV beyond our community.

A watercolor-style background with soft, blended colors of blue and purple. The colors are more concentrated in the center and fade out towards the edges, creating a dreamy, ethereal atmosphere. The texture of the watercolor is visible, with some darker spots and lighter washes.

**ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE, AND  
EVERYONE SHOULD TRY**

John F. Kennedy



**Questions or  
Comments?**