

ABSTRACT

ASHCROFT, MARIAMA OLATUNDE. Intersection of Religion, Gender, Migration, and Intimate Partner Violence: An Exploration of How Married Men of Gambian Origin Conceptualize Marital Quality. (Under the direction of Dr. Annie Hardison-Moody).

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a global public health, social, and human rights crisis that is pervasive and indiscriminate. Much research has been undertaken to understand the phenomenon, its determinants, and its consequences in many countries. However, there is a dearth of research on IPV in many parts of the world including The Gambia. The present study focuses on the cultural and social factors that shape men's beliefs about gender and IPV against women from the perspective of Gambian married men living in and outside The Gambia. The objective was to explore the beliefs, norms, and societal expectations that influence how married men from The Gambia conceptualize marital quality and IPV in a heterosexual marriage. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with married men to understand the cultural and social norms that influence how they perceive gender expectations in marriage and IPV. The sample comprised 11 married men of Gambian origin recruited using purposive sampling technique. Six of the participants resided in The Gambia and five have been US residents between three and 21 years. From the perspectives of these research participants, marital quality and IPV are largely shaped by religious beliefs, social norms, and their migration status. These participants believed that social norms in The Gambia sustain gender inequality and IPV and that Gambians tend to use religion to justify women's subordination and IPV. They also believed that Gambian migrants to Western countries that have less gender oppressive norms were more likely to espouse gender equality and less likely to justify IPV. This research highlights the complex interplay of religious beliefs and socio-cultural norms that shape how men perceive gender expectations in marriage and IPV against women.

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Intersection of Religion, Gender, Migration, and Intimate Partner Violence: An Exploration of
How Married Men of Gambian Origin Conceptualize Marital Quality

by
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this report to my granddaughter Miriam, praying that her world will be safer and more just and to my children who cheered me on and supported me.

This report would not have been possible without the men who trusted me with their personal information and freely shared their stories and beliefs.

I am grateful to God.

BIOGRAPHY

Mariama Ashcroft is a retired development practitioner who returned to university following a 36-year career supporting civil society and business organizations in more than 15 countries. She is a lifelong learner and a gender justice advocate. Her inspiration comes from her passion for social justice and a desire to understand the theoretical underpinnings of social inequity. This research project has ignited a love for qualitative research that Mariama hopes to apply to advance her work with women, youth, families, and communities. Mariama has 3 adult children and a granddaughter.

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INTRODUCTION

Intimate partner violence (IPV) refers to actions characterized as physical abuse, emotional or psychological aggression, forced sexual intercourse, controlling behaviors or homicide committed by a current or former spouse, dating, or cohabiting intimate partner (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015). IPV is global public health pandemic, a social problem, and a human rights violation (García-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise & Watts, 2005; Hajjar, 2004; Merry, 2011). IPV is a widespread phenomenon that occurs across different social settings and geographies. It does not discriminate by age, gender, race, class, or socio-economic status (Ali & Naylor, 2013). Although men also experience IPV victimization, IPV against women is the most pervasive form, and mostly perpetrated by men globally (Ali & Naylor; Diemar, 2014; Merry; Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

Men's perpetration of IPV against women is a major cause of ill health in women, contributing to reproductive and sexual health problems including HIV/AIDS, physical injuries, and mental health disorders (Black, 2011; Smith et al, 2017; Stöckl et al, 2013). It also stifles women's capacity for agency and choice, and restricts their employability thereby perpetuating a vicious cycle of IPV and economic dependence (Charrad, 2010; Waters et al, 2004). IPV also poses significant risks to marital quality (Razera, Mosmann & Falcke, 2016; Sabour Esmaeili & Schoebi, 2017). It is estimated to affect between 20% to 70% women worldwide, the majority of whom are located in low income countries (Ali & Naylor, 2013).

There is a dearth of research on men's beliefs about and perceptions of IPV. Existing IPV research with men has focused on perpetrators under institutional custody or mandated behavioral change training (Johnson, 2006; Vatnar & Bjorkly, 2008). These studies, most of them conducted in Western countries, have generally reported prevalence rates and individual

level risk factors such as substance abuse, personality disorders, and childhood history of parents' IPV (Coates & Wade, 2004; Madruga, Viana, Abdalla, Caetano, & Laranjeira, 2017). Male attitudes and perpetration of IPV is under-researched and not fully understood, especially in low income countries that have high levels of gender inequality and norms that condone IPV (Fikree, Razzak, & Durocher, 2005; Fulu, Jewkes, Roselli, & Garcia-Moreno, 2013). Very few studies have been conducted in The Gambia, a country in West Africa with a predominantly Muslim population. Moreover, research has proven that not all men commit IPV, even under circumstances that others attribute as a cause (Fulu et al, 2013; Merry, 2011; Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). There is clearly a need for a different approach to understanding how broader social forces influence men's attitudes to IPV. Rather than a narrow focus on perpetrators and individual risk factors, UN agencies and the global gender justice community have called for innovative approaches that engage men in examining their notions of masculinity and power, and as agents in IPV prevention (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2013; UN Women, n.d).

The present study focuses on understanding men's IPV perpetration against women notwithstanding evidence that men are victims of IPV (Johnson, 2006; Krahe, Bieneck, & Möller, 2005). Maddox et al (2018) argued that population-based IPV research that seeks to explore the perspectives of men with no known IPV perpetration history should understand the facilitators and barriers to men's participation in such research because of challenges inherent in IPV research with men. The authors concluded that "there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to engaging men in domestic violence research" (Maddox et al, p. 10). Because it is difficult to talk with men about IPV, the present study adopted a nuanced approach to the subject by focusing on married men's beliefs about gendered practices in marriage and how IPV may be justified in that context. This study explores the beliefs and social norms that influence how Gambian married

men with no known history of IPV perpetration conceptualize marital quality and IPV in a heterosexual marriage. This study is expected to contribute to approaches that engage men and other stakeholders working with women to end IPV and promote gender justice at local and global levels. Through semi-structured interviews with eleven married men of Gambian origin, this study explored men's beliefs about gender, marital quality, and IPV (Ellsberg and Heise, 2005; Hesse-Biber, 2014). The study addressed the following questions:

- How do married men of Gambian origin conceptualize a healthy marriage?
- How do married men of Gambian origin rationalize IPV in marriage?
- How do views about healthy marriage and IPV differ between married Gambian men residing in The Gambia and those who have migrated to the United States of America (USA)?

The interview data were coded and analyzed, and theories generated that reflect meanings mutually derived from interactions between the researcher and participants (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Saldana, 2009). This study found that Gambian men believe in what they defined as the sanctity of marriage. They also believed that religiosity shapes Gambians' perceptions of marriage and expectations from spouses. The men I talked with believed that Gambians misinterpret religion to justify women's subordination and IPV. However, Gambian migrants to Western countries that have less gender oppressive norms appear less likely to justify IPV (Flood & Pease, 2009). This study argues that Gambian men's conceptualization of IPV in marriage reflects the intersection of gender, religion, and migration status (Hankivsky, 2014; Sokoloff, 2008). In other words, Gambian men's beliefs about marriage and IPV are interlocked with their religious beliefs and the social norms that define gender-appropriate behavior in their social location— whether in The Gambia or as migrants in a western country. The study is unique in

that it investigates the socio-cultural factors that influence married Gambian men's attitudes to IPV and offers a novel approach to engaging men in IPV research and prevention by listening to their perspectives on IPV and appropriate responses. The first part of this paper examines the literature on intimate partner violence, highlights relevant theories about gender, and provides an overview of the Gambian cultural context. Following this is a description of the study design, method, and data analysis. This is followed by the section presenting the findings of the study based on the themes that emerged from the data analysis. The report ends with a discussion of how the results relate to existing theories and empirical data, and implications for future work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of relevant literature on IPV, including definitional issues, prevalence, and impact. It reviews the literature linking gender, religion, migration, and IPV and highlights key contextual information on The Gambia.

Intimate Partner Violence Against Women

Definition and prevalence. Research on IPV has advanced significantly since it was considered a private, family matter and prevention was focused on justice system reform and treatment programs for perpetrators (Heise, Pitanguy, & Germain, 1994; Sokoloff, 2008).

Although it is still largely treated as a taboo subject in many cultures, IPV is increasingly gaining space in public discourse. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have now declared IPV against women a global public health epidemic (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015; WHO, 2012). They have streamlined their definitions to facilitate an understanding of IPV causes and impact and to measure its prevalence. The WHO defined IPV as,

any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm to those in the relationship. Examples of types of IPV behavior include: *Acts of physical violence*, such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating; *Sexual violence*, including forced sexual intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion; *Emotional or psychological abuse*, such as insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation (e.g. destroying things), threats of harm, threats to take away children; and *Controlling behaviors*, including isolating a person from family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting access to financial resources, employment, education or medical care. (p.5)

Differences in definition, inconsistent monitoring, and underreporting by certain social groups have complicated the accuracy of IPV prevalence rates and cost-benefit analysis globally (Heise, Pitanguy, & Germain, 1994; Johnson, Ollus, & Nevalla, 2007; Merry, 2011; Waters et al). Notwithstanding these complications, studies confirm that IPV disproportionately impacts women, children, and low income families. This in no way ignores the fact that high income, well-educated women also experience IPV in almost the same way and under similar circumstances as other women (Merry, 2011; Weitzman, 2000). However this phenomenon, which Weitzman refers to as upscale violence, tends to escape surveillance reports as researchers focus on marginalized women as the path of least resistance, because low income women are more profoundly impacted, and because upscale women can afford treatment from private professionals who adhere to stricter confidentiality codes (Merry; Weitzman).

With the foregoing in mind, WHO and CDC reported global and regional prevalence rates among women ranging from 20% to 70% (Garcia-Moreno et al, 2013; Smith et al, 2017). They estimated that more than 35% of women worldwide have experienced some form of IPV in

their lifetime, with rates 25% or lower in high income countries and the Western Pacific region, and more than 36% in Africa, Eastern Mediterranean, and South East Asia. More than 38% of global female homicides were committed by an intimate partner and an additional 20% of homicide victims were family members or friends of an intimate partner (Smith, Fowler, & Niolon, 2014). These results reflect IPV's far reaching and devastating impact.

Impact of IPV. Men's perpetration of IPV against women is associated with devastating health, social, and economic consequences for families and societies. As feminist Gloria Steinem famously stated, "The most dangerous place for a woman, statistically speaking, is not in the street. It's in her own home" (Steinem, n.d.). IPV is a major cause of women's reproductive and sexual health problems including HIV/AIDS, lost pregnancy, and unwanted pregnancy. In studies of young women in South Africa, Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, and Shai (2010) found a strong correlation between IPV and risk for HIV infection, which Johnson, Ollus, & Nevala (2007) also corroborated. In a metanalytic study of data from seven countries in West and Central Africa, Olorunsaiye, Huber, Laditka, Kulkarni, & Boyd (2017) found a strong association between IPV acceptance among women and low use of health care programs and modern contraceptives. IPV survivors have an increased risk for severe physical injuries and mental health disorders, with studies showing that post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) was present in 31% to 84% of cases (Black, 2011, Meszaros, 2011; Stöckl et al, 2013). IPV also has adverse health outcomes on children in affected families, exposing them to emotional and behavioral disorders at an early age and the risk of experiencing IPV in adulthood (Madruga, Viana, Abdalla, Caetano, & Laranjeira, 2017; Vatnar & Byorkly, 2008).

IPV diminishes women's personhood and autonomy for decision-making, and creates barriers to IPV disclosure and help seeking (Merry, 2011; Mashhour, 2005; Sedziafa, Tenkorang,

& Owusu, 2018). This is particularly so in cultures that tend to value family over self and consider the family as a private sphere (Adjei, 2018; Sokoloff, 2008). For women of low socio-economic status, the more they are victimized, the poorer and more vulnerable they become, making them incapable of leaving the abusive relationship for lack of a financial safety net (Charrad, 2010; Larsen, 2016; Sokoloff, 2008; Waters et al, 2004).

IPV also poses significant risks to marital quality and stability (Razera, Mosmann & Falcke, 2016; Sabour Esmaeili & Schoebi, 2017). Studies on marital quality found strong association between marital health and physical and mental well-being in spouses (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Robles, 2014). In a metaanalytic review of literature about marital quality in predominantly Muslim countries, Sabour Esmaeli & Schoebi assessed causes of marital discord and divorce, and found that IPV and adultery by husbands were among the major causes. Razera, Mosmann & Falcke conducted a quantitative study of 186 heterosexual couples and found that psychological violence, which had an 87% prevalence rate, was the most significant cause of marital problems. Van Hoff (2016) argued that even as gains are being made in creating gender equity in public spaces, traditional gender inequality and power dynamics persist in intimate relationships including marriage.

Intimate partner violence has far reaching consequences not only for individuals and families, but for communities and nations everywhere. For example, the financial burden of IPV to the economy of the United States of America (USA) is estimated to be between \$6 billion and \$12 billion annually in prevention and treatment, law enforcement and legal services, and loss of productivity (Waters et al, 2004). Between 21% and 60% of IPV survivors in the USA lose their jobs annually due to IPV-related conditions (Breiding et al, 2015). The financial burden in England and Wales is estimated to be \$40.2 billion annually (Waters, et al., 2004). Researchers

have argued that it is difficult to estimate IPV's economic burden for low income countries because of lack of reliable data on prevalence, outcomes, and cost of intervention programs.

