



Interpersonal Violence and Suicide in Victoria, Australia

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Research has shown a link between a history of exposure to interpersonal violence (IPV) and suicidal ideation and suicide attempts. However, less is known about the link between IPV and suicide death. Researchers from Victoria, Australia, examined 2,153 suicides that took place between 2009 and 2012 and found that nearly half of all females (42%) and one-third of all males (34%) who died by suicide had a history of IPV.

Using the Victorian Suicide Register, researchers classified IPV history according to role (victim only, perpetrator only, or both victim and perpetrator), types (physical violence, psychological violence, and sexual abuse), and time elapsed between most recent reported IPV exposure and suicide death. They also looked for information on whether the deceased had reported IPV to a professional or to family or friends.

The researchers found that women were significantly more likely to be victims of IPV, while men were more likely to be perpetrators. Among suicide decedents, 23% of women and 10% of men had been a victim of physical violence, 18% of women and 8% of men had been a victim of psychological violence, and 16% of women and 4% of men had been a victim of sexual assault. Male perpetrators of IPV most commonly reported that they committed violence in the six weeks prior to suicide (36%). Women who experienced IPV most commonly reported that it took place more than 12 months prior to suicide (43%). Women were more likely than men to have disclosed exposure to IPV before dying by suicide. These findings reflect a need for targeted suicide prevention efforts among those who experience or perpetrate IPV.

Maclsaac, M. B., Bugeja, L., Weiland, T., Dwyer, J., Selvakumar, K., & Jelinek, G. A. (2017). Prevalence and characteristics of interpersonal violence in people dying from suicide in Victoria, Australia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health*, 30(1), 36–44.

Populations: Women, Men

About Suicide: Suicidal Thoughts and Behavior, Ideation, Attempts, Risk and Protective Factors

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