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Abstract

As engaging men in gender-based violence (GBV) prevention efforts becomes an increasingly institutionalized component of gender equity work globally, clarity is needed about the strategies that best initiate male-identified individuals' involvement in these efforts. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived relevance and effectiveness of men's engagement strategies from the perspective of men around the world who have organized or attended GBV prevention events. Participants responded to an online survey (available in English, French and Spanish) and rated the effectiveness of 15 discrete engagement strategies derived from earlier qualitative work. Participants also provided suggestions regarding strategies in open-ended comments. Listed strategies cut across the social ecological spectrum and represented both venues in which to reach men, and the content of violence prevention messaging. Results suggest that all strategies, on average, were perceived as effective across regions of the world, with strategies that tailor messaging to topics of particular concern to men (such as fatherhood and healthy relationships) rated most highly. Open-ended comments also surfaced tensions, particularly related to the role of a gender analysis in initial men's engagement efforts. Findings suggest the promise of cross-regional adaptation and information sharing regarding successful approaches to initiating men's anti-violence involvement.

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Proactively engaging men and boys is emerging as a core component of global efforts to prevent gender-based violence (GBV), and encompasses a spectrum of goals inclusive of encouraging men's attendance at prevention events, increasing men's uptake of gender-equitable attitudes and behaviour, and fostering gender justice activism among men. The rapid proliferation of men's engagement programs in recent years has been accompanied by innovation and a diversification of the strategies implemented to reach men. These strategies have come to embody, for example, curricula implemented in schools and organizations, community-based action and awareness events, and a general push to reframe men and boys as a part of the solution to the problem of violence against women (Messner, Greenberg, and Peretz, 2015). Over time, the focus of many programs has broadened from simply preventing GBV to engaging men more holistically in conversations about feminism and gender equity (Jewkes, Flood, and Lang, 2015). As these programmatic approaches mature, evidence is surfacing regarding their effectiveness at changing men's gender and violence-related attitudes and behaviours (Barker, Ricardo and Nascimento, 2007; Dworkin, Fleming, and Colvin, 2015).

In a review of gender transformative approaches to engage men, Casey et al. (2016) argue that while many of the prevention and engagement strategies embedded across these myriad programs are interrelated, they can, and should, also be analyzed distinctly according to the goal, or 'phase' of efforts to partner with men. More specifically, some strategies used to initially interest men in violence prevention events may be unique to or differentially effective at this early stage of engagement. Pinpointing the approaches that best invite men into conversations about gender equity and GBV prevention is important, as this holds promise for reaching larger

circles of men. Evidence regarding effective initial engagement strategies is relatively young, however, and there is limited evidence regarding the cross-regional relevance of various strategies. This exploratory study, therefore examines the salience and perceived effectiveness of strategies for initially engaging men in GBV prevention, from the perspective of men around the world who have attended prevention events or are doing GBV prevention-related work.

Strategies for engaging men in GBV across global regions

Emerging and largely qualitative research across regions of the world hints at approaches that hold promise for inviting wider circles of men to participate in reducing violence and gender inequity. On an individual level, for example, male participants in a GBV and HIV prevention program in South Africa (Kalichman et al., 2009), and adolescent boys participating in gender equity work in Canada (Coulter, 2008) were successfully recruited, in part, through their own social networks and via personalized invitations from or relationships with participating family members, friends, or mentors. On a broader scale, other programs have leveraged community-based events, theater, or media to introduce prevention messages. In a survey of 27 representatives of violence prevention organizations around the world, Carlson et al. (2015), found that many programs situated their recruitment within context-specific and culturally relevant community events to disseminate engagement messaging. These could include approaches such as the global White Ribbon campaign (Kaufman, 2001) which uses community-specific mobilization to encourage men to pledge to end violence, or the ‘Through our Eyes’ project which used community-informed violence-related videos to disseminate prevention messaging in regions of Africa and Asia (Gurman et al., 2014). Other strategies focus on the content of the appeal to men as opposed to the venue. For example, male anti-violence allies in the U.S. (Casey, 2010) and globally (Carlson et al., 2015) report that inviting men into

conversations about topics perceived as highly relevant and compelling (such as fatherhood or relationships) is an effective way to garner initial participation in programming that can eventually include GBV prevention concepts.

The aforementioned strategies variously reach men individually, through their social networks and relationships with family and peers, through organizations, policy and media, and through the strategic messaging they leverage. Nearly absent from previous research, however, is evidence regarding both the relative effectiveness of strategies across this spectrum of initial engagement approaches, and whether there are regional differences in the salience of each strategy. One recent study of men involved in GBV prevention around the world found few cross-regional differences in the types of anti-violence *activities* those individual participants engaged in (Tolman et al., 2016). Additionally, the descriptive literature regarding men's engagement strategies implemented around the world is replete with diverse recruitment approaches that cut across individual and community-level approaches (see for example, Ruxton, 2004). Collectively, this suggests that there is likely tremendous opportunity for cross-regional adaptation and learning regarding innovative ways to reach out to previously unengaged men – capitalizing on this promise requires additional work to understand the relative salience of these strategies across regions.