Gender, Religion, and IPV

For most societies around the world, religion provides instruction on gender norms in public interactions and in the home, yet interpretations of these instructions have been fraught with tension for generations (Hajjar, 2004; Kwok, 2004; Mashhour, 2005; McMorris & Glass, 2018). Conceptions of gender and appropriate behavior for men and women in intimate relationships tend to acquire additional salience in societies that have strong religious leanings and where institutional norms legitimize male dominance (Bailey, 2016; McMorris & Glass; Krause, et al, 2015; Kwok). Religious beliefs have historically been manipulated to justify IPV and men's authority over women, and religious leaders have contributed to the conspiracy of silence around IPV (Bailey; Mashhour; Merry, 2001; Kwok). Paradoxically, religion has also served as a sanctuary and source of strength for abused women; they invoke God's will to imbibe themselves with a sense of hope that the situation will change and spirituality for healing and forgiveness (Hardison-Moody, 2011; Hunting, 2014; Krause et al; Kwok).

Gender refers to "the socially constructed roles, expectations and definitions a given society considers appropriate for men and women" (Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento, 2007). Despite evidence that men's attitudes to IPV perpetration are entrenched in gender structures and social norms that ascribe authority and privilege to men over women, IPV research with men has hitherto failed to focus on the interplay between sociocultural and structural drivers of gendered behavior (Flood & Pease, 2009; Fulu, Jewkes, Roselli, & Garcia-Moreno, 2013; Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). These researchers and others (Hajjar, 2004; Mashhour, 2005; OECD, n.d) argued that social norms that justify women's inequality in the family have a

mutually reinforcing effect with policies and practices in social institutions. OECD described these as “the formal and informal laws, attitudes and practices that restrict women’s and girls’ access to rights, justice and empowerment opportunities” (genderindex.org/about). An understanding of how social norms and gender hierarchy in the family and public institutions impact men’s perpetration of IPV is essential as an appropriate response to IPV (Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento, 2007; DeKesredy & Schwartz, 2013; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004).

Chatillon, Charles, & Bradley (2018) define gender ideologies as “sets of widely taken-for-granted cultural beliefs about the essential natures and relative worth of men and women” (p. 217). These beliefs and stereotypes shape notions of masculinity, femininity, and power relations between men and women in a given social context in both public and private settings where men and women interact. Gender expectations are scripted and non-compliance may be penalized (Adjei, 2015; Flood & Pease, 2009). For example, in some cultures that elevate manhood and masculinity, boys grow up being taught to be aggressive and dominant whereas girls are taught to be nurturing and forgiving. Male privilege allows a man to have multiple partners legally and through extramarital affairs, yet a woman’s infidelity is ostracized. It is important to understand how these cultural scripts support or penalize IPV against women especially in cultures where there is no equivalent social construct for IPV (Diemar, 2014; Flood & Pease).

Researchers have argued that cultures with strong religious leanings tend to espouse patriarchy as a gender ideology, which perpetuates gender inequality in families, communities, and public institutions (Arat, 2010; Bailey, 2016; Khader, 2015; Kwok, 2004; Risman, 2018). Patriarchy is grounded in notions of male headship and authority over women, women’s submission, and expressions of masculinity that may justify IPV (Arat, Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento, 2007; Chitando, 2012; Hayes & Boyd, 2017; Merry, 2001). Patriarchal societies

tend to relegate women to nurturing and caring functions around the home while men take on the provider role and leadership functions outside the home. Despite strong opposition from religious conservatives, studies have shown that, as societies modernize, gender norms are becoming more egalitarian and notions of healthy masculinity are gaining salience; more men are assuming caring and homemaking functions as women work outside the home and contribute to the financial upkeep of the family (Arat, 2010; Bailey, 2016; Risman, 2018). Working on the premise that gender socialization is a dynamic process, approaches that engage men in IPV research and prevention will contribute to transforming the ways that men conceptualize masculinity and gender relations and could have a long-term impact on IPV rates and prevalence (Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento; Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

The Gambian Cultural Context

Demography. The Gambia is a small country in West Africa with a population of 2.03 million (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], 2018). Forty percent of the population lives in rural areas (CIA). With a national average poverty rate of 48.9%, The Gambia is ranked 174th out of 189 in the 2018 Human Development Index; the US is ranked 13th for the same year (United Nations Development Program [UNDP], 2018). The Gambia is composed of diverse ethnic groups who are predominantly Muslim (95.6%); about 4% are Christian (CIA, 2018). Less than one percent of the population practice African traditional forms of worship, sometimes in conjunction with a mainstream religion (Balonon-Rosen, 2013). In 2010 only 57% of the population was enrolled in secondary education and data is unavailable for enrollment in post secondary education (World Bank, 2018). English is the official language spoken in most public institutions and in Western-style educational institutions.

Gambian Diaspora. International migration is a common phenomenon in The Gambia. It is estimated that 9% of the population, consisting largely of skilled and professional workers, live mostly in Europe and the USA. Gambian migrants maintain close ties with their extended family, communities, and social networks in The Gambia and are an important source of remittances that substantially contribute to mitigating poverty (Tiemoko, 2004; World Bank, 2018). Remittance flows to The Gambia are estimated to represent one-fifth of GDP, equivalent to \$216 million in 2017 (World Bank, 2018). Gambian migrants potentially represent social capital that can be harnessed for social change and gender justice work. Studies have reported that migrants ascribe new meanings to phenomena as they adapt to their new experiences and environments, reflecting the dynamism and fluidity of culture that is also known as acculturation (Ali, O'Chatain & Croot (2016; Berry, 2005; Chao, Kung, & Yao, 2015). Ali, O'Chatain & Croot (2016) conducted a qualitative study of 41 Pakistani men and women living in Pakistan and The United Kingdom to explore the meanings they ascribed to marital quality and IPV but did not find any conclusive evidence of acculturation as a factor. In contrast, Flood & Pease (2009) argued that when migrants from cultures that normalize violence move to less violence supporting cultures, some integrate the norms of their adopted home. Americans may have greater appreciation for gender-equitable norms because of progress in advancing gender equality and laws that protect women against discrimination (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005; Risman, 2018). Based on evidence from the above literature on acculturation, engaging Gambian migrant men to serve as ambassadors and accountability partners with peers in their country of origin has potential as part of a strategy to promote a gender justice culture that works for the benefit of Gambian families.

Gambian Social Context. As in many African countries, the predominant family structure in The Gambia is the extended family which can extend up to four generations within one household or compound headed by a patriarch with several wives and division of labor based on a hierarchical structure (Adjei, 2018; Foster, 2000; Tiemoko, 2004). Each wife oversees her sub-unit of offspring, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren, and supervises the daily chores. Gambian families tend to be collectivistic and individualism is discouraged. Because the family structure is hierarchical and interdependent, individual family members are expected to consider benefits to the family and larger community before making most decisions. This may serve as a support network for its members but also has implications for gender norms, power dynamics in marriage, and response to IPV. A woman who marries into this system is in principle married to the extended family and kin rather than to the individual husband in the sense of responsibility for maintaining a healthy marriage. As a result of this collectivistic, close knit structure, members who have migrated generally maintain close emotional and economic ties with their extended family of origin (Tiemoko, 2004).

Heterosexual marriage is the only form of marriage that is recognized. Homosexuality is illegal under The Gambia's Criminal Code (Library of Congress, 2014). Customary law marriage is recognized, as is polygyny which is widely practiced by Muslims and practitioners of African religions, but is not permitted for Christians (OECD, n.d).

Gender equality and IPV in The Gambia. The Gambia ranked 148th out of 160 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index (GII) that measures inequality between women and men in health, education, and economic activity in contrast to the USA which ranked 41st (UNDP, 2018). The comparative scores on the different GII indicators are outlined below:

- in The Gambia, 10.3% of parliamentary seats were held by women compared to 19.7% in the USA;
- for every 100,000 live births, 706 women in The Gambia and 14 women in the USA died from pregnancy related causes;
- in The Gambia, 29% of adult women and 42.3% of adult men had at least a secondary education compared to 95.5% of adult women and 95.2% of adult men in the USA;
- the adolescent birth rate was 79.2 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19 in The Gambia and 18.8 births for the same group in the USA;
- labor market participation was 51.2% for women and 67.7% for men in The Gambia compared to 55.7% for women and 68.3% for men in the USA.

The Gambia has ratified most international charters that promote human rights and women's rights. These include the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Rights of Women in Africa, and the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (GBOS, 2013). At the domestic level the government has passed laws and constitutional amendments that criminalize child marriage and human trafficking. In The Gambia, young people can legally consent to marriage at age 18. However, according to 24% of adolescent girls under the age of 18 were married or in a union, with 9% having married before the age of 15 (GBOS, 2013; UNICEF, 2012). Sixty-two percent were married to a man at least 10 years their senior and more than 31% were either pregnant or already had a child by the age of 15. The enforcement of civil laws against child marriage is jeopardized by the coexistence of Islamic and customary laws that legitimize it (OECD, n.d). In 2010, The Gambia passed the Women's Act Protecting Women

from Violence. The Domestic Violence Act (Protecting Survivors of Domestic Violence) and The Sexual Offenses Act Criminalizing Sexual Violence were ratified in 2013 (UN Women, 2017). The Domestic Violence Act (2013) defines domestic violence broadly to include acts committed by and with intimate partners and non-partners alike. This open-ended definition complicates monitoring and data analysis to codify different forms of violence and report on IPV prevalence in particular.

The Gambian Constitution recognizes civil law as well as customary and Islamic laws (OECD, n.d.). Whereas constitutional and civil laws guarantee women legal protection and equal rights with men, customary and Islamic laws do not accord the same protections. For example, the Gambian constitution accords women freedom of movement, including the right to choose where she lives, but this freedom is restricted under customary and Islamic law which bind her choice to the wishes of her husband (OECD). Child marriage is criminalized under the constitution and child protection laws, yet permissible under customary and Islamic law, as is forced marriage. Wife inheritance is practised and also justified under these laws.

Research data on IPV in The Gambia is limited. What is available includes a cross sectional survey of 136 pregnant women in a prenatal care setting in the Greater Banjul Area which found that nearly 62% of the sample had experienced IPV during or prior to their pregnancy, nearly double the regional average for Sub-Saharan Africa (Idoko, Ogbe, Jallow, & Ocheke, 2015; WHO, 2013). A Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) estimated that between 20% and 41% of women in a population-based sample had experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime (GBOS, 2013). This report also found more than 58% of women aged 15 to 49 years and nearly 32% of men in the same age group agreed that a husband was justified to punish his wife for one or more reasons including refusing sexual intercourse or

going out without his permission. The DHS also reported that 30% of the population between 20 and 24 years old were married before the age of 18. These data may reflect gross underreporting because of the culture of silence that stifles IPV disclosure and social norms that accept hegemonic masculinity (GBOS, 2013; Idoko, Ogbe, Jallow, & Ocheke, 2015). This is why it is so important to understand how men think about IPV and the factors they attribute to their beliefs.

METHODOLOGY

Using semi-structured interviews and an embedded survey, this study explored how eleven married men from The Gambia conceptualize marriage, gendered behavior, and IPV. In the present study, I use the terms IPV and domestic violence interchangeably to mean acts of violence, abuse, or aggression committed by a current or former intimate partner as defined by the CDC and WHO (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015; WHO, 2012). This section of my report describes the study design, sampling and recruitment, and data collection and analysis. It outlines how I ensured reliability and rigor throughout the study. It also highlights my positionality as a female researcher of Gambian origin and other ethical considerations (Ellesberg & Heise, 2005; Hesse-Biber, 2014). The study was approved by the NC State University Institutional Review Board in May 2018, Protocol Number 12528.

Sampling and Recruitment

I recruited married men from The Gambia using a purposive criterion sampling technique (Creswell & Poth, 2017). This technique ensured that participants met the inclusion criteria of age, sex, marital status, and country of origin and had the relevant experiences and perspectives about the research topic. For participants to be eligible, they needed to self-identify as male, be 18 to 64 years old, currently married, and of Gambian origin. The age range was determined in

consideration for ethical issues governing research with vulnerable subjects such as children and older adults (Creswell & Poth). Participants needed to speak, read, and write English to reduce the time, cost, and validation implications of using local language interpreters, and the translation and back-translation of the research tools and interviews (Brislin, 1970).

Purposive criterion sampling also ensured that participants included some who lived outside The Gambia to explore the influence of migration on attitudes and beliefs (Ali, O’Cathain, & Croot, 2016; Berry, 2005; Chao, Kung, & Yao, 2015; Flood & Pease, 2009). For this reason, married Gambian men were recruited from The Gambia and the USA, countries with fundamentally different gender norms. The final sample consisted of five men of Gambian origin who have lived in the USA for three to 21 years and six who live in The Gambia.

