



Intervening to reduce gender-based violence does not enhance HIV risk reduction outcomes for South African men: Results of a quasi-experimental field trial

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Abstract

Background: There is a well documented association between violence against women and HIV transmission. Interventions that integrate HIV prevention with gender-based violence prevention may demonstrate synergistic effects.

Aim of study: The current study tested the effects of a community-based HIV/gender-based violence prevention intervention targeted to South African men.

Methods: A quasi-experimental intervention trial was conducted with two communities randomly assigned to receive either (a) an intensive 5-session integrated intervention designed to simultaneously reduce HIV risk behaviors and gender-based violence or (b) a single session workshop focused on alcohol abuse and HIV risk reduction. Participants were followed for 1, 3, and 6-months post intervention, with 90% retention.

Results: The results indicated few differences between conditions on any behavioral outcomes. In fact, the few differences that were observed favored the HIV/alcohol risk reduction comparison intervention over the HIV/gender-based violence intervention.

Conclusion: The association between gender-based violence and HIV risk behaviors does not lead to a path of enhanced HIV risk reduction through integrated interventions. Unlike alcohol's connection to sexual risks, gender-based violence poses risks for increased women's HIV risks and not men's risks. Interventions are needed to reduce gender-based violence and HIV prevention interventions should focus on correlates proximal to risk behavior, such as alcohol use in sexual contexts.

Background

Gender power differentials make a compelling case of targeting men for HIV prevention.

Men often hold beliefs that foster gender violence and facilitate HIV risks



Background continue...

Gender violence and supportive attitudes are prevalent among men

Attitude	No history of sexual assault (N = 338)	History of sexual assault (N = 97)	OR
A woman who talks disrespectfully to a man in public should expect trouble.	68%	85%	2.7**
Hitting a woman is sometimes necessary to keep her in line.	30%	55%	2.9**
It is understandable that a man will hit his women if she is disrespectful of him.	38%	54%	2.2**
There are times when a man should hit his woman because of things she has done	36%	53%	2.2**

(Simbayi et al., 2005, *Am J Health Behavior*)
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Background continue...

HIV risks are prevalent and associated with gender violence among men

	No history of sexual assault (N = 338)	History of sexual assault (N = 97)	OR
Number of sex partners			
0	22%	9%	
1	50%	46%	
2	10%	9%	
3+	19%	35%	1.5**
Multiple partners and unprotected intercourse	86%	39%	2.0**
Sex involving alcohol	34%	68%	4.3**
Sex involving drugs	4%	16%	5.0**

(Simbayi et al., 2005, *Am J Health Behavior*)
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Background continue...

HIV risks are prevalent and associated with gender violence among men

	No history of sexual assault (N = 338)	History of sexual assault (N = 97)	OR
Lifetime history of STI	13%	32%	3.2**
STI in the past 3 months	3%	14%	5.0**
Exchanged money for sex	2%	27%	15.2**

(Simbayi et al., 2005, *Am J Health Behavior*)

Background continue...

We have developed a community-based gender violence and HIV prevention intervention for men in their social networks



This study tested the effects of a community-based HIV/gender-based violence prevention intervention targeted to South African men