It is also important to note that many men's engagement strategies aimed at initial recruitment may also be used in 'later' stages of on-going interventions aimed at attitude and behaviour change. For example, across regions, GBV prevention programs use peer to peer discussion groups, role modelling by mentors, and situating GBV prevention content within larger discussions about family and sexual health to support violence-preventative behaviour and beliefs among male participants (see for review, Barker et al., 2007). While similar approaches

may play out in different stages of men's anti-violence engagement, it is important to assess their particular relevance at each of those stages, as well as differential relevance to each stage across regional contexts.

Finally, the expansion of a focus on engaging men and boys within larger GBV prevention efforts has not come without tensions and some critical analysis from the feminist movement that has traditionally led efforts to end GBV. The need to invite men into GBV prevention conversations in ways that are inviting and positive can sometimes result in forefronting initial engagement strategies that downplay the role of gender in violence, that focus first on issues of higher importance to men, or that center the ways that patriarchy harms men though rigid notions of masculinity. While potentially effective at getting men in the conversation, these approaches have been criticized for eliding men's role in perpetuating GBV, and re-centering the concerns of men (see for review, Flood, 2015). It remains unclear whether some of these strategies are effective at actually initiating men's participation, and how they are perceived by GBV prevention practitioners and participants around the world.

Summary and purpose of the study

There is a growing descriptive knowledge base regarding the strategies being employed around the world to increase men's interest in GBV prevention. The degree to which different engagement approaches are relevant and perceived as effective across regions of the world is unclear. This exploratory study aims to add to the cross-regional understanding of strategies to engage men in GBV prevention by assessing the perceptions of men who participate in or sponsor GBV prevention work regarding the relative effectiveness of several approaches to reaching out to men. Specifically, we drew from previous qualitative research to identify 15 potential strategies that encompass both individual and community-level approaches, as well as

venue-based and messaging-based strategies in service of three aims; 1) to assess the perceived relevance and relative effectiveness of these strategies for successfully recruiting men into violence prevention events or work, 2) to describe differences in perceived effectiveness across regions of the globe, and 3) to solicit additional strategies used by men in the sample to engage other men. We focus on examining the salience of these strategies to the initial recruitment phase of men's engagement but acknowledge their potential importance to other stages of GBV prevention programming.

Methods

Procedures

Data for these analyses come from a larger project examining the nature and content of prevention events aimed at engaging men in GBV prevention around the world. Male-identified individuals over 18 who had attended any GBV event in the past year were eligible to take an online, anonymous survey available in English, Spanish, and French. For parsimony we refer to our sample as 'men' throughout this paper. Participants were invited via email and postings on several violence and prevention-related email list-serves. Emails advertising the project were also distributed to violence prevention and intervention programs globally, located through web-based searches targeting every region of the world. Organizations with publicly accessible contact information were sent invitation emails (in English, Spanish and French) two times each, detailing the survey, inviting participation, and requesting that the invitation be forwarded to other potential participants. A small number of participants (19) were recruited through two organizations that used the survey to evaluate their own prevention events; these specific events occurred in the U.S., and Sweden.

Measures

Survey development drew from qualitative studies by the research team regarding effective strategies for the initial recruitment and engagement of men into GBV prevention events and work (authors, blinded for review). Measures were also informed by consultation with the project's global advisory board and with practitioners and activists currently working to engage men in prevention efforts. The survey was developed in English and translated into French and Spanish. French and Spanish versions of the survey were both back-translated into English and examined by native speakers in each of these languages prior to survey dissemination to enhance accuracy, readability, and cross-language consistency regarding the meanings of terminology. The survey was pre-tested with approximately 20 respondents and revised for content clarity prior to full dissemination.

Strategies for engaging men in violence prevention. The research team drew from two previous qualitative projects to develop a 15-item index of possible strategies for encouraging the initial participation of men in GBV events or programming. The first study examined the perceptions of North American male anti-violence allies and the second focused on anti-violence organizational representatives from across global regions regarding approaches they have used or view as promising for inviting other men to become involved in ending GBV (citations blinded for review). Each strategy assessed in the current study was identified as a useful initial engagement tool in at least one prior study by the team. Items ranged from relational strategies such as 'individual invitations to a prevention activity from male family/friend' to broader community strategies such as 'community theater or artwork events.' The items also included a mix of more concrete avenues for reaching men, such as 'an event in men's workplace or place that is a part of their daily routine,' as well as strategies focused on the content of outreach messaging, such as 'starting the conversation with a discussion of healthy masculinity.'