I sent a recruitment email (Appendix A) to friends and colleagues requesting introduction to prospective participants who met the inclusion criteria and would be interested to participate. These contacts forwarded the names and phone number of prospective participants who I called to further discuss the interview procedure and respond to their questions and concerns. Interested participants gave me their email addresses for me to send them more information about the study, conditions for participation, and procedures for ensuring confidentiality. Out of an initial 15 prospective participants identified, two dropped out because one requested the interview questions to be sent to him in advance and the other asked not to be audio-recorded. I sent the informed consent form (Appendix B) for signature to the remaining 13 participants but two failed to return the signed consent form and were eliminated. This process resulted in the eleven participants that were interviewed, five participants living in the USA and six living in The Gambia. All the participants interviewed signed an informed consent. Demographic information on the final list of participants interviewed is presented in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 *Participants' demographic profile.*

Pseudonym	Residence	Years in USA	Years married	Education	Age range	Religion
Hassan	USA	20	5	College	30 - 35	Muslim
Francis	USA	20	5	College	46 - 50	Christian
Musa	USA	3	8	Advanced	30 - 35	Muslim
Sulayman	USA	21	20	College	46 - 50	Muslim
Joseph	USA	15	3	College	26 - 30	Christian
John	Gambia	n/a	1.5	High School	26 - 30	Christian
Michael	Gambia	n/a	15	College	40 - 45	Christian
Ebrima	Gambia	n/a	20	Advanced	40 - 45	Muslim
Charles	Gambia	n/a	2	High School	40 - 45	Christian
Dawda	Gambia	n/a	1.5	Advanced	26 - 30	Muslim
Ousman	Gambia	n/a	7	High school	40 - 45	Muslim

Data Collection

From May to July, 2018, I conducted face-to-face and phone interviews guided by a semi-structured interview protocol (Creswell & Poth, 2017) that included questions about participant's demographic profile and questions about marriage, decision-making in marriage, and domestic violence (for the semi-structured interview guide, see Appendix C). I developed the questions based on a review of literature on IPV conducted in developing and Western countries and literature on engaging men in IPV research. The questions were designed to explore participants' beliefs about and perceptions of marriage and IPV as social and interpersonal relationship phenomena (Creswell & Poth; Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Hesse-Biber, 2014). This required the use of open-ended questions that participants could answer based on their knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, and experiences. Follow up questions, probing, and paraphrasing helped to clarify participant's responses and provide deeper insight.

I converted four questions into a multiple choice and Likert-scale survey (see Appendix D) and used the NC State University Qualtrics (<https://oirp.ncsu.edu/surveys/qualtrics/accessing-qualtrics-at-nc-state>) to email the survey to the participants individually. Participants completed the survey and returned it before the interview. I coded participants' responses using alpha-numeric codes immediately upon receipt.

The first participant I interviewed also served as a pilot test for the interview guide. The open-ended nature of the questions and probing allowed me to adjust the questions as his responses revealed aspects that I had overlooked. This process allowed me to include the interview in the final sample but revised the interview guide for subsequent interviews. For example, the original guide did not include a question about religion but was added to the revised guide as a result of the perspectives shared by the first participant. At the end of the interview, participants were debriefed, assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and asked for any further comments they had, including on the interview process itself. Although participants were not asked any direct question about their personal experience with IPV, I provided them a list of resources that they could use to learn more about IPV or seek help and advice if needed.

For qualitative IPV research with men, it is particularly important to provide a safe environment for them to share genuine and honest views and beliefs (Maddox et al, 2018). Individual interviews with participants were conducted at a mutually agreed upon time and location, and lasted 45 minutes to 2.5 hours. Interviews with participants living in the USA were conducted by phone. Interviews with participants in The Gambia were conducted in person at a location chosen by the participant, mostly at the participant's office, the office of a local non-governmental organization, or at my local office base. The participant's privacy and the confidentiality of the interview were paramount considerations in the choice of a location.

Participants in The Gambia received an amount equivalent to \$12.00 to compensate them for their transportation and as incentive for their participation, a common practice in The Gambia.

My insider status as a Gambian adult with almost 25 years marriage experience appeared to make participants feel at ease to provide detailed responses to the questions and to share deeply personal and emotional experiences. My understanding of at least three languages spoken by Gambians made participants comfortable to use phrases in the local languages that they had difficulty finding equivalents in English. I addressed the power dynamic inherent in my outsider status as a female researcher from the USA by using a humble, inquisitive approach and the ethos that participants were the experts and I was there to learn from them. Although my outsider positionality could not be completely eliminated, the rich stories presented by the participants suggests comfort in sharing their stories.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

I assigned each participant a pseudonym and an alpha-numeric code for identification and to maintain strict data confidentiality. To respect participant's individuality and identity, I chose pseudonyms that were Christian and Muslim names commonly used for Gambian males and assigned them according to their religion. I audio-recorded each interview and created memos as soon after the interviews as possible to glean preliminary emergent categories and analytic themes (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Saldana, 2009). I transcribed each interview recording manually and labelled interview tapes, memos, and transcripts using participant codes and pseudonyms.

To ensure rigor, I worked with my advisor to create a codebook before interpreting the findings. We held a series of meetings to discuss the creation of codes from the memos and interview transcripts and develop a codebook which I used to code the eleven transcripts. I identified and inductively coded participants' responses to form themes and concepts that

assisted in generating theories around the research objectives and questions (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Saldana, 2009). To strengthen internal reliability, my advisor and I separately coded one of the eleven interview transcripts, then met to discuss our coding strategies and review any discrepancies. We reread the transcripts, redefined the codes, and reprioritized others as we became more familiar with the data. This process resulted in developing five coding categories and their definitions to form a codebook: gender and male headship; religion and religiosity; definition of domestic violence; justification for domestic violence; and response to domestic violence (Appendix E). I used these codes to conduct line by line coding of the eleven transcripts individually and reread the transcripts several times to compare categories and ensure consistency. I selected two of the codes—religion and gender—that were dominant categories in all the interviews and overlapped with the other three codes. I analyzed what participants said in relation to these two codes to find the most important relationships between participants, ideas, perceptions, and other patterns in the data that point to responses to the research questions. This resulted in the development of the themes that are presented in the findings chapter.

Ethical Considerations

Research on intimate partner violence is recognized as a delicate process with potential safety and ethical risks requiring skill, sensitivity, and reflexivity (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Hesse-Biber, 2014). I developed questions that were open-ended and non-judgmental, and participants had full knowledge of the purpose and content of the. I did member checking during the interviews by frequently paraphrasing participants' responses and asking them to confirm or correct my understanding (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Hesse-Biber). I also did this a few times by email and phone after the interviews to verify certain information. I interviewed participants individually at a location of their choice where their privacy was guaranteed. I assured

participants of their right to decline to answer any question and established a non-threatening atmosphere by not asking them their experience with IPV as perpetrator, victim, or witness. I gave them a list of resources that, regardless of what they disclosed, they could use to learn more about IPV or seek help and advice if needed. Ellsberg & Heise (2005) argued that for some domestic violence research participants, the interview may serve as an intervention, and this was evident in the deeply personal and emotional stories that some participants shared and one of them admitting that the interview felt like therapy (Dawda, GM).

FINDINGS

“That’s What God Wants People to Do”

In this section, I present the results of my analysis of the interviews with eleven married men of Gambian origin (for a demographic profile of participants, see Table 1.1) and a quantitative analysis of their responses to a survey about gender norms and intimate partner violence (IPV). Six of the participants lived in The Gambia and five in the USA; six of them identified as Muslim and five as Christian. The USA residents have lived in the USA between three to 21 years. Participants ranged in age from 28 to 49, with a median age of 40 years and a mean of 38 years. They had one to four children respectively. Eight participants had a college degree or higher, an overrepresentation of college educated Gambians when compared to data estimating secondary education enrollment at 57% in 2017 (World Bank, 2018).

Using codes and themes to organize, analyze, and interpret the data, I identified religiosity and gender as intersecting social constructs that shaped the interview participants’ beliefs and perceptions about marriage, gender norms, and intimate partner violence. All the men I interviewed acknowledged that Gambian culture supports IPV and women’s subordination, and that religion is often manipulated to justify these norms. However, most of them disagreed with

religious justifications for IPV, arguing that they are a “perversion of the religion,” regardless of what religion that was. Furthermore, even as they declared their opposition to IPV and disagreed with the notion that religion justifies IPV, some participants’ responses pointed to the possibility that they may have unknowingly committed at least one form of IPV based on the WHO (2012) definition cited in the literature review, a contradiction that I explore in detail in the sections below. Most of the men in this study also believed that migration to countries like the USA, which have laws against IPV and gender discrimination—and (if imperfectly) enforce those laws—influenced their gender ideology and beliefs about IPV.

I explore how these Gambian men describe marriage, their beliefs about gender hierarchy, and their perceptions about IPV. I discuss four overlapping themes that reflect the intersections of religion, gender, IPV, and migration. These are: The sanctity and sacrality of marriage; Masculinity and gender in marriage; Complications in defining and rationalizing IPV; and, The role of acculturation in understanding IPV. When quoting participants, I will use their pseudonym followed by an abbreviation of their place of residence (GM for The Gambia, US for USA) and C for Christian or M for Muslim to indicate their religious affiliation.

Marriage is Sacred and Children are a Blessing

Muslim and Christian participants alike believed that marriage was sacred and a religious duty. Sulayman (US, M) said, “That's what God wants people to do—to get married and build a family.” These men believed that marriage should benefit families and ensure the survival of the human race. Ebrima (GM, M), asserted “marriage is something that is sacred, something that ensures that the human race continues to exist. For me if you get married it’s a form of contribution to societal progression because we will have children.” Francis (US, C) believed that marriage is ordained by God “since creation that's how God created the world, for man and

woman to come together and be called husband and wife.” They also believed that children are a blessing and that couples who maintain healthy marriages will receive divine rewards for themselves and their offspring. Musa (US, M) said, “when you have a good marriage we believe that when you die there is life after death also and you can enter into paradise.” Charles (GM, C), reiterated that having children is an added blessing. It was clear that for these men marriage was an important, even sacred, institution that guaranteed the continuation of one’s people and the promise of heavenly rewards.

Polygyny as a religious imperative. Although polygyny (sometimes referred to as polygamy) is legal in The Gambia and common among Muslims and practitioners of African religions, the participants I interviewed, regardless of religion, had negative perceptions about this type of marriage. Most of the Muslim participants I interviewed informed me that they grew up in polygynous families, which may have influenced their perceptions. They believed that polygyny is prone to conflict and that men who practice it use religion to justify it despite its inherent issues. Hassan US, M) said, “it seems like most women would prefer to be in monogamous relationships but the men would use religion and society as justification to get something [polygyny] they already wanted anyway.” Ousman (GM, M) believed that “If you have two wives and you cannot treat them equally, God will punish you.” Francis US, C) also believed that polygyny multiplies the challenges inherent in intimate relationships “if you have two wives there will be more conflict in that one than one wife, no doubt about that.” Michael (GM, C) reiterated the above views, “we cannot deny the fact that polygamy is not an ideal marriage. To be able to love two women equally is almost impossible.” Joseph (US, C) who reported that his mother was Muslim, related his opposition to polygyny from personal experience and as a matter of self-preservation “my mum is currently in a polygamy relationship.

Honestly, I disagree about it because I feel one man to one woman, that's all one person can handle, especially a man. Us men we don't like too much emotion so if you marry five women, or two women, or whatever, you are creating more stress for yourself." Islamic scholars have argued that polygyny is not an Islamic imperative contrary to worldwide belief and practice but that it is founded on patriarchal norms that manipulate Islam to justify its continued practice (Hajjar, 2004; Mashhour, 2005). The men I interviewed also shared their perception that polygynous marriages were declining among Gambians, and implied that the younger generation of men and women who grew up in polygynous households were rejecting the practice.

Marriage and conflict. Although the men in this study believed that marriage is sacred, they also perceived it as fraught with conflict. They used the relationship between the teeth and tongue as a metaphor to represent marital conflict as inevitable and solvable, likening it to the occasional friction between the teeth and the tongue in the mouth. The reference to the teeth and tongue is a common metaphor in The Gambia for conflict that is inevitable in intimate relationships. Ebrima (GM, M) told me:

You know the teeth and the tongue they are like neighbors because the teeth are above the tongue. And with husband and wife also, if you are living together there are bound to be times when the relationship may not be at its best due to one reason or the other but that also does not necessarily mean that you have to part.

Charles confirmed the metaphor's use in situations of marital conflict, adding, "I think when people are trying to solve a problem in marriage, that's the time they use those proverbs just to calm down the situation."

Participants offered various reasons why marital conflict occurred. They identified polygyny as a conflict prone environment, as discussed earlier. They also identified

disagreements about financial issues, parenting practices, and tension over power and control. Four of the participants believed that conflict about finances arose when couples perceived that one was shirking his or her financial responsibilities or mismanaging the financial resources meant for family needs. Ousman, on the other hand, thought that conflict arose over parenting practices and said this, “Fathers and mothers love kids. If the mother beats the one father likes that can cause problem. And sometimes you just come home from work you didn’t find your wife there without your permission, that’s always a problem.” This perspective may be a result of the social expectations of gender and male dominance as earlier shown in the literature (Arat; Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento, 2007; Chitando, 2012; Hayes & Boyd, 2017; Merry, 2001).

Although participants believed that conflict in intimate relationships may be solvable, they also believed that it could escalate into violence if unchecked. Participants believed that couples can successfully manage conflict if, as Joseph added, they had developed a “love language.” It may be worth further exploring this concept as part of IPV prevention.