Phaphama Men

Social Action Theory as a Framework

Integrates gender violence and HIV prevention within a unified model

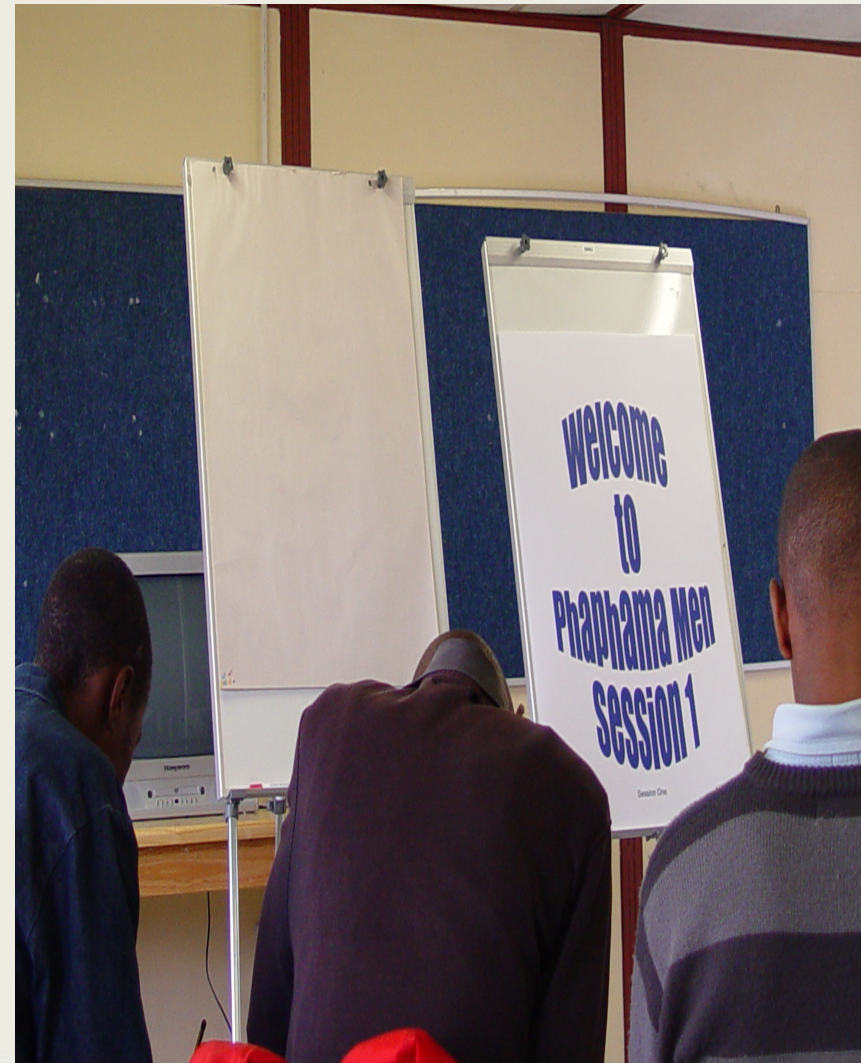
Incorporates Friedman et al.'s concept of Intravention and advocacy skills training adapted from Kelly et al. 1997 and Latkin et al., 2003

One man wants
welcome
to
Phaphama Men
to teach.

Phaphama Men

Men are recruited using chain/member driven sampling

Intervention is intensive: Five 3-hour sessions conducted by mixed gender facilitators in the community were conducted on different days



Study Design and Procedures

- Quasi – experimental intervention trial with two communities randomly assigned to receive either
 - An intensive five 3-hour sessions integrated intervention designed to simultaneously reduce HIV risk behaviours and gender based violence (Phaphama Men) or,
 - A single 3-hour session workshop focused on alcohol abuse and HIV risk reduction
- Participants were followed for 1, 3 and 6 months post intervention, with 90% retention

Participants

- 475 African men living in two townships in Cape Town, South Africa
 - Community 1 – Phaphama Men
 - N = 242
 - Community 2 – Alcohol use & HIV Prevention
 - N = 233
- Participants were all African men of Xhosa cultural heritage

Measures

- Measures were administered in English and Xhosa (an indigenous African language spoken in both communities)
- Demographic and risk characteristics
- Theoretical correlates of behaviour change (AIDS knowledge, AIDS stigma, risk reduction intentions, acceptance of violence against women)
- Alcohol abuse
- Primary outcomes(sexual risk, sexual protective and gender based violence behaviours)

Table 1
Demographic and baseline behavioral characteristics of men in two intervention communities.

Variable	HIV/AIDS & Gender Violence		HIV/AIDS & Alcohol		X ²
	N	%	N	%	
Exchanged sex	31	13	30	13	0.1
Has used a condom	210	90	207	30	0.1
Number of sex partners in past month					
0	23	10	29	12	
1	101	42	92	40	
2	67	28	63	27	
3+	49	20	49	21	1.1
Diagnosed with an STI	54	23	52	22	0.8
Tested for HIV	116	57	117	51	1.7
Tested HIV positive	8	6	7	5	
Has hit or pushed a sex partner	135	56	109	47	4.2*
Detained for domestic violence	42	18	49	21	0.8
Used threats to obtain sex	38	16	39	17	0.8
Used force to obtain sex	47	20	40	17	0.5
	M	SD	M	SD	t
Age	31.6	8.6	28.8	10.1	3.2*
Years of Education	10.7	1.9	11.0	2.0	2.0

Note: *p <.05

Table 2
Comparison of intervention communities on sexual risk behavior outcomes.