Participants were asked, 'we are interested in hearing about good ways to get men interested in the issue of violence against women. How effective do you think the following strategies are at reaching out to other men and encouraging them to learn more about violence against women?' Respondents rated the perceived effectiveness of each strategy for successfully sparking other men's participation in violence prevention on a scale from 1 (not at all effective) to 5 (extremely effective). Participants were also provided with an open-ended space that asked, 'If you have other ideas for effective strategies that are not listed above, please write them below.' Responses provided in Spanish were professionally translated into English; no substantive responses were received in French.

Demographics. Participants were asked to indicate their age in years; response options extended to 65, and were capped at 'over 65' to accommodate an unwieldy drop-down menu for this item. We used the United Nations (UN) list of countries from which respondents could indicate their country of residence. UN-derived regions were then used to group countries into larger geographic regions (UN, 2013). Participants were also asked to indicate (yes/no) whether they were currently working or volunteering for an organization that addresses violence.

Analysis Approach

Quantitative analyses were performed using SPSS v. 22. We used ANOVA to examine regional differences in endorsement of each strategy, and followed with post-hoc pairwise comparisons for each region, using the Bonnferoni-Dunn correction for multiple comparisons within each analysis. In addition to these statistical tests, we present the rank for items within region. Using this method, we can call attention to when mean differences among regions do or do not reflect a different priority for that item within region. We also used ANOVA to test for

differences in perceived effectiveness between respondents who work or volunteer for violence prevention organizations, and those who do not have formal involvement in an organization.

Open-ended responses regarding additional engagement strategies were coded thematically using a two-stage approach. Strategies captured in the quantitative index described above were used as initial sensitizing concepts, with new strategies identified inductively via line by line coding of each response. In the first phase, all open-ended responses were coded by one member of the research team, who created a codebook consisting of both new strategies identified inductively, and existing strategies from the quantitative index that were reinforced or elaborated upon in the open-ended comments. Two members of the research team then reviewed the open-ended comments using the initial codebook, with areas of agreement and disjuncture noted. Final resolution of the codebook was reached via research team discussion.

Results

Sample

The final sample for the analysis described here consisted of 346 individuals. Although a total of 744 people consented to the survey, and 471 continued into the screening portion of the survey, only 351 individuals answered the items regarding engagement strategies *and* country of origin. Additionally, 5 respondents from Oceania were not included in this analysis because the small representation of this region created severe statistical power limitations on cross-regional comparisons. The final group of 346 participants ranged in age from 18 to ‘over 65’ (m=41.9, sd=13.6). Regional representation was as follows; 8.7% of participants were from Africa (from a total of 15 countries), 6.1% from Asia (from 9 countries), 11.5% from Europe (from 12 countries), 16.8 % from Latin America and the Caribbean (from 16 countries), and 57.0% from North America. Approximately 89% of North American respondents were from the U.S. Thus,

with the exception of the US and Canada, most individual countries were represented by five or less respondents. The vast majority of respondents took the survey in English (77%), followed by Spanish (20%), and French (3%). The average length of anti-violence involvement among participants was 7.7 years (s.d.=6.6), with a range of less than one year to over 21 years.

Approximately 84% of respondents were employed or volunteered at a violence-related organization. Proportions of participants who work or volunteer differed by region (χ^2 =12.87, p=.012, df=4), with 100% of participants in Asia, 96.8% in Africa, 92.7% in Europe, 81.7% in Latin America, and 80.3% in North America reporting that they are formally connected to a violence prevention program. In pairwise comparisons, North America and Latin America had significantly fewer men volunteering or working in GBV organizations than did Asia or Africa.

Perceived Effectiveness of Strategies to Engage Men in GBV Prevention

Table 1 displays the perceived effectiveness of each outreach strategy presented by region and for the total sample. The top number in each cell represents the relative ranking of each strategy from most to least effective (1st through 15th) within each region, and averaged across the sample as a whole. The bottom number in each cell represents the mean score on the effectiveness scale, with significant differences across regions represented with superscripts. Both of these approaches to reporting results are included because of the disproportionate effect of North American respondents on the average effectiveness score; ranked strategies give equal weight to each region in determining the overall ordering of engagement strategies in terms of perceived effectiveness. Below, we first summarize findings regarding the overall and relative effectiveness of the 15 engagement strategies, with qualitative findings interspersed to add nuance and depth to understanding respondents' perceptions of each engagement strategy. We then summarize regional differences in perceived effectiveness. [Table 1 about here.]