Doing Gender

In addition to being perceived as a sacred institution, marriage was also shaped for these men by how they understood gender and masculinity. All participants completed a survey about gender norms and a husband’s authority to discipline his wife (for details about the framing of these two questions, see Appendix D). In this survey discipline refers to action that is meant to correct or penalize a transgression. Tables 2.1 and 2.2, below, summarize the interview participants’ responses to the two survey questions.

Table 2.1. *Gender Norms in Marriage*

Roles in a marriage	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A wife should stay in a relationship under all circumstances for the sake of the children	9% (1)	9% (1)	73% (8)	9% (1)
It's the woman's duty to meet her partner's sexual needs.	9% (1)	64% (7)	27% (3)	0%
The man and woman should share the household chores	18% (2)	55% (6)	27% (3)	0%
The tradition of the man as head of the family should be honored.	18% (2)	73% (8)	9% (1)	0%
The man and woman should have equal say in making decisions	27% (3)	64% (7)	9% (1)	0%
The man has the power to stop his wife from working outside the home	0%	27% (3)	45% (5)	27% (3)
How a man treats his woman in the privacy of his own home is his own business.	0%	18% (2)	45% (5)	36% (4)
The mother and the father should share responsibility for child care.	55% (6)	45% (5)	0%	0%
The man has the obligation to discipline his wife to correct her behavior.	0%	55% (6)	27% (3)	18% (2)

Participants ranked their agreement or disagreement based on a 4-point Likert scale (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The overwhelming majority of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that men and women should share childcare responsibilities (100%) and household chores (73%). Ten out of 11 (91%) agreed or strongly agreed that the couple should have equal say in decision-making and 8 out of 11 (73%) disagreed or strongly disagreed that the husband had the right to stop his wife from working. On the other hand, the majority—between 55% (6) and 91% (10)—agreed or strongly agreed that the tradition of the man as household head should be honored and that the

husband had the obligation to discipline his wife. The participants who completed this survey seemed to have embraced some elements of gender equality while holding on to traditional beliefs male headship that bestow power and authority on the husband, which may reflect potential risk factors for IPV perpetration detailed in later sections of this thesis.

Table 2.2. *Reasons for a man to discipline his wife.*

Reasons for disciplining	Responses
She does not complete the housework to his satisfaction	11% (1)
She dresses in a way that displeases him	22% (2)
He dislikes her friends	11% (1)
She dislikes his friends	0
She takes birth control without his permission	22% (2)
She challenges his authority in the home	22% (2)
None	78% (7)
No response	(2)

In this survey question, participants were asked to select one or more of the seven statements that represent the reason(s) they would discipline their wife. Nine (82%) out of the 11 participants responded to this question. Of the nine who responded, 78% (7) chose None, meaning that they did not support any reason for a man to be justified to discipline his wife. The other two (22%) out of the nine who responded to the question selected one to two reasons a man could have for disciplining his wife. For example, two participants selected “she challenges his authority in the home” as the reason a man would discipline his wife. Two participants did not respond to the question; one informed me that he disagreed with the implication that a man could discipline his

wife “like a teacher with a school child” and the other said that the reason he would discipline his wife, if required, was not listed.

During the in-depth interviews, participants talked about how their beliefs about gender were influenced by religion, social norms, and individual values. The majority of them believed that religion justified male headship and that this was also valued in Gambian custom. A majority also appeared to espouse patriarchal norms in the sense of being the head and provider, and believing in the man’s authority to discipline his wife, a belief that is confirmed in the survey results cited above. Musa (US, M) said “even in religion it’s the man's responsibility to take care of the woman.” Hassan (US, M) explained the confluence of religion and individual values, “The man wants to be the head, wants to be powerful. And then you add the stamp of religion saying that it’s your God-given right.” Some of them believed that, although marriage was an equal partnership in practice, this occurred side by side with the man being the head as a religious prerogative. Michael (GM, C) said, “as a Christian it's my conviction that the man is the head. My wife respects me 100% and I respect her 100%. If you come to our house, you will wonder—you won't know who is the head.” Sulayman (US, M) concurred, adding that he “[sees] my wife as my partner, with equal stake into the marriage, [but] it’s not like the woman will replace you as the head.” Although the men acknowledged that their wives were partners, they maintained their role as head. This perspective is consistent with Bailey’s (2016) “hierarchical complementarianism” (p. 225) which he viewed as an ideology where women are subordinate but not inferior to men. Bailey argued that complementarianism is part of a continuum with patriarchy reflecting hegemonic masculine norms where “men lead and women and children follow in submission” (p.225) and egalitarianism where men and women are considered equal in all respect.

At least eight participants expressed the perception that religion and Gambian social norms justified a woman's subordination. In other words, a woman's submission to her husband was an indication of her religiosity. Hassan explained this idea this way, "telling [the woman] her obedience to God is contingent on [her] subservience to the man. That helps cement certain attitudes and beliefs." For Ousman agreed with this perspective, "in our religion view, women should not be talking for other people outside to hear [the woman's] voice." Ousman believed that his religion expected women to be soft spoken and not heard beyond the confines of their home. For these men, social norms that conferred male privilege also condoned harmful manifestations of masculinity and exhorted women's forbearance with the promise of divine rewards. Francis explained,

I don't know whether it's in Islam but that's the norm I do hear most of the time. If you want to have blessed kids you should endure the marriage, no matter what it is. Even if your husband cheats, ignore him. Don't even confront him. That's the saying *dina taayii* [he will get tired].

Francis believed that social norms and religion expected women to be patient even in the face of severe abuse in the hope that the husband would change and that her children would be blessed. Individual and religious beliefs reinforced by social norms appeared to become more dominant and entrenched and may require greater focus in efforts to prevent IPV.

Some of these men talked about how some beliefs had become so entrenched that it was difficult to ascertain their origin. Michael argued that "religion and culture have harmonized in such a way that it's a deep-seated thing, it's a core value, has blended with the culture." Sulayman agreed, adding that "in Gambia we might mix up the culture under the guise of religion. Practicing certain things over years might look as if its religion, but not necessarily. It's

just people doing what they want and looking for religious justification.” The co-existence of customary law with strong religious socialization in the Gambia may explain the difficulty in determining if a practice is justified by religion or not. For example, Charles reported that, “Muslims, they will always use this phrase that ‘I can marry up to four’ so for them it’s a leverage to play around [have an extramarital affair]. With the Aku [an ethnic group whose majority identify as Christian], they will not use it as a leverage but they will still play around because society just accepts it.” For Charles, seems ironic that Gambian Muslim men use Islam’s apparent acceptance of polygyny to justify their extramarital affairs yet Christian men also engage in extramarital affairs without the religious justification to fall back on. This appears to be, for Charles, another symptom of male privilege and gender inequality because as he continued, “But the woman cannot do that [have extramarital affairs] because that’s an abomination in Gambian society.” This perspective upholds a hierarchical understanding of gender in which men and women have different standards to uphold. Additionally, the ways that religion and social norms interweave in The Gambia to an extent that they become indistinguishable justifies an intersectional lens when studying factors that incite IPV and gender violence in general.

Participants’ beliefs about male privilege and women’s inequality were also expressed through their expectations and stereotypes. Ousman believed that the best age for a woman to marry was 18 and that by 30 years she might be considered too old to find a husband. This is a stereotype that pressures women to marry prematurely, start childbearing prematurely, and diminishes their educational and career opportunities thereby restricting their capacity for agency and choice, and increases their risk for IPV victimization (Charrad, 2010; Larsen, 2016; Sokoloff, 2008). Francis believed that most men had an ego that needed to be stroked to make

them happy “most men have ego. If the woman knows how to get to the man's ego in a positive way with appreciation, that can make a man to do more in the relationship.” Although Ebrima resisted, he was under a lot of pressure to marry a second wife when his first did not conceive for 12 years after their first child was born. He narrated, “when I got married, when I had my first daughter it took us 12 years to have another one so there was a lot of pressure from the family for me to marry a second wife.” Dawda affirmed men’s love for children and their expectation to have many children, “Most men want kids, I think ASAP. Most men want to have a lot of kids.” Because children are considered a blessing as reported earlier, childlessness in marriage is stigmatized and blamed on the wife without any medical evidence, exposing her to psychological abuse from her husband and the extended family. Men’s love for children may also explain why child rearing practices appeared as a source of conflict in marriage reported by some participants. For these participants, a woman’s religiosity is tied to expectations of marriage and motherhood, something that impacts how these men view women’s subordination and IPV.

The survey results presented in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 and the above interview data suggest that the majority of the participants in this study have a healthy attitude toward masculinity and gender equality in intimate relationships. Although they believed in the essence of male headship, they embraced marriage as a partnership and believed that men and women should share responsibility for household chores, thus combining elements of complementarianism and egalitarianism. Participants also generally disavowed justifications for men’s infidelity and abuse of women. The data also illustrates the importance of understanding the different ways that social norms, religious beliefs, and men’s individual attitudes can, separately and in tandem, shape gender inequality and expose women to IPV.

Rationalizing IPV

IPV Beliefs and Definition. In addition to religion shaping views about marriage and gender, men's understandings of IPV were also shaped by how they defined IPV itself. I conducted a survey to understand what men thought of as IPV. As part of the survey, participants were given a list of nine statements for them to rate using a 4-point Likert-scale. I asked participants to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement that the behaviors listed were justifiable. As these are behaviors identified in the CDC and WHO definition of IPV (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015; WHO, 2012), participants' responses could serve as predictors of their knowledge of or attitude to IPV. All the eleven participants responded to this survey question and their responses are presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 *Men's understanding of actions that define IPV*

Behaviors of a husband against his wife	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Denies her access to household money.	0	9% (1)	45% (5)	36% (4)
Forbids her from visiting her family or friends.	9% (1)	9% (1)	45% (5)	36% (4)
Slaps or punches her when the meal is late or not prepared to his taste	9% (1)	0	27% (3)	64% (7)
Insults or humiliates her in the presence of others.	9% (1)	0	18% (2)	73% (8)
Shakes, pulls or pushes her.	18% (2)	0	9% (1)	73% (8)
Refuses to provide food for the family because he is upset at something she did.	18% (2)	0	9% (1)	73% (8)
Breaks things in the house.	9% (1)	9% (1)	18% (2)	64% (7)
Prevents her from working.	0	27% (3)	27% (3)	45% (5)
Has sexual intercourse with her when she may be tired, ill, or not in the mood.	0	0	55% (6)	45% (5)

Most participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with all the statements in this survey item. The statement with the highest rate of accord, with 3 (27%) participants agreeing, was that the husband can prevent his wife from working. This same number of participants agreed with an identical statement reported in Table 1.1, that the man has the power to stop his wife from working outside the home. At least one participant agreed or strongly agreed with all the statements justifying IPV. The statement with the least accord, at 100% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing asked if a man is justified to have sexual intercourse with his wife regardless of her health or mood. A similar statement in Table 1.1 asked is it is a woman's duty to meet her partner's sexual needs, to which eight (73%) participants agreed to strongly agreed. This difference in response may reflect differences in interpretations, although some participants verbally explained their response to me saying that both husband and wife had the obligation to meet the other's sexual needs. The men's objection to marital rape is indicated by the 100% disagreement with the statement about his right to sex under any circumstance. Although this is a small sample, it helps to clarify the individual beliefs about IPV that they shared during the interviews.

In defining and describing their beliefs about IPV, interviewees declared their opposition to IPV with statements like "even me, I hate beating women. If I see any man beating his wife or other woman I get angry." Another participant declared that he had never beaten his wife in the 20 years of their marriage, "I thank God that throughout my 20 years of marriage, definitely I have NEVER, EVER, beaten my wife." It turned out that, for these two participants and some others I interviewed in The Gambia in particular, this reflected their level of understanding of the different manifestations of IPV and the narrow scope of the definition they give to IPV.

When asked what IPV meant to them, the participants based in the USA offered definitions that closely matched international standards. Sulayman gave this definition:

I think it means taking advantage of the other partner. You know, things like threatening the woman, beating the woman, not letting the woman to develop herself. It's like you don't want her to work, you don't want her to improve her skills. You just want her to be your prize possession and to be kept at your house or palace. And the threat of force whether overtly or covertly.

Sulayman's definition covers most of the elements included in the WHO (2012) version except for sexual violence. Joseph had a similar definition, although not as comprehensive, "domestic violence means husband and wife fighting physically, from the physical fighting to—that's one form of domestic violence and also the verbal and emotional ones." Joseph identified physical and psychological aggression, which research suggested were the most prevalent forms of IPV (Smith et al, 2017), with physical violence at more than 37% and psychological aggression at nearly half the population of the USA.

Participants living in The Gambia were more likely than the US-based participants to define IPV narrowly, with three out of the six in The Gambia defining it only as beating compared to the USA-based men who gave definitions that encompassed actions other than beating. John (GM) defined IPV as "a husband and wife quarreling, beating, fighting in the compound," emphasizing the physical aspect of the episode. Although John mentioned quarreling and fighting, it is important to note that the literature on IPV considered these as conflict resolution tactics that partners might use when negotiating for power and control rather than acts of aggression or intentional acts meant to inflict harm, but acknowledged that it could escalate into assault if unchecked (Gottman & Silver, 2015; Krahe, Bieneck, & Möller, 2005).