Variable	HIV/AIDS & Gender Violence		HIV/AIDS & Alcohol		F
	M	SD	M	SD	
Unprotected intercourse					
Baseline past 1-month	3.1	7.2	2.0	4.2	
1-month	1.7	3.6	1.4	4.1	2.2
Baseline past 3-months	7.2	18.1	4.6	12.6	
3-month	3.9	10.9	1.7	4.3	6.5**
6-month	2.5	7.2	3.1	10.3	0.5
Percent intercourse condom protected					
Baseline past 1-month	64.3	38.2	72.0	32.5	
1-month	69.9	34.3	76.1	32.9	1.1
Baseline past 3-months	64.9	36.9	70.1	33.9	
3-month	72.3	32.7	73.7	33.6	0.1
6-month	74.1	31.8	72.5	34.9	0.3
Drink alcohol before sex					
Baseline past 1-month	3.3	5.1	2.5	3.9	
1-month	4.0	15.5	1.8	2.9	3.9*
Baseline-past 3 months	6.6	15.8	4.5	6.9	
3-month	3.6	8.8	2.6	5.1	1.5
6-month	3.4	8.6	3.6	11.8	0.4
Number of sex partners past 1-month					
Baseline	1.6	0.9	1.5	0.9	
1-month	1.5	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.7
3-month	1.5	0.9	1.4	0.9	1.5
6-month	1.6	0.9	1.4	0.9	4.9*

Note: All analyses controlling for age and baseline scores, * p<.05, **p<.01

Table 2 (continue...)

Variable	HIV/AIDS & Gender Violence		HIV/AIDS & Alcohol		F
	M	SD	M	SD	
Sex partners met at shebeens					
Baseline past 1-month	0.7	1.5	0.8	1.7	
1-month	1.0	2.5	0.6	1.9	4.9*
Baseline past 3-months	1.4	2.8	1.3	2.6	
3-month	1.5	3.5	1.2	2.9	1.3
6-month	1.3	3.7	1.5	7.4	0.3
Talked with partner about condoms					
Baseline past 1-month	4.2	6.8	3.5	4.9	
1-month	6.8	11.3	4.6	8.1	4.8*
Baseline past 3-months	7.3	15.7	7.3	13.6	
3-month	7.3	13.7	7.2	13.4	1.1
6-month	9.5	17.3	8.7	18.3	1.1
	N	%	N	%	OR
100% condom use					
Baseline	79	38	85	46	
1-month	84	43	101	56	1.7*
3-month	88	43	86	50	1.3
6-month	91	51	80	51	1.1
Tested for HIV in past month among men not tested at baseline					
1-month	40	18	17	8	0.4*
3-month	48	21	28	13	0.5*
6-month	47	21	30	15	0.7*

Note: All analyses controlling for age and baseline scores, * p<.05, **p<.01

Table 3
Comparison of intervention communities on behaviors in the previous month.

Variable	Gender Violence & HIV/AIDS		Alcohol & HIV/AIDS		OR
	N	%	N	%	
Did not lose temper with a woman among men who had at baseline					
1-month	53	23	27	13	0.5**
3-month	43	18	32	15	0.7
6-month	52	23	29	14	0.5**
Hit or pushed a woman in the past month					
1-month	54	23	40	19	1.3
3-month	84	36	62	29	1.2
6-month	72	31	124	61	0.3**

Note: All analyses controlling for age and baseline scores, *p<.05, **p,.01

Key Findings

- Men in our study demonstrated high-risk for HIV infection
 - with one in five having been diagnosed with an STI and,
 - nearly half-reporting two or more sex partners in the previous month
- The sample also indicated high rates of relationship violence
 - With more than half of the men indicating a history of physically assaulting a sex partner and,
 - One in five having been detained for domestic violence

Key findings

- Results indicated few differences between conditions on any behavioural outcomes
 - In fact the few differences that were observed favoured the HIV/Alcohol risk reduction comparison intervention over Phaphama Men

Conclusions

- The association between gender-based violence and HIV risk behaviours does not lead to a path of enhanced HIV risk reduction through integrated interventions
- Unlike alcohol's connection to sexual risks, gender-based violence poses risks for increased women's HIV risks and not men's risks
- Interventions are needed to reduce gender based violence and HIV prevention interventions should focus on correlates proximal to risk behaviour, such as alcohol use in sexual contexts

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