Mean perceived effectiveness scores across all 15 engagement strategies ranged from 3.20 to 3.86, or between 'somewhat effective' and 'very effective' in the full sample. Only three strategies received an average score below 3.0 ('somewhat effective') in at least one region – these were community theater/artwork events and pledge events (North America), and faith-based events (Europe). In contrast, eleven strategies received a mean effectiveness at or above 4.0 (between 'very effective' and 'extremely effective') in at least one region – including both faith-based events (Africa) and community theater and artwork events (Africa and Asia). Collectively, this suggests that all strategies were viewed as at least somewhat relevant and effective in most regions of the world.

Across the full sample, five strategies surfaced as relatively more effective, taking into account both rankings and mean effectiveness scores. These included leveraging men's discussion or support groups, individual invitations into participation from male family members or friends, and three approaches to messaging: initiating conversations with men through the topics of 1) healthy relationships, 2) fatherhood, and 3) healthy masculinity. These more highly ranked strategies share the characteristics of embodying more individual and social network-level approaches, and of leveraging and fostering individual relationships between men around topics of importance to them.

Several of the responses to the open-ended question regarding additional approaches were interpreted by the research team as elaborating on these five strategies, often combining aspects of more than one strategy. For example, one participant in the Philippines suggested a 'peer education program among fathers and soon to be fathers' as an effective engagement avenue, and another in Chile suggested creating 'groups that link masculinity to other social struggles.' Another participant from the U.S. highlighted the importance of tying any

conversation about violence into topics that men are invested in, suggesting, ‘'Tie the issue into what they already care about, e.g. turn a workshop ostensibly about gun safety into a workshop about parenting.’ Another participant from the U.S. synthesized many of these highly ranked strategies, adding the element of an explicit focus on engaging men as ‘part of the solution:’

> The idea is to include men as part of the solution - and to have safe spaces in which men [examine] the various layers of masculinity and how that relates to gender and sexual violence. Most of the time, workshops talk at men rather than bringing them into the conversations. We see the value of consciousness-raising groups for women, yet we don't work on providing men with such spaces to share common experiences about their own navigation through masculinity and how that can affect women negatively. Except - I'd promote such events with better names than ‘consciousness raising,’ because such a name wouldn't attract any man to it.

Finally, another participant from Canada highlighted the promise of leveraging social networks, and existing relationships between men to engage individual men in the service of larger social norm change:

> It has been proven time and time again that social networks (the real ones, not computer programs) are the most effective way to address these issues. If a peer group no longer accepts a behaviour that is the way to reach people. Recruiting men to stop violence is all about reaching motivated men who will talk to family and friends - especially males - about stopping violence. Men who are willing to intervene and call out men who engage in inappropriate behaviours. Change will happen one person at a time.

Across the sample as a whole, four strategies emerged as relatively less effective than others (although mean effectiveness scores for these approaches still ranged from 3.20 to 3.27, or around ‘somewhat effective’). These were largely community-based or community-awareness strategies, including religious or faith-based community events, anti-violence pledge events, large community events, fairs or marches, and finally, social media strategies such as leveraging Facebook. While the lower rankings of these strategies were relatively universal, it should be noted that ‘religious or faith-based community events’ was ranked as third most effective by

African respondents. Fewer of the open-ended comments were interpreted by the research team as elaborating on these four strategies. One participant in Zambia noted the potential effectiveness of pairing local media with other strategies: 'Use of Community-based radio stations like [local radio station] in our community in conjunction with community or village outreach programs and sponsored radio programs focusing on the same.' Another participant in the U.S. hinted at a critique of broader, awareness-based approaches noting the need for 'more proactive action steps. Things that men can do besides signing pledges, going on marches, and having conversation are essential.'

Comparisons by Employment or Volunteering for GBV Prevention Organizations

We examined whether there were differences in endorsement of strategies based on how men were involved in GBV prevention efforts. Seven of the strategies were endorsed significantly more by men who worked or volunteered in organizations (W) than by men who did not (NW). These include community theater or artwork events (mNW=2.71, s.d. =1.1.2; mW=3.36, s.d.=1.17; F=14.84, p=.000), encouragement from a female family member or friend (mNW= 3.42, s.d. =1.07; mW=3.70, s.d. =.93; F=4.18 p=.042), celebrity endorsements (mNW=2.98, s.d.= 1.15; mW=3.43, s.d.=1.09; F=7.76,p=.006), an event or meeting in their work place or place that is part of their daily routine (mNW=3.42, s.d.=1.05; mW=3.71, s.d.=.92; F=4.59, p=.003), starting the conversation with a discussion of fatherhood (mNW=3.37; s.d.=1.12; mW=3.71; .97; F=5.32, p=.022), events that ask men to take an anti-violence pledge (mNW=2.91; s.d.=1.22; mW=3.21, s.d. =1.16; F=4.58, p=.033), men's discussion or support groups (mNW=3.44, s.d.=1.12; mW=3.79, s.d.=1.12; mW= 3.79, s.d.=.99; F=5.53, p=.019). Notably, two strategies fell below the rating of 'somewhat effective' for the non-

employees/volunteers; community theater or arts events (m=2.7) and pledge-based events (m=2.9).