Ebrima (GM) declared, “I thank God that throughout my 20 years of marriage, definitely I have NEVER, EVER, beaten my wife. definitely yes. that is something very unique [emphasis added].” When I informed him that beating was not the only form of IPV, he replied with alarm in his voice, “the beating aspect, so it’s beyond that?” Participants in The Gambia tend to not identify the full spectrum of IPV as IPV. Michael (GM) was one of the few participants living in The Gambia who gave a comprehensive definition,

Domestic violence comes in different forms. It can come in beatings, it can come with denying your wife certain things, even forced sex is violence. You can't force your wife to have sex with her, you have to have her consent. Spanking your wife, shouting at your wife, ordering your wife, denying her certain things will affect her emotionally. So those are all domestic violence. What leads men to do those things, maybe culture. Believe me it’s culture.

Throughout the interview, Michael demonstrated a deeper understanding of global perspectives about gender and IPV than other participants I interviewed in The Gambia, and this was reflected in the breadth of his IPV definition. Michael also believed that culture—social norms—instigated men to commit IPV. As noted in research literature, narrow definitions of IPV prevent intimate partners from recognizing when abuse occurred because they believed it was a normal aspect of intimate relationships (Adjei, 2018; Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015; Flood & Pease, 2009; Krahe, Bieneck, & Möller, 2005). This may lead victims to treat acts like spousal rape or emotional and psychological violence as normal and fail to report them (Black, 2011; Maddox, 2018). Such narrow meanings also relieve perpetrators from guilt and accountability, and help to sustain their abusive patterns (Coates & Wade, 2004).

Justifying IPV. I asked the interview participants why men commit IPV. Their responses included individual factors such as witnessing parent's violence as a child, loss of control, frustration with the spouse, intergenerational cycle of violence, and substance abuse. John explained, "when they are smokers [of marijuana], they can beat their wives seriously." Michael also identified substance abuse as a cause of IPV when he shared that his grandfather abused his grandmother whenever he was drunk. Francis added "if you grew up in an abusive relationship where you see your dad abuse your mom, when you grow up the tendency for you is higher for you to do the same thing in your marriage." This concept of cycles of abuse and other childhood related experiences that affect attitudes to gender and IPV were mentioned by several other participants but was not coded as a theme and will therefore not be addressed here. It may warrant a future project to explore from the interview data collected in this study.

Some of the men I interviewed believed that women also committed IPV and that men's IPV perpetration was sometimes in retaliation for abuse from women. Both Hassan and Charles commented that men were not the only ones who commit IPV, women also did. Hassan stated, "these things also happen with women and they might be the ones that start pushing, shoving, cussing, and there's also domestic abuse victims who are male too." Michael and Sulayman argued that men commit IPV in response to provocation and verbal assaults from women. "Some women they can really, really provoke their husband. So, when the men feel like they are too provoked, some of them that cannot control their temper would raise their hands and hit their wives." (Michael). Sulayman, on his part, argued that women emotionally abused their partners to compensate for their lack of physical power, and concluded that "women can use their mouth to kill you sometimes" implying that emotional abuse by women could be as fatal as IPV by

men. Dawda, from The Gambia, narrated his personal experience with what he considered abuse by a woman and his response,

It gets to a certain limit, especially when you are being confronted by someone who is hitting you, shouting at you but still you are being pulled back. You try to control yourself but it only gets to a point whereby you can't control yourself.

Dawda admitted to me that he had once been accused of IPV and explained the circumstances as being retaliatory in response to the emotional and physical abuse that led to him losing his control. Men like Dawda may justify IPV by blaming the victim, loss of control, self-defense, or as retaliation (Flynn & Graham, 2010; Johnson, 2006). Likewise, some gender theorists and IPV researchers argued that IPV perpetration is a gender symmetric phenomenon that occurs as an interactional process (Johnson, 2006; Krahe, Bieneck, & Möller, 2005). Although the debate about men's experience of IPV from women is unresolved, the preponderance of the evidence confirms women as the primary victims even as men may claim otherwise (Flood & Pease, 2009; Krahe, Bieneck, & Möller). However, it is important that IPV researchers working with men are sensitive to these concerns without overshadowing the harsh effects of IPV against women. Hearing such stories about male IPV victimization, limited as examples may be, could motivate men to engage in prevention for the benefit of all members of society.

In addition to the individual factors discussed above, participants also believed that Gambian social norms condoned violence against women. Hassan shared this:

There's definitely just general culture and tradition where violence against women within the confines of marriage are almost seen as the norm. I remember sitting with this old lady and she was casually joking about women who marry boxers and wrestlers and what

are those women going to do when it's time for their husbands to beat them. Like based on her generation the husband beating the wife was the norm and expected.

Although Hassan implied that this norm was from an older generation, the belief that women are subordinate and can be abused with impunity still persists as explained earlier when some participants described women being blamed for a childless marriage which entitled the husband to divorce her or marry another wife with impunity.

When asked if there were any religious justifications for IPV, Christian and Muslim participants alike refuted the notion in relation to their own religion, one of them labelling such a claim as “a perversion of religion.” Joseph, a Christian, asserted “There's no place in the Bible that says men, you go to mistreat your women. It's all love, love, love, treat the wife like Jesus treats the church.” Joseph denied that the Bible verse referring to wives submitting to their husbands could be used by Christians to justify women's subordination. However, Ousman, a Muslim, seemed to suggest that Islam permits certain forms of IPV. “Islam doesn't give right to a man to beat his wife. They say there is a way of hitting, if there is a problem you just need to slap [gently] but you don't need to beat and harass and insult.” Ousman made a distinction between hitting and insulting which he claimed Islam objects to and a gentle slap which was permitted by Islam. Christian participants occasionally stereotyped Muslims. For instance, John and Michael were adamant in their belief that Islam—and notably the Quran—dictated that men subjugate women when they transgressed or dishonored the family. Hassan, a Muslim, explained that some Muslims manipulated the Islamic texts to justify their personal impulses:

At least in Gambia where the majority of the men are Muslim, there is a verse in the Quran that can be interpreted as ways of resolving disagreements with your spouse include forsaking them in their beds, not talking to them, and hitting. And there's a whole

discussion about what does hitting actually mean, is it justification for domestic violence or is it being translated wrong. But like I said if someone already has a certain impulse and all they are looking to the religion for is justification, they are not going to care what a hundred different scholars from 1200 years said about the issue.

Sulayman (US), a Muslim, shared Hassan's view that society justified women's subservience by interpreting a select portion of the text and ignoring the rest of the verse which enjoins believers to fear God and show compassion. In the same way, the Christian participants argued that the Bible verse about wives submitting to their husbands was taken out of context.

To give the interview participants evidence of how IPV justification was framed in The Gambia, I shared the results of a Demographic and Health Survey conducted in The Gambia in 2013 which found that more women than men justified IPV by 58% to 32% (GBOS, 2013). I asked them their views as to why more women than men would justify IPV. Many of them conveyed shock and confusion that women would believe that their husband had the right to punish or discipline them. Some participants suggested that it was based on traditional beliefs and women being socialized to believe that men had the power to control and dominate them. Ousman (GM, M) explained, "you know women the concept they have is, a husband is the family head, he has right to beat." Most of the men in this study also shared this view. John (GM) added a similar perspective about social norms, "I think women the way they see themselves and the way they are being indoctrinated about who they are. It's like, they cannot stop it so why worry about it." Joseph (US, C), also surprised at the finding, had this to say,

I think it's just a culture. probably just feeling like men should pretty much dominate and be in control of the situation. and maybe women also, some of them also feel like they were out of line and they deserve the domestic violence. I'm just assuming.

Joseph's comment introduced a new element that women may feel they deserved to be disciplined if they transgressed norms. Analyses of Demographic and Health Surveys conducted in other countries in Africa and Asia also found that more women than men justified IPV because of gender ideologies that engender male domination in interpersonal relationships (Hayes & Baak, 2016; Krause et al, 2015). Francis (US, C) shared a quote that was attributed to women in The Gambia, "I heard women say that 'it's better to beat me than to curse me' or something like that, *dorrma sah morma genal nga xas ma* [I prefer that you beat me than you berate me]." This is a common saying in the Wolof language claiming that women prefer beating to verbal abuse.

Response to IPV. The participants in this study believed that women should not rush to disclose abuse to outsiders. Charles (GM, C) said, "hence we are somehow too nucleus [he meant communal], I think it can be sorted out. Why not call your immediate family, and tell them this is what I'm going through? I want to get a solution." Charles' belief is consistent with collectivist family values that prioritize family integrity and protection of community wellbeing over the individual's (Adjei, 2015; Krause et al, 2015; Merry, 2001). Hassan (US, M), identified a social construct that he claimed influences women's hesitance about disclosure even to her immediate family, saying, "To be honest, I don't know because we also have the culture of *sutura*—covering other people's faults—and people keeping things in, so no one's gonna call the police, no one's gonna tell their in-laws." *Sutura* is a social imperative that is invoked to prevent disclosure of an incident that may cause someone to lose face or honor. John (GM, C) confirmed Hassan's view about the restriction on disclosure, "This *sutura*, they say that whatever happens, let it be here between you and your husband. Even though he is going to kill you let it be here in the house, don't allow other people to know about it." Michael (GM, C) added his view about

norms that discourage IPV disclosure and help-seeking by women, “It’s not being reported. Sometimes out of a culture of shame.” This once again reflects the stigma associated with committing IPV as being more important than the victim or survivor’s need to seek help.

The culture of silence also prevented IPV survivors from reporting to the police. When participants were asked if a survivor should report to the police, most of them vehemently opposed the idea. Charles (GM, C) believed that “calling the police, at times it can be very embarrassing, especially if kids are around. If there’s no kids, maybe, but I think that can be solved amicably.” Charles believed that IPV should be resolved by the partners without involving the police to avoid embarrassment for the family and harm to any children that may witness police intervention. John (GM, C) added,

The woman herself will not be comfortable, even some women would say no matter what your husband does to you, you don’t have to call 911 for these people to come. It’s a disgrace, you are disgracing your husband in front of the whole community. The woman herself if there is no law to protect the woman, she will not have peace of mind. In the end, she will even regret why did I do that.

Like Charles, John believed that police should not be involved in order to protect the husband and community from stigma. John implied that survivors who reported to the police may suffer backlash or revictimization from her community. Sulayman (US, M) expressed a slightly different perspective about police involvement, arguing that it might lead to incarceration and subsequent financial hardship for the family,

You cannot do that because here [in the USA] you can do that. You call and they take you to jail, you know that, right? But over there [in The Gambia], we have to be very careful because in as much as I am against domestic violence but also, our approach has

to be more measured, simply because the economic foundation of the families is in such a way—such that therefore you have to be—once you start doing that, the families will start to collapse again.

Others believed that involving the police may be a futile effort because the police themselves may be IPV perpetrators and dismiss a complaint to argue that it was a matter for the family to resolve. Joseph (US, C) remarked,

In Gambia or in other African countries—some African countries—calling the police doesn't even help you out. The police themselves are beating their wives. So, it's like, ha, that's something you need to handle in the household, you should not bring it out here, you know, just the cultural clichés--like the police will deal with a thief harsher than a person who is doing domestic violence with their wife.

Michael (GM, C) argued that calling the police may be necessary only if the abuse were persistent and other options had been exhausted. He noted,

[Calling the police] should not be an immediate result. It is when you know that this abuse can lead to the death of this woman, when an abuse has gone very hard and it can destroy a life and it can kill, then to some extent, yes.

Like many others who were averse to police or formal intervention as a response to IPV, Michael preferred to overlook the fact that waiting until being certain that the abuse would lead to death may be too late for the victim. I would argue that this was the worst manifestation of patriarchy and male privilege, and the worst form of injustice that society could mete out on women.

The men I talked to had ideas about more socially desirable responses to IPV, although some were a last resort. Dawda (GM, M) said,

You call the elders but most again, when it gets to the last—I've seen couples that have had issues and the wife asked for a divorce, the husband refuses to give a divorce and it goes to the next stage whereby they have to go to a Qadi Court.

The Qadi Court is a legal body that adjudicates social issues based on Sharia (Islamic) Law.

They believed that resources available in the extended family for conflict intermediation should first be exhausted before external resources are called upon. Francis (US, C) explained it:

What I have observed in most marriages, if problem happens in the family normally the [family] elders are called to come and try to resolve the conflict. As they say in the culture the uncles are very powerful and the aunties, they are the ones who normally try to resolve many marital conflicts.

Charles (US, C) supported this idea, arguing that reaching out first to external, formal sources of help was a more practical option for those living in the USA,

For them [Americans] your father and your mother have to be miles away. They don't have this--how to call it--this social living that we are having here, that you can call the uncles from both parties and they can talk to the man.

In communal societies like the Gambia, family elders, including uncles and aunts, play an important role. Ebrima shared a slightly more formal experience within the context of family and community response. "Normally when a marriage is being proposed, there is a sort of guardianship entrusted to someone who the couple can consult," he stated. Elders within the wider community may be assigned the formal role of counsellor at the time a couple got married and would be the first to intervene in the event of conflict or IPV. When the family support network failed to address the problem, only then were the couple or survivor encouraged to seek external support, including religious leaders or elders in the community. "You go either through

the priest or you go to the Imam,” Francis noted. Resources that are available in the extended family and community are believed to provide adequate resources for resolving conflict and IPV to ensure family integrity, cohesion, and protection against stigma. However, this approach tends to ignore or diminish the urgency in a woman’s need for professional care for her health and that of her children.

