Profiles of Recent vs. Non-Recent Immigrant Perpetrators of Domestic Homicide: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT

There have been a number of studies that have explored victim’s immigrant status and length of residence in relationship to domestic violence in Canada (Dawood et al., 2012, Hyman et al., 2006, Du Mont et al., 2012). Unfortunately, there have not been any Canadian studies examining the status or length of residence of perpetrators. The present study seeks to examine the profiles of recent immigrants (0-5 years in Canada) versus non-recent immigrants (5+ years in Canada) immigrant perpetrators of domestic homicide and risk factors present and system/agency involvement.

INTRODUCTION

• Immigration status is emerging as one of the most significant factors in determining how or if domestic violence is addressed in immigrant families (Emmer, 2010).
• Country of origin is also relevant, with research suggesting that immigrant women from non-Western and developing countries are at an increased risk of violence compared to immigrant women from Western and developed countries (Hassan et al., 2011).
• In Canada, immigrant populations may be further categorized as ‘recent’ immigrants (e.g., 0-5 years in host country) and non-recent immigrants (e.g., >5 years in host country), with recent immigrants commonly referred to as ‘newcomers’.
• Risk for intimate partner violence was significantly lower among recent immigrant women compared with non-recent immigrant women in Canada (Hyman et al., 2006).
• Research from the United States examines risk factors among immigrant perpetrators found that men who resided for greater than six years and had poor English proficiency were at the highest risk of intimate partner violence perpetration (Gupta et al., 2010).
• Acculturation does not always lead to positive outcomes for newcomers integrating into society. Specifically, alcohol use by men can increase post-migration, placing victims at greater vulnerability for intimate partner violence (Guruge, 2014).
• Immigrant battered women note that their partner’s drinking behaviour would change post-migration; they partly attributed their abusive behaviour to this (Erez et al., 2009).

METHODS

Design
This study utilized a retrospective case analysis design using quantitative data made available from the 2015 Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee (DVDRC), exploring cases reviewed from 2003-2015.

Sample
This study utilized 66 cases where the perpetrator was identified as an individual born not in Canada and was residing in Canada at the time of the violent incident.
• There were 9 cases identified as Newcomers (0-5 years in Canada) and 57 cases identified as Non-recent immigrants (5+ years in Canada).
• 10 cases were omitted from final analyses as it could not be determined how long the perpetrator had resided in Canada.

Procedure
• Cases with immigrant perpetrators who resided have 0-5 years in Canada were grouped as newcomers (recent immigrants) and perpetrators who have resided for 5+ years were grouped as non-recent immigrants.
• (1) Frequencies were utilized to obtain demographic information; (2) Chi-square analyses were conducted for categorical variables (e.g. risk factors); (3) T-tests were conducted for continuous variables (e.g. number of agencies involved); (4) Frequencies were also utilized to further examine the data through a lens.

RESULTS

Demographic Info of Immigrant Perpetrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Newcomers (0-5 years)</th>
<th>Non-Recent Immigrants (5+ years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North/Central/South America</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern &amp; Eastern Asia</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Europe</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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IMPLICATIONS/FUTURE DIRECTIONS

• Newcomer immigrant perpetrators of domestic homicide have different profiles than non-recent immigrants.
• Further research is needed to better understand the needs and challenges of newcomers.
• Investigating perpetrators’ through a pre- and post-migration context is necessary.
• Mainstream services (police, health care) are the services that newcomers are primarily involved with.
• Screening tools that can capture the unique factors that may put couples at risk for domestic violence are needed.

REFERENCES