Regional comparisons of strategy effectiveness.

North American respondents consistently rated most strategies lower on the effectiveness scale than did participants from other regions, particularly Africa and Asia. For example, although 'an individual invitation to a prevention activity from a male family member or friend' was the top-ranked strategy in North America, its effectiveness score there (3.83) was not significantly different from the mean score for this strategy among respondents from Asia (3.67), although Asian respondents ranked this approach 14th. While strategy by strategy differences in effectiveness ratings across region are detailed in Table 1, we rely primarily on relative the overall *ranking* of strategies within regions to examine regional similarities and differences here. In general, participants in Asia and Africa had more optimism about the potential success of community-based or larger macro-level engagement strategies such as media campaigns, community theater or artwork events, and on-going TV or radio programs about violence than did respondents from North America. In contrast, recruitment strategies involving individualized invitations from either male or female family members or friends were ranked as the two most effective strategies in North America, but no higher than eighth among respondents from Africa or Asia. Men's discussion or support groups were highly endorsed across all regions of the world except North America, which ranked this approach seventh out of 15. Some of these findings may be attributable to the higher proportion of participants in Africa and Asia who volunteer for or are employed by GBV-related organizations. Still, several areas of agreement across regions surfaced. Generally, social media/technology approaches, pledge-based events, and celebrity endorsements were seen as relatively less effective strategies across regions, while starting

engagement efforts with conversations about healthy relationships or healthy masculinity were highly ranked globally.

Additional strategies surfaced in open-ended responses

Eighty-four respondents answered the open-ended question eliciting additional strategies not represented among the quantitative items. Of these, 45 responses offered content regarding new strategies, while the remainder were interpreted as elaborating on strategies reflected in the quantitative items, or did not contain enough information to analyze (for example, very short responses such as 'messaging' or 'road shows'). Across comments suggesting additional strategies, we identified four main themes. These themes represented a mix of tangible avenues for reaching men versus ways of thinking about the messaging inherent in starting discussions with men. The first two of these embody the former: engaging youth and schools, and engaging men and boys through sports. First, starting earlier and situating engagement efforts in *schools or other youth-oriented spaces* was the most commonly mentioned additional strategy. Comments from 16 participants reflected some variation of this theme, encapsulated in the following suggestion from one U.S. participant: 'Working with young boys in elementary and middle schools -- changing norms early on!!!' Another respondent in Mexico paired a focus on youth with messaging about broadening notions of gender norms and responsibilities through role modelling and leveraging schools:

> To improve everyday behavior and set an example of fair behavior in the family when doing domestic chores without sex distinctions, encouraging to offer testimony at parents meetings in the schools where our sons and daughters study. To learn to set an example of another way of being a man, use the time fairly, learn to look after children, the sick, and the elderly.

An additional seven respondents suggested explicitly reaching out to men and boys through their participation in *sports* or presence at sporting events. These responses were not, as a whole, long

or elaborate – most of these participants briefly noted the importance of sports, as in the following two responses, 'engaging men and boys through sports' (Canada), and 'use of sports events like indoor games'(Uganda).

In contrast to the more concrete venues for reaching men and boys, several respondents used the open-ended question as an opportunity to comment on messaging within outreach efforts. The prominent theme emerging from these responses centered on the perceived efficacy of engaging men in conversations about their own trauma, experiences of discrimination, or struggles with limitations created by traditional notions of masculinity. We termed this a '*men-first*' strategy, because the range of ways that participants wrote about this approach suggested their belief in the efficacy of first focusing on men's own experiences of violence, gender, and marginalization as a way to then connect them to GBV work or prevention. This theme emerged almost exclusively from North American respondents (the lone exception was in Europe). For example, one Canadian respondent elaborated on the importance of helping men to make links between the ways that notions of masculinity are connected to violence and oppression, and can be oppressive and limiting for men themselves:

> The most effective approach is to address the powerlessness men feel before they might become violent. It really is not a woman's issue, it is a men's issue. Until men see that they are oppressed in our society as well as women they will not become curious enough to explore the consequences of that oppression.

Similarly, another commenter in the U.S. suggested starting with men's experiences of abuse or oppression, and identifying the benefits of ending violence for all genders, noting, 'Focus on men's experiences of violence both as children and as adults, which will diminish the 'us' and 'them' feeling and highlight the relevance of anti-violence work for men's health and well-being as well as for women's.' Finally, another U.S. participant took more pointed exception to the

notion of identifying engagement strategies specifically for men, specifically in the context of GBV, and suggested that this erases men's experiences of victimization:

> Events that are broader then violence against women, but that are focused on all violence in relationships. This approach takes the demonization of men out of the equation and allows more men to come into the conversation. This make it easier for men to fully commit to ending violence in relationships because they do not feel as though they have to deny the reality they may have experienced or witnessed when women may have been abusive or men have been victims.