IPV Prevention. I asked participants what needed to happen for IPV against women to be prevented. Most of them thought that men’s beliefs about IPV and gender equality in The Gambia had started to change. Participants’ ideas about IPV prevention mapped into the different layers of the social ecological model, using primary prevention approaches at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels.

At the individual level, Charles (GM, C) believed that women’s attitudes were changing, saying, “what our mothers used to accept in their homes, my wife will not accept.” The men believed that some of the changes in attitudes to IPV were a result of increased access to education. John stated, “I think now with people’s education and awareness about equality, and your wife how you should live with ideal relationship, it [IPV] has reduced a little bit.” Joseph (US, C) proposed premarital education that would begin with children in school as early as possible, saying, “teaching people that marriage is a beautiful thing, it’s what God made us for.” At the relationship level, men were holding other men accountable. Charles explained, “I am seeing that they [the men] will tell you, you can’t beat my sister.” Musa (US, M) also believed that men holding other men accountable was changing attitudes because “you don’t want to be moving with your colleagues and [for them] to be telling you hey you used to beat your wife.” Learning from his personal experience, Hassan (US, M) proposed men mentoring boys to develop positive attitudes about masculinity and healthy relationship skills, saying,

Mentoring them on how to relate to women and how to respect them because that's something that was super lacking, at least when I was growing up and I had to learn about women from other teenage boys, which was probably not a good idea.

As part of community level prevention, participants pointed to the need for engagement with community elders and religious leaders and faith-based organizations. Hassan (US, M) claimed that in Western countries, Muslim religious leaders are trained as counsellors to provide premarital education, "certain mosques and Imams are trained as counsellors, since it's at the mosque its religious instruction, then they will go for it but that's more common here with western mosques." Michael (GM, C) also believed that faith-based non-profit organizations can play a role by offering Family Life Education to couples,

to ensure that wife and husband live in harmony. We feel that the home is the base for the church and the court—it is where people are made and it is where people are unmade. A good marriage produces good children; good children, good society.

Participants identified several societal levels approaches to preventing IPV. They identified signs of change that were associated with the impact of mass media. Ousman (GM, M) reported that Gambians were watching movies and TV programs that showed, "how couples should be." Hassan (US, M) proposed that criminal justice reform would be a good start.

To be honest, I think it should just be legislated into law. Sometimes you can't let the fate of some people be trusted to other people acting reasonable or kind. But if there's a law that puts you in trouble if you engage in it, I think that's a good way to start.

Hassan's view about criminal justice reform is a shift from the majority of the participants who decried the involvement of law enforcement but acknowledged that legislation was important at some point. Michael (GM, C) believed that even with a law in place to protect

them, women would not make use of it. He said, “there’s even women that will even know that a law is there, they won't even go, they won't even report their husband.” This may be because of the fear of reprisal or backlash as others have argued earlier, or because of women’s acceptance of men’s authority to discipline them as suggested in the literature reported earlier, a problem that is tied to societal norms. Sulayman (US, M) proposed women’s empowerment programs that would help women to be financially independent and be more active in public institutions, “let's empower the women more. Let the women be part of the Gambian fabric in more visible ways than has been in the past.” Overall, the participants I interviewed seemed to share a sense of hope about changes in attitudes and norms that perpetuate IPV, but they admitted more needs to be done.

Acculturation

This sub-theme explores how the men I interviewed described their personal experiences in relation to influences they attributed to their immigrant status (Ali, O’Cathain, & Croot, 2016; Berry, 2005; Chao, Kung, & Yao, 2015; Flood & Pease, 2006). Table 4.1 provides a highlight of the length of residence and spouses’ nationality for participants living in the USA.

Table 4.1 *Length of residence and spouse’s nationality for participants living in the USA.*

Pseudonym	Length of US residence	Spouse’s nationality
Hassan (M)	20 years	Gambian
Francis (C)	20 years	Gambian
Musa (M)	3 years	Gambian
Joseph (C)	15 years	American
Sulayman (M)	21 years	Gambian

I analyzed the quantitative survey data to compare participants’ responses that may suggest influences based on their migration status. A comparison of participants’ responses to the survey

statements presented in Table 2.1, showed that more participants in The Gambia agreed with the statements justifying IPV than US-based participants. Whereas one out of five participants based in the USA (20%) agreed with any of the statements, three of the six Gambia-based participants (50%) agreed that a husband was justified to prevent his wife from working. All the US-based participants (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that the man and woman should share household chores compared with three out of six (50%) of the Gambia-based men. Two of the five US-based participants (40%) agreed or strongly agreed that a man can discipline his wife compared with 80% of Gambia-based participants who strongly agreed.

During the in-depth interviews, four out of the five men resident in the USA believed that living in a western country like the USA, with laws that were enforced to protect women against discrimination and IPV, and having educated women who understood and stood up for their constitutional rights, had a positive influence on their attitudes toward IPV. Sulayman, a USA resident for 21 years, confirmed that his attitudes had changed in the way he viewed his wife as a partner with equal stake in their marriage and did not see any reason why any man would commit IPV. He also informed me that he sent financial assistance to his extended family in The Gambia, a sign that he maintained strong ties with his extended family. Others made similar statements about changes in their beliefs about marriage and IPV that they attributed to their experience living in the USA. Hassan, a resident of the USA for 20 years, explained,

The more I've been in America, the more that I've learned and read and understood and yes, that's basically how my ideas about marriage have also evolved. I'm very comfortable with being married to a woman who I consider to be very strong, very opinionated and I don't expect to be yielded to.

This notion of men in the USA adapting to strong women was echoed by Joseph, a USA resident

for 15+ years, who attributed his attitude change to his American adopted mother, a highly educated woman “she has a PhD and she has a very good job. American women tend to be outspoken because of women’s rights compared to back home where women are more reserved because of the culture and men have more power over women.” Joseph was adopted when he was about 13 years old and described himself as “I am pretty much American, you might as well consider me an American because I’ve lived here most of my adult life. I have Gambian elements, don’t get me wrong, but I can pass for an American any time.” Joseph also informed me that he is married to an African American woman. Francis, a resident in the USA for more than 20 years, also believed that living in a western country could influence attitudes, “I can learn some good parts in the western culture and try to integrate that with what I believe as African.” However, it is possible that length of residence determined how much a migrant embraced his new culture. Musa, a USA resident for 3 years said “Here what I observe about people living with your wife and they will be sharing everything equally, like 50/50. I don’t agree because for me what my religion taught me is the man to take care of his household no matter what.” Only time will tell how or if Musa’s attitude changes after a few more years living in the USA.

Some participants I interviewed in The Gambia also believed that living in a western country had an influence on attitudes about gender and IPV. Michael said, “a little bit of exposure to Western culture, knowing that this one is good, this one I can take, I think this one is good.” Ousman agreed with Michael, saying, “some of the Gambians if they move to Europe or America they will change attitude and their cultures they will never follow.” The Gambian diaspora is clearly a potential asset for social change toward gender justice in The Gambia. However, this will require a sound strategy to effectively mobilize and engage them (Flood & Pease, 2009; Tiemoko, 2004) because some migrants to countries that champion gender equity

continue to practice patriarchal norms that sustain IPV (Berry, 2005; Chao, Kung, & Yao, 2015; Sokoloff, 2008).

DISCUSSION

This study has shown that, with appropriate research design, men participating in qualitative IPV research do provide perceptions and personal experiences that contribute to a deeper understanding of the gender and intimate partner violence. I designed the study to provide an environment that allowed participants to feel safe and uncensored, without shame or guilt (Elseberg & Heise, 2005; Maddox, 2018). This approach has resulted in the rich personal stories and perspectives that have emerged from this study which I hope will contribute to strategies that engage men to transform gender ideologies that rationalize IPV.

The findings of this study responded to the research questions:

- How do married men of Gambian origin conceptualize a healthy marriage?
- How do married men of Gambian origin rationalize IPV in marriage?
- How do views about healthy marriage and IPV differ between married Gambian men residing in The Gambia and those who have migrated to the United States of America (USA)?

I found that the Gambian men I interviewed believe in what they defined as the sanctity of marriage and that religious and socio-cultural factors intersect to shape the way they conceptualized marriage, gender, and IPV. These men also believed that religiosity shapes Gambians' perceptions of marriage and expectations from spouses. The study participants believed that Gambians misinterpret religion to justify women's subordination and IPV. Most of the men believed that migration to a country like the USA that has advanced in gender equity and legal protections against gender discrimination and IPV were likely to have attitudes that

reflect the norms in their host country (Berry, 2016; Flood & Pease). This offers an opportunity for such migrants to contribute to social change in their home countries (Tiemoko, 2004). I will further discuss how these findings explain men's perpetration of IPV against women and propose implications for future work.

The role of religion was evident in the narratives of the interview participants. More than 99% of Gambians identify as either Muslim or Christian (CIA Factbook, n.d). Both Muslim and Christian participants that I interviewed described marriage as a sacred duty and a heterosexual union that is ordained by God. With one exception, they believed that their religion enjoins them to be the heads of and providers for their families, with authority over their wives. They also believed that certain elements of religious precept may be construed as justifying women's subservience and a man's obligation to discipline an erring wife. Researchers have noted that conceptions of gender and marriage tend to acquire additional salience in cultures that have strong religious leanings where adherents resist challenges to the basic tenet of male leadership and patriarchy that most mainstream religions espouse (Bailey, 2016; Chitando, 2012; Khader, 2015; Merry, 2001). In such a context, the division of labor in the home and the relative worth of men and women were believed to be scripted in religious texts and therefore sacrosanct (Khader, 2015; McMorris & Glass, 2018).

Religious and cultural gatekeepers deny that IPV is a problem, portray the family as a private domain, and blame the woman for provoking men's violence. Yet they commend a woman's forbearance as a moral imperative even as they accept men's moral transgressions with impunity (Hajjar, 2004; Khader, 2015; Krause et al, 2015; Memela & Ayogu, 2005; Merry, 2001). Although the men in this study embraced positive attitudes toward gender, they perceived that social norms in The Gambia engender women's subordination and that religion is

manipulated to justify women's low social standing. The men narrated practices that exemplify the blurring of lines between religion and social norms that reflect society's definition of successful ways of being a man, including prolific childbearing and multiple sexual partners. Participants talked about how Islam is believed to support polygyny. Likewise, they said that society turns a blind eye when Muslim and Christian men engage in extramarital affairs although both religions decry adultery (Hajjar, 2004; Mashhour, 2005; McMorris & Glass, 2018). They went on to say that when a marriage remains childless for some time, this is blamed on the woman without any medical evidence, and the man has the right, indeed the social obligation, to marry someone else who can bear children and sustain the family's survival, reflecting social and norms that consider procreation and children as gifts from God (McMorris & Glass). Such manifestations of harmful masculinity, male privilege, and women's inequality as reported by the men in my study permeate social and political institutions, thus entrenching them even more (Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento, 2007; Hajjar, 2004; Merry, 2001).

Women's inequality and subordination to men, and lack of autonomy risks not only their physical health and harm to their children, but also their sexual and reproductive health (Black, 2011; Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, and Shai, 2010; Olorunsaiye, Huber, Laditka, Kulkarni, & Boyd, 2017). Worldwide, only 52% of women are able to make their own decisions about contraceptive use and health care access (UN, 2015). In a nationally representative population-wide survey of women 15 to 49 years old, 41% were in a polygynous union and only 13% of currently married women used contraceptives (UNICEF, 2010). Although HIV prevalence is low in The Gambia, studies indicated that more women than men in polygynous unions were HIV-positive, and married women in polygynous unions were twice as likely to be HIV positive than those in non-polygynous unions (GBOS, 2013). Only 52% of women surveyed believed that they were

justified to refuse sex with their husband if she knows that he has been with another woman. The majority of the study participants believed that a wife was obligated to meet her husband's sexual needs and that a woman cannot use contraceptives without her husband's consent, thereby risking the woman's exposure to sexually transmitted infections and HIV. With the prevalence of polygyny and extramarital affairs in The Gambia, one man exposed to STI can infect more than one woman.

Men's perpetration of IPV thrives in an environment of gender inequality and unhealthy masculinities nurtured by social norms and by religious beliefs, with religion serving as the dominant factor because of its role in scripting acceptable forms of gender behavior, family formation, and childrearing (Bailey, 2016; Hajjar, 2004; McMorris & Glass, 2018; Merry, 2001). Likewise, researchers studying men's perpetration of IPV have hypothesized that IPV is a manifestation of a gender ideology that privileges unhealthy masculinity and supports women's subordination (Barker, Ricardo, Nascimento, 2007; Fulu et al, 2013). Although the Muslim and Christian participants I interviewed rejected the notion that their religion sanctions women's subordination and IPV, scholars of religion have argued that mainstream religions do engender a patriarchal gender ideology with rigid gender role differentiation, male authority to discipline and subjugate women, and women's subservience (Hajjar; Khader, 2015; Mashhour, 2005; McMorris & Glass). The men in my study demonstrated a strong preference for male headship and authority, believed that this tradition should be honored. The majority of them also believed that a husband has the obligation to discipline his wife for failing to meet social expectations.