Reflected in this comment is a sentiment expressed by a handful of participants that the focus on gender in conceptualizing both violence prevention and participant recruitment is inappropriate, exclusionary, or ineffective.

Finally, a handful of participants responded to the open-ended prompt with suggestions about *macro-level considerations*. For the most part, these comments did not delineate specific initial recruitment strategies for men and boys, but suggested a focus on larger community, structural, or policy levels. These comments hinted at institutionalizing both prevention and a focus on engaging men and boys through enhanced community awareness, and policy and national-level strategies. 'Introduce a policy or strategy into the agencies of government that would be included in all the services provided by the ministries,' noted one Nicaraguan participant, while a respondent in Spain advocated for more centralized national efforts coupled with increased support of existing efforts and networks that engage men, 'Design of national strategies focused on men to prevent violence, [and] support pro-feminist men's networks when developing awareness-raising activities.' Two other participants promoted community mobilization as a broader engagement and prevention strategy: a participant in Pakistan suggested the 'village-based formation of groups, then develop network at district level for… rights and legal support,' and a U.S.-based participant endorsed 'building a movement for mass mobilization and activism like with [activist group].'

Discussion

The aims of this study were to elicit male antiviolence allies' perceptions of both the degree and the relative effectiveness of 15 discrete strategies for recruiting and initially engaging male-identified individuals into GBV prevention events and work. Across the board, participants in the sample were optimistic about the promise of these strategies, which included a combination of specific avenues for reaching men and approaches to tailoring engagement messaging. While all of the strategies were perceived as at least 'somewhat effective,' some differences in their relative perceived effectiveness and across regions emerged. Survey participants also offered suggestions for additional strategies beyond those quantitatively measured. Below, we examine the implications of these findings for the practice of and research regarding attracting larger numbers of men and boys into GBV prevention.

Effective engagement strategies: Spanning individual and community-level approaches

Although all of the initial engagement strategies included in this survey were rated positively in most regions, some patterns emerged with respect to their relative perceived effectiveness. Higher-ranked strategies across regions tended to be those that were explicitly about messaging, or the ways that the topic of GBV is framed for previously unengaged men. Three of the most highly rated strategies centered on initiating conversations through the lens of topics important to men (in our sample these topics included relationships, fatherhood, and healthy masculinity). This suggests that for many survey participants, strategically tailoring the conversation used to reach out to individual men is of greater concern than the specific forums or venues in which that conversation happens. At the same time, other highly rated strategies included leveraging or holding men's discussion groups and individualized invitations to engage from other males – both personal and social network-based strategies that reinforce the notion of

more tailored, individualized, and relationship-based approaches to making an appeal for men's participation. Open-ended comments reinforced the utility of seeing these not as distinct, separate strategies, but as complimentary ones – participant remarks suggested the importance of engagement strategies that start with topics of importance to men, in supportive 'male' spaces, or through existing male networks and relationships.

In contrast, from a global view, more community-wide venues and macro-level strategies seemed to hold somewhat less appeal, although they were still rated positively. It may be that, on their own, strategies such as large community or pledge events or media campaigns are experienced as less useful for sparking an emotional connection to the issue of GBV among men than more personalized, individualized approaches. Previous research also underscores the importance of multiple and overlapping engagement opportunities across levels of men's social ecology (Pease, 2008); successful entrée into anti-violence work may require individualized outreach that is reinforced by events and messaging within men's social environment.

Regional differences in perceptions of effective strategies

Although all strategies included in the survey were received by participants as relevant across regions, participants in Asia and Africa were more optimistic about community-level engagement strategies such as media or arts/theater events than were participants in North America. Given the tremendous diversity of countries included within broad regions, it is unclear exactly what these differences might mean; we offer some speculations for consideration here. It may be that community-level events and mobilizing are more culturally relevant avenues for social change work in some national contexts, or that there is longer-standing expertise in some regions around effectively promoting engagement through these kinds of venues. Previous work has found, for example, that community marches, mobilizing, and protests are particularly

culturally and historically familiar forms of political engagement in some regions of South Asia and Africa, rendering these strategies useful and recognizable means of introducing prevention messaging (Casey et al., 2013). These strategies may also be more relevant in geographic areas with greater cultural, ethnic, or socioeconomic homogeneity, and in which most community members are likely to see themselves reflected in events and those who organize them. The individualistic cultural reputation of and social norms within North America, by contrast (and particularly the U.S.), may be related to community-oriented strategies being perceived by men in this region as less effective and perhaps as too impersonal for sparking an anti-violence consciousness.