Religious beliefs and social norms contribute to women's attitude to IPV in ways that are believed to sustain its perpetration by men (Adjei, Arat, 2010; Hajjar, 2004; Khader, 2015; Mashhour, 2005; McMorris & Glass, 2018; Merry, 2001). As shown earlier, religious precepts

that appear to dictate, and social norms that condone men's authority and dominance also expect women's obedience and subordination. Passages in the Quran and the Bible are used as evidence of religious expectations of women's subordination to men. In the midst of adhering to their religious and social obligations to submit and forbear, women use "pious agency" which (Rinaldo, 2014, p. 825) relates to women's deliberate use of religion for diverse ends, including as a protective factor against the adverse consequences of their disadvantage (Fikree, Razzak, & Durocher, 2005; Hardison-Moody, 2010; Hajjar, 2014; Hunting, 2014; McMorris & Glass, 2018; Merry, 2001). In this way, religious piety becomes part of a woman's identity and part of her survival toolbox. The participants in this study suggested that Gambian society measures women's religiosity by the extent of her forbearance and suffering in marriage. Women remain in abusive relationships partly because they keep hoping and praying that the man will change, "*dina taayii*" [he will get tired of it] (Francis, interview participant, 2018; Hardison-Moody, 2011). Women also take solace from their religious piety and active engagement with religious duties either as atonement for their perceived transgressions, or as protective armor and "healing" (Hardison-Moody, 2011, p.3). Women weigh options to leave or stay also by considering the implications on their economic welfare, the wellbeing of their children, and on the social status and honor of their families (Adjei, 2017; Bailey, 2016; Johnson, Ollus, Nevala, 2007; Weitzman, 2000). Women may decide to stay in a controlling and abusive intimate relationship because they may not recognize an act as abuse, may fear victim blaming and revictimization, may lack financial resources to support themselves and their children, may fear the psychological impact of separation on their children, or may be under pressure to keep the family together and protect its privacy—referred to as *sutura* by the participants in this study. Researchers in The Gambia and elsewhere found that more women than men justified IPV based

on their perceptions of social and religious expectations from men and women, power and control dynamics; and their individual circumstances (Chowdhury, Bohara & Horn, 2018; Flynn & Graham, 2010; GBOS, 2013; Hayes & Boyd, 2017; Krause et al, 2015). When asked why they think more women than men justify IPV, the men I interviewed attributed it to women “maybe believe that they did something to deserve it” (Joseph, interview participant, 2018). Others said that women’s justification may be because of their traditional or religious beliefs. Clearly, the perception that religion justifies women’s abuse and subordination, and changing these beliefs will require the engagement of religious leaders.

Defining IPV is an important step in acknowledging its existence, codifying its patterns, facilitating an understanding of its causes and impact, and measuring its prevalence (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015; WHO, 2012). In 2013, The Gambia passed the Domestic Violence Act (Protecting Survivors of Domestic Violence) and The Sexual Offenses Act Criminalizing Sexual Violence (UN Women, 2017). Although this was an important step toward understanding why men commit IPV, the definitions codified in texts did not make a separate distinction of acts committed by intimate partners from other forms of gender-based violence that occur in the home. This open-ended definition complicates monitoring and data analysis to report on prevalence of different forms. The men from The Gambia that I interviewed defined IPV narrowly as wife beating, sometimes adding verbal abuse or quarreling to the definition. Some researchers have argued that African cultures lack the equivalent language for IPV beyond wife beating (Adjei, 2017), which may account for the men in this study defining it narrowly. Narrow definitions of IPV risk preventing victims and perpetrators from recognizing when abuse occurs because they believe it is a normal feature of intimate relationships (Adjei, 2018; Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015; Flood & Pease, 2009). This may lead

victims to treat acts like spousal rape or emotional and psychological violence as normal and fail to report them (Black, 2011; Diemar, 2014; Maddox, 2018). Such narrow meanings also relieve perpetrators from guilt and accountability, and help to sustain their abusive patterns (Adjei; Coates, 2004). Engaging men in IPV qualitative research such as this study helps to educate them about these elements.

The role of migration in informing attitudes and perceptions about social phenomena such as IPV has been widely documented (Berry, 2005; Chao, Kung, & Yao, 2015; Flood & Pease, 2006; Sokoloff, 2008; Tiemoko, 2004). International migration is a common phenomenon in The Gambia and 9% of the Gambian population live mostly in Europe and USA. Migrants maintain close ties with their extended family, communities, and social networks in The Gambia and are an important source of remittances that substantially contribute to mitigating poverty (World Bank, 2018). The Gambian migrants in this study appeared to embrace more positive gender attitudes than the non-migrants. When migrants from cultures that normalize violence move to less violence supporting cultures, some integrate the norms of their adopted home (Berry, 2005; Chao, Kung, & Yao, 2015). Some studies have suggested that Americans may have greater appreciation for gender-equitable norms because of progress in advancing gender equality and laws that protect women against discrimination, a likely explanation for the influence on Gambian men's attitudes (Bartley, Blanton, & Gilliard, 2005; Flood & Pease (2009; Risman, 2018). Using the UNDP GII as a proxy for gender equitable norms in a country, The Gambia was ranked 148th out of 160 countries compared to the USA which ranked 41st (UNDP, 2018). The GII measures inequality between women and men in health, education, and command over economic resources. The group of Gambian migrants in this study and other like-minded

Gambian diaspora serve as a potential asset in the fight to build a gender equitable Gambian society.

It is encouraging to find that the men I interviewed are generally positive about gender equality and recognize that ending IPV against women is a matter of compassion, self-preservation, and survival of families. It will take a lot more men like these to engage in IPV research, be sensitized to the health and justice implications of IPV, and be committed as vanguards in changing norms and challenging religious beliefs that engender such adversity.

Limitations

In this study, men's childhood experiences featured in the interviews as likely predictors of attitudes to gender and IPV. It was not developed and explored as one of the themes, which could be a next phase in this study. This study would have benefitted from a larger representative sample in order to more systematically identify reasons that are perceived by men to be the most important contributors to IPV and to examine the meanings they ascribe to IPV. The smaller sample size was adequate for an exploratory study of this kind that relied more on the richness of the data and the participants' lived experiences shared through the interviews and because it did not aim to generalize the findings to the public. Further research on perceived reasons for IPV also needs to address gender differences in perception. Research with religious leaders is needed to explore their attitudes to IPV and how they interpret and communicate religious texts associated with gender ideology. There are several limitations to this study, one of which is the small sample size. Nevertheless, the small size allowed me to have a deeper understanding of participants' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about gender and IPV. Another limitation is that these participants do not fully represent the diversity of Gambians living in The Gambia and in other parts of the world.

CONCLUSION

Religion and social norms intersected with gender to shape the ways that Gambian men in this study conceptualized marital quality and intimate partner violence. Migration status was a contributing factor as well. The Gambia is making progress in creating awareness about the blight of IPV and its impact in disrupting the social fabric and has developed legal codes that criminalize IPV. This study has contributed to knowledge about how men conceptualize IPV and ways in which men perceive women's justifications and coping mechanisms as sustaining women's subordination and IPV by men. Most IPV against women is perpetrated by men globally. Engaging men in research and prevention of intimate partner violence against women is a sound public health and social justice strategy. As the primary gatekeepers and beneficiaries of the systems that perpetuate social inequity in most societies, men should be accountable and responsible for IPV and be engaged beside women to change social norms and attitudes that legitimize IPV against women. Of most importance in changing these beliefs and attitudes are religious leaders, community elders—men and women—and household heads who make decisions and enforce religious precepts and social norms in ways that have profound impact on women and their families. IPV prevention must appeal to community and family values that are foundational to family wellbeing and religion. IPV prevention must illustrate how gender violence and IPV are risk factors to those values, asserting in effect that, “women's safety is a men's issue” (Diemar, 2014, p.3). Protecting women from intimate partner violence is a matter of basic human rights. It is also a matter of justice and compassion, both virtues that Islam and Christianity consider as divine responsibilities of their believers (Mashhour, 2005).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Recruitment Email

Hello,

My name is Mariama Ashcroft. I am a graduate student in the Department of Agricultural and Human Sciences at North Carolina State University. I am conducting a study as part of the requirements for my degree and would like to invite you to participate. This study is not sponsored or funded, and you will not be paid to participate.

To be eligible to participate, you must be:

Male	Gambian by birth	Live in The Gambia or USA
18 - 64 years old	Married	

I am studying Gambian men's attitudes and beliefs about satisfying, healthy marriage and romantic relationships and the strategies they use to resolve conflict in a romantic relationship. If you decide to participate you will be asked to take part in a phone or face-to-face interview lasting 60 to 90 minutes. In this interview, you will be asked questions about the ideal marriage or romantic relationship, how Gambian men typically communicate, make decisions, and resolve conflict in marriage or romantic relationships. There are also questions that solicit your views about domestic violence against women. This study is approved by the North Carolina State University Institutional Review Board Protocol #12528.

Your participation in the interview will be confidential. If you agree to participate in the study, you will sign a consent form to show that you freely agreed. Your personal identity will not be revealed or linked to any information you share. All study information will be securely stored. Your identity will not be revealed in any report or publication that may result from the study.

Taking part in the study is your decision. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. Your participation is voluntary. You may also quit at any time or decide not to answer any question you may find uncomfortable.

I will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study. You may contact me, Mariama Ashcroft (+1-919-885-9414 or moashcro@ncsu.edu) or my faculty advisor Dr. Annie Hardison-Moody (amhardis@ncsu.edu or +1-919-515-8478) at any time.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the NC State University IRB office via email at irb-director@ncsu.edu or by phone at +1-919-515-4514.

Please reply to this email if you agree to participate. I will send you a consent form to sign before we formally begin the interview.

Thank you for your time.

With kind regards,
Mariama Ashcroft

Appendix B
NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY
INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH
IRB# 12528

Title of Study: Gambian Men's Perceptions and Expectations about Marital Quality

Student Researcher: Mariama Ashcroft

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Annie Hardison-Moody, amhardis@ncsu.edu, +1-919-515-8478

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to participate, to choose not to participate, or to stop participating at any time without penalty. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in the study. Research studies may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher named above.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the attitudes, perceptions and expectations of Gambian men about marriage relationships. The study will attempt to understand Gambian men's perception of an ideal marriage and strategies that married couples employ for communicating, making household decisions, and resolving conflicts. The study will also seek to understand how Gambian men perceive domestic violence against women and men's role in preventing domestic violence.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this study. If you agree to participate, I will interview you for about one and half hours to get your opinion on questions about marriage relationships and how couples resolve conflict in marriage. You may respond with examples but I will not ask about your personal experience specifically. For a few questions, I will ask you if you agree or disagree with certain statements. You may decline to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. You can withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty. With your permission, I will record our voices as we speak during the interview.

Risks and Benefits

There are minimal risks associated with participation in this research. Because the study is about marriage relationships, decision-making and conflicts in marriage, you may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions. I will provide you with a list of sources of information in case you need help. You do not have to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study without any penalty. There are no direct benefits to your participation in the research. Your participation may indirectly result in increasing awareness about Gambian men's attitudes

and expectations about marriage and how Gambian men resolve marital conflict. This may contribute to healthy marriage relationships and building resilient Gambian families and communities.

Confidentiality

Your participation in this study will be confidential. Only the two researchers named above will know that you participated. If someone introduced you to this project, he or she may know that you participated but will not know what you said. The information in the study records will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law. Data will be transcribed and coded. Although I will use some of your words in my thesis report in the form of quotes, I will not identify you by name, where you live, or in any way that you can be identified. No reference will be made in oral or written reports which could personally link you to the study. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you or any individual as being part of this project.

Compensation

You will not receive any compensation for participating in this study.

What if you have questions?

If you have questions at any time about the study itself or the procedures implemented in this study, you may contact the researcher, Mariama Ashcroft by email moashcro@ncsu.edu or phone +1-919-885-9414, or the Faculty Sponsor Dr. Hardison-Moody by email amhardis@ncsu.edu or phone +1-919-515-8478.

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact the NC State IRB office via email at irb-director@ncsu.edu or by phone at +1-919-515-4514.

Consent to Participate

“I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I may be otherwise entitled.”

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's signature _____ Date _____

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

A. Questions about Marriage and Romantic Relationships

1. If married, for how long have you been married? Is your wife Gambian by birth?
2. As a Gambian, can you recall any lessons you learned about marriage relationships while you were growing up? What were the sources of those lessons: family, relatives, religious leaders, community, other?
 - Probe: for example, how a man or a woman should behave in a marriage?
 - Probe: how married couples should relate with one another?
 - Probe: what the role of the wife and the husband should be?
3. How have these lessons or experiences influenced your beliefs about the ideal marriage, wife, and husband?
4. In general, what does marriage mean to you?
5. What, in your opinion, are the benefits of marriage? Are there any disadvantages? If so, what are they?
6. What does a healthy marriage look like to you?
 - Probe: How would you know if someone is in a healthy relationship?
 - Without giving any names, describe a couple you know who have a healthy marriage or romantic relationship
 - Probe: What is unique about them; why do you admire them?
 - Probe: how does this differ in America and Gambia? (*skip if residing in Gambia*)
7. Conversely, what are the characteristics of an unhealthy marriage? Why do you think so?
8. Think of someone you know who is an ideal wife or female partner and describe her qualities, without naming her:
 - Probe: What does she do?
 - Probe: If you were to marry this woman, what would you like her to know how to do?
9. Again, picture someone who you consider an ideal husband or male romantic partner? Describe him to me:
 - Probe: what are his qualities?
 - Probe: how does he behave?
 - Probe: Why do you admire him?
10. What, in your opinion, are some of the factors that can influence the quality of marriage relationship?

11. How have your expectations about marriage relationships and the traits of an ideal wife and husband changed?
- Probe: Since you moved to America? (*skip if residing in Gambia*)
 - Probe: Since your youth to now as a married man?
 - Probe: Why do you think your views have changed?
12. Now, I am going to share a list of statements with you. Please respond to each statement by checking one box next to the statement indicating if you agree, or disagree, or strongly agree, or strongly disagree. (see advance interview form)

B. Questions about Conflict Management and Domestic Violence in Marriage

13. What are some reasons couples might disagree or quarrel?
- Probe: How should couples solve these differences?
14. How do you think couples should make decisions about the big things they might disagree about?
- Probe: For example, how should a couple decide how to spend the household income, who should pay for what?
 - i. Probe: what if only one partner is earning an income, how should spending be decided?
 - Probe: What about engaging in social activities outside the home, how should this be decided?
15. How should they decide about the number and spacing of children?
16. Let's go back to the qualities of the ideal wife. How would your ideal wife behave in situations when major decisions are made?
17. What about those quarrels that do not get resolved? How should the couple deal with those?
- What should the husband do when a conflict is unresolved?
 - What should the wife do?
18. Are you familiar with the Gambian saying that “teeth sometimes bite the tongue?” What does that mean to you? Probe: How would you apply that to marriage?
19. You know that Gambians practice monogamy and polygyny. To what extent does the type of marriage influence the way couples relate with each other and resolve conflict?
20. What other factors may affect conflict resolution in marriage?
- Probe: the type of marriage (polygyny vs monogamy)?
 - Probe: the couple's religious beliefs or affiliation?
 - Probe: the couple's connections with the extended family?
21. There is another saying that is attributed to Africans. It goes like this. “Never marry a woman who has bigger feet than you”. What do you think this means?

- Probe: What does this say about a healthy or ideal marriage?
 - Probe: Does this ring true for you? Why/why not?
22. I want to learn a bit more about the times when couples can't resolve their disagreements. For example, some couples might get violent, or shout or yell. Why do you think that some conflicts become violent?
 - Probe: What might be a reason why some couples fight this way?
 - Probe: Do you think there is ever a reason for this (shouting, violence)?
 23. What does domestic violence mean to you? To what extent do you think domestic violence exists in marriages in general; in Gambian marriages; why?
 24. Does a Gambian couple's religious belief or affiliation influence their attitude to domestic violence in marriage? If so, how?
 25. The Gambia Bureau of Statistics conducted a study in 2013. Men and women were asked if they believed that domestic abuse is justified under any circumstance. The number of women who agreed was almost double the number of men (58% women and 32% men). Why do you think that is the case?
 26. Do you believe that domestic violence can be prevented? If so how, if not why not?
 27. If a woman told you that her husband or intimate partner abused her, what would you do? What should/can you and other Gambian men do to prevent domestic violence against women?
 28. What actions should women take to stop and prevent domestic violence?
 29. If you had the power to make all Gambian marriages happy, what would you do?

Participants' Personal Reflections

30. What question did I miss that you would have asked if you were conducting this study?
31. If there was one thing you would like the world to know about Gambian men, what would that be? Why?
32. If you have any further comments regarding the topic, the interview process, or if you want to share any other information that you think I should know, you are welcome to do so.
33. What did you discover during the interview about your perspectives concerning marriage relationships or domestic violence that you did not realize before?
34. Would you like to receive a copy of the report when it is complete?
35. Before we close, do you have any questions for me?

Appendix D

Gambian Men's Perceptions and Expectations about Marital Quality

North Carolina State University IRB #12528

Advance Survey Questions

1. Demographic Information

For each category, please select the response that best applies to you.

Gambian by birth	Y	N				
Residence	The Gambia	USA				
Education	Advanced Degree	College	High School Diploma	Less than High School		
Married	Y	N				
Age	< 20	20 – 29	30 - 39	40 – 49	50 - 59	60 - 64
Male	Y	N				
Religion	Muslim	Christian	None	Other		

2. Gender Roles in Marriage

Please respond to each statement by checking one box next to the statement indicating if you agree, or disagree, or strongly agree, or strongly disagree.

Roles in a marriage	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. It's a woman's duty to stay in a relationship under all circumstances for the sake of the children				
2. It's the woman's duty to meet her partner's sexual needs.				
3. The man and woman should share the household chores like cleaning, shopping, cooking, etc.				
4. The tradition of the man as head of the family should be honored.				
5. The man and woman should have equal say in making decisions				
6. The man has the power to stop his wife from working outside the home				
7. How a man treats his woman in the privacy of his own home is his own business.				
8. The mother and the father should share responsibility for taking care of their children.				
9. The man has the obligation to discipline his wife to correct her behavior.				

3. In your opinion, what are the reasons a man may have for disciplining his wife or romantic partner? Please select one or more.
- She does not complete the housework to his satisfaction
 - She dresses in a way that displeases him
 - He dislikes her friends
 - She dislikes his friends
 - She takes birth control without his permission
 - She challenges his authority in the home
 - None
4. The following is a list of behaviors that some men use against their intimate partners. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree that the behavior is justifiable by checking one box to indicate that you agree, or disagree, or strongly agree, or strongly disagree.

Behaviors of a husband or male intimate partner	Agree	Disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree
1. Denies his wife or partner access to household money.				
2. Forbids his wife or partner from visiting her family or friends.				
3. Slaps or punches his wife or partner when the meal is late or not prepared to his taste				
4. Insults or humiliates his wife or partner in the presence of others.				
5. Shakes, pulls or pushes his wife or partner.				
6. Refuses to provide food for the family because he is upset at something his wife or partner has done.				
7. Breaks things in the house.				
8. Prevents the wife or partner from working.				
9. Has sexual intercourse with his wife or partner when she may be tired, ill, or not in the mood.				

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.

Appendix E

Gambian Men's Perceptions and Expectations about Marriage Relationships Code Book

CODE 1: GENDER AND MALE HEADSHIP

Definition: Participant's beliefs about gender roles and the importance of male headship in families. Discussions of people or things as related to men/boys/male/masculinity or women/girls/female/femininity; any references to gender expectations or differences. Qualities of the ideal wife, ideal husband

When to use: Use this code for any discussion in which a participant suggests something is related to gender (for example, caregiving roles, family chores, outdoor activities, work opportunities, beliefs) or implies expectations about, or differences or similarities between, boys and girls, males and females, or men and women, including any instances in which males or females are used as a blanket group reflecting gender stereotypes.

Also use this code when analyzing participant's responses to the survey questions on gender roles and discipline.

Do not use this code to refer to children's sex.

Examples:

3S2Y: To me I don't agree with many men, especially those from Gambia because for me what my religion taught me is the man to take care of whatever--to take care of his household no matter what. So when the woman is ready or willing to help it will be out of her own generosity but not necessarily mean that there should be equality or whatever.

9L1V: Its nature, it's just in you, you are just temperamental, you can't just sit down and solve problem--some men have that problem. Some they just like to deal with women violently. I have an uncle I think that's his problem. With men, he has a problem--with men he cannot fight men but anything that has to do with women he will attack you. So, for me that's sickness.

Cross-codes: This code may overlap with RELIGION as a justification for participant's beliefs about gender roles differences. It may also overlap with DOMESTIC VIOLENCE JUSTIFICATION when participant uses gender roles as justification. This code may also overlap with BENEFITS OF MARRIAGE when participant discusses effect of gender expectations on marriage. It may also overlap with RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE when this is based on gender roles or expectations

CODE 2: RELIGION AND RELIGIOSITY

Definition: Participant's conceptualization of religion as shaping and justifying their views about marriage, family, and gender roles. Religion as obligating their actions and attitudes.

Religious beliefs based on Christianity, Islam, and traditional forms of worship such as Animism.

When to use: Use this code when participant indicates that his religion has guided his beliefs about marriage and the role of husband and wife. Use when participant states that his actions and attitudes to marriage are obligated by his religion. Also use this code when participants use religious definitions or precepts to describe or define healthy interpersonal relationships between men and women. Use this code when participant describes his perception about a religious practice or interpretation. Also use this code when participant describes a cultural norm as a religious belief and the role of religious leaders.

Examples:

2P2A: I'll go back to my belief. I've seen going back to biblical times God created man and woman and he says be fruitful. So, in that God is promoting relationship between man and woman. So, I definitely strongly believe in that as well., that since creation that's how God created the world for man and woman to come together and be called husband and wife.

4L1W: Even if you married to somebody and 2, 3 years you don't bear a child, you know in our own religion, we are Muslims, in our tradition, they will start talking and there will be problem.

Cross-code: This code may overlap with BENEFITS OF MARRIAGE, JUSTIFICATION FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE and RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CODE 3: DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Definition: When a participant refers to or describes acts or behaviors that can constitute forms of domestic violence as defined by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization. For example, verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, economic; whether in response to a direct question about domestic violence or as part of a response to a different question. The behavior may have been witnessed by the participant or he may have been a victim. The behavior may represent his personal beliefs or actions he has committed whether or not he recognizes them as marital violence

When to use: Use this code when analyzing participants' response to the Likert-scale question on domestic violence. Also use this code with the interview transcript when participant gives a specific definition to the term or uses a similar concept such as abusive when describing an action or behavior by one or both spouses. Participant's reference to verbal jabs or taunts, deliberate withholding of sexual pleasure, and other non-verbal forms of threatening or controlling behaviors. Also forms of control such as chastisement for bad behavior, restrictions on outside activity, restrictions on access to income and finance. Also use for description of impact of domestic violence.

Examples:

1S2Z: I think it's definitely physical abuse and you could extend it to verbal/emotional abuse, but physical is the most prominent.

11M2U: I think it means basically taking advantage of the other partner. Now, you know, things like threatening the woman, beating the woman, not letting the women to develop herself. It's like you don't want her to work, you don't want her to improve her skills level. you just want her to be your prize possession and to be kept at your house or palace. For me that's how I see domestic violence, and of course the threat of force whether overtly or covertly.

Cross-code: This code may overlap with CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE and RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

CODE 4: JUSTIFICATION FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Definition: Reasons given by participant to explain or justify domestic violence, or to refute justifications for domestic violence. Events that trigger or cause marital violence.

When to use: Use to code participant's description of reasons given by friends, society, or based on his ideas tries to explain why domestic violence occurs. Also use when participant is describing incidents of domestic violence that he has witnessed and how/why he thinks that happened.

Examples

5A1X: So things went on for a pretty long time I would just let it go but it gets to a certain point when, it gets to a certain limit, especially when you are being confronted by someone who is hitting you, shouting at you but still you are being pulled back. So, you try to control yourself but it only gets to a point whereby you can't control yourself. what I would say is that you pray that somebody is there to hold you, stop you. because you've done all you can. like I said I'm totally against violence against women but it could be pushed, at times it could be pushed.

7B1W: I've seen my father beat my mother truly speaking, several times, several times. But to some extent, it does not bring bitterness between them They are good friends, sometimes my father he drinks and gets drunk, and then, you know—he does those things. Sometimes he is sober and regrets it.

Cross-code: This code may overlap with RELIGION when proposed as a justification or to refute its use to justify domestic violence. The code may also overlap with GENDER/MALE HEADSHIP when gender roles are used to justify domestic violence, and with GOOD MARRIAGE when marital quality is a descriptor for domestic violence.

CODE 5: RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Definition: Participant's descriptions of ways that couples, families, and communities respond to conflict and domestic violence. Participants ideas and proposals about prevention measures that they believe can work or those they believe will not work. Reasons, if any, for proposing or opposing those prevention approaches. Reasons given by participants why domestic violence is not or should not be disclosed.

When to use: Use this code when participants suggest approaches to preventing domestic violence and why they believe those approaches would work. Use this code when participants describe ways to deescalate conflict and follow up interventions by “third party” or other outsiders. Also use this code for participant’s attitude to law enforcement involvement in domestic violence prevention.

Examples:

Interviewer: So parents basically modeling the good behavior?

10D2E: Exactly. It always starts from the home. Unfortunate but what we see is what we do even when we don't want to do it. We see ourselves falling into the same trap as our parents. That’s why they talk about these generational curses. It’s really not a curse, it’s just habits; until those habits change, we can't expect any transformational change to happen within our society. Because everything starts with the home--it starts in the home and then bleeds into society.

6L1C: “You don’t have to do that [call the police]. No matter what your husband do to you, you don’t have to expose it outside. It will be like you have reduced your husband to a loaf of bread if I can say

Cross code: This code may overlap with CONFLICT IN MARRIAGE when participant describes approaches to resolving or deescalating conflict. It may also overlap with RELIGION AND RELIGIOSITY when participant alludes to a response that is influenced by religious belief or decree. This code may also overlap with GENDER when a response implies certain gender norms or expectations