Alternatively, findings may be attributable to the greater proportion of African and Asian respondents who work or volunteer in prevention organizations, and who may have more direct experience with these strategies' successful implementation. Participants who were not formally engaged in an anti-violence organization (and who were largely from North America), were less enamored with community-based approaches. At a minimum, the fact that different strategies were perceived as holding somewhat divergent levels of promise across regions underscores the importance of both context-specific and locally relevant strategies for reaching out to men *as well as* cross-regional fertilization and learning about what might be exported across regions in effective ways. Here, it is worth underscoring the several strategies that were universally highly regarded across regions, including engaging men through conversations about fatherhood, healthy relationships, and healthy masculinities.

How much 'gender' in GBV prevention engagement strategies?

Another regional difference emerged exclusively from the open-ended comments. The participants who suggested engaging men through conversations about the ways that violence

and conceptualizations of masculinity negatively impact men (or who suggested removing attention to gender altogether), were almost exclusively from North America. These comments surface a tension that pervades conversations regarding efforts to engage male-identified individuals in GBV-related work. On the one hand, evidence suggests that men are best engaged when they make a personal connection to the issue of violence, such as through the strategies tested here related to starting conversations with the topics of fatherhood or relationships or by helping men make linkages between personal experiences of victimization and the violence that women experience (Messner et al., 2015). Some activists and scholars have noted the importance of 'starting where men are,' and tailoring messaging to the 'stage' of readiness for engagement (e.g. Funk, 2006), which may also entail starting conversations that focus on men's personal experiences and concerns. Yet, engagement approaches that center on men's own experiences of victimization or powerlessness, or that leverage notions of traditional masculinity to appeal to men have also been criticized for their potential to downplay the greater prevalence and impact of GBV on women, and to reify gender inequities by continuing to center men's concerns (e.g., Fleming, Less and Dworkin, 2014; Jewkes et al., 2015).

In particular, it is important to assess the costs and benefits of foregrounding explicit conversations about gender specifically in initial recruitment efforts. To our knowledge, almost no research has examined the impact of pro-feminist messaging in initial anti-violence outreach on men's willingness to engage. One exception comes from a study of the Young Men Initiative, a program promoting healthy masculinities among adolescents in Balkan nations (Namy et al., 2015). Although largely successful at leveraging mentorship, social network support, and other strategies for deeply engaging young men, some boys in these groups noted that the initial advertising of the program as related to 'masculinity' was off-putting to them, and activated

homophobic attitudes. Along different lines, intersectional analyses surface the reality that globally, many men experience marginalization based on race, class, sexuality and other social locators, and omitting the personal ways that some men experience forms of oppression in efforts to focus exclusively on GBV is potentially exclusionary and ineffective (Ratele, 2015). These various ways of understanding men's reactions to recruitment efforts that are explicitly framed in gendered terms foreground a central paradox of men's engagement work; making participation inviting, palatable, culturally compelling, respectful, and relevant, while retaining a pro-feminist stance and a commitment to promoting gender equity (at least eventually, if not initially). This signals the need for continued investigation of how the degree of 'gender' in initial messaging attracts or deters men from GBV prevention programming, as well as how initial engagement strategies are related to the theories of change, the degree of explicit attention to gender, and effectiveness of programming implemented once men are solidly in the door.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include the under-representation of participants outside of North America, and the restriction of the survey to English, Spanish or French speakers, and those with reliable internet and computer access. It is also probable that language translation and context-specific meanings across regions impacted participants' interpretation of and response to survey questions; although significant pre-testing of the survey took place in all three languages, context-specific meanings of ideas within the survey are likely to differ significantly. As is often true with web-based surveys, it is not possible to calculate a response rate, or assess how non-responders are systematically different from those who did. As noted above, male-identified individuals who have been involved in GBV prevention work for some time and who work or volunteer for antiviolence organizations are also over-represented in this sample. Additional

work is needed to understand how more recently or less formally engaged men and boys respond to initial outreach approaches. It is also important to stress that findings represent anti-violence allies' *perceptions* of effective strategies, not actual outcomes or evaluations of those strategies; it may also be that allies perceive strategies to be effective when they are familiar with them or have personally used them to engage other men. Finally and as previously noted, as many of the strategies assessed here are relevant and are used to engage men at different stages of allyship; some participants may not have focused their open-ended remarks on *initial* engagement as prompted. Additional work is needed that assesses each strategy's relevance and centrality to different 'phases' of prevention work with men, and the ways in which these strategies, and in what combinations can be appropriately tailored to men's local contexts.

Conclusion

In the larger social justice movement to end GBV, strategies to engage men and boys in GBV prevention are key elements to maximize and interrogate. Though participants in this study perceived many strategies to engage men and boys in GBV prevention as being 'effective,' more research is needed to situate these findings in the larger social justice movement to end GBV. Of principal concern is understanding the degree to which strategies are successful at channeling men into long-term gender equity activism. Additionally, as the current study surfaced regional differences in perceived strategy effectiveness; studies which identify effective ways of combining strategies across social ecological levels in regionally appropriate ways are sorely needed. Understanding how to best leverage the diversity of strategies used to engage men is imperative to realizing an end to GBV across the globe.

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Table 1. Ranking and perceived effectiveness of strategies to engage men in GBV prevention

	Asia Rank/ mean (s.d.)	**Europe** Rank/ mean (s.d.)	**Latin America** Rank/ mean (s.d.)	**Africa** Rank/ mean (s.d.)	**North America** Rank/ mean (s.d.)	**Total** Rank/ mean (s.d.)	**F test** df=4
Men's discussion or support groups	1 4.45 (.69) [a]	1.5 4.05 (.73) [b]	1 4.05 (,99) [c]	1 4.38 (.62) [d]	7 3.40 (1.00) [abcd]	2.3 3.72 (1.01)	15.60***
Starting the conversation with a discussion of healthy relationships	3.5 4.24 (.70) [a]	4 3.79 (1.00)	4 3.87 (.95)	2 4.33 (.66) [b]	3 3.59 (.94) [ab]	3.3 3.76 (.95)	6.28***
Starting the conversation with a discussion of fatherhood	2 4.25 (.72) [a]	3 3.84 (1.10)	3 3.89 (.83) [b]	6.5 4.00 (.68) [c]	6 3.44 (1.02) [abc]	4.1 3.66 (1.00)	6.52***
Individual invitation to prevention activity from male family/friend	14 3.67 (.86)	1.5 4.05 (,92)	6 3.81 (,98)	8.5 3.97 (.72)	1 3.83 (.95)	4.2 3.86 (.93)	.83
Starting with a discussion of healthy masculinity	6 4.10 (1.02)	5.5 3.74 (1.04)	2 4.00 (.88)	4 4.13 (.97) [a]	5 3.49 (1.03) [a]	4.5 3.69 (1.03)	5.62***
Event in their work place or place that is part of their daily routine	12 3.80 (1.06)	5.5 3.74 (.88)	5 3.85 (.91)	14 3.69 (.89)	4 3.58 (.96)	8.1 3.67 (.95)	1.10
Media campaign about violence against women	3.5 4.24 (.94) [a]	12 3.33 (1.09) [a]	11 3.47 (.98) [a]	6.5 4.00 (.89) [b]	8 3.39 (1.01) [ab]	8.2 3.50 (1.02)	5.69***
On-going radio/TV programs with story lines involving violence	5 4.19[ab]	8 3.59	12 3.45[ac]	8.5 3.97[cd]	9 3.38[bd]	8.5 (3.52)	4.82**
Community theater or artwork events	7.5 4.05 (1.02) [a]	7 3.62 (1.02) [b]	8 3.76 (1.00) [c]	5 4.03 (.96) [d]	15 2.82 (1.1) [abcd]	8.5 3.25 (1.17)	19.61***
Encouragement from a female family member or friend	15 3.60 (1.10)	9 3.56 (1.02)	7 3.79 (.89)	11 3.70 (.88)	2 3.64 (.94)	8.8 3.66 (.94)	.44
Celebrity endorsements	9 4.00 (.86) [a]	11 3.38 (1.12)	14 3.25 (1.07)	10 3.80 (1.09)	10 3.25 (1.09) [a]	10.8 3.35 (1.10)	3.68**
Religious or faith-based community event	10.5 3.90 (1.22) [ab]	15 2.59 (1.44) [ac]	15 2.80 (1.09) [bd]	3 4.24 (.83) [cde]	11 3.21 (1.07) [e]	10.9 3.21 (1.19)	12.97***

Events that ask men to take an anti-violence pledge	10.5 3.90 (.94) [a]	13 3.31 (1.17)	9 3.73 (.99) [b]	12.5 3.77 (.86) [c]	14 2.87 (1.15) [abc]	11.8 3.20 (1.17)	11.97***
Large community events, fairs or marches	7.5 4.05 (1.02) [ab]	14 3.18 (1.02) [a]	13 3.44 (.80)	12.5 3.77 (.68) [c]	13 3.07 (1.00) [bc]	12 3.26 (.99)	8.42***
Social networking, like facebook	13 3.75 (.91)	10 3.39 (1.00)	10 3.49 (1.02)	15 3.66 (1.20)	12 3.08 (1.04)	12 3.27 (1.06)	4.50**

Note. In this table, superscripts denote significant pairwise differences for cells with the same letter.
***p<.000, **p<.01