

How to Think About Gender-Based Violence in the Workplace

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OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Position GBV in the workplace as part of a larger continuum of GBV
- ▶ Examine prevalence and impact of gender-based violence (GBV) in the workplace
- ▶ Look at recent research, gaps and challenges
- ▶ Issue focus:
 - ▶ Engaging men in the workplace
 - ▶ Impacts of domestic violence on the workplace
- ▶ Position some promising practices, practical solutions, real-life challenges
- ▶ Discussion, Q&A

PRESENTERS

- ▶ Barb MacQuarrie

- ▶ Community Director, Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children, Western University
- ▶ Researcher, educator, mother of two plus Lucy (she's a dog)

- ▶ Todd Minerson

- ▶ Senior Policy Advisor, Department for Women and Gender Equality, Government of Canada
- ▶ Former Exec Dir of White Ribbon, the world's largest effort of men and boys working to end gender-based violence
- ▶ Gender justice activist, father of two, really average hockey player

POSITIONING THE ISSUE

- ▶ GBV in the workplace does not happen in isolation
 - ▶ Part of a broader experience of violence against women and girls, that may not distinguish between work and private life
- ▶ Part of a larger continuum of gender based-violence
 - ▶ Violence that we witness in workplaces is directly linked to a system of inequities for women, girls and non-binary individuals
- ▶ Intersectionality
 - ▶ Even within that continuum, we need to use an intersectional analysis - different people will have different experiences with GBV based on social location and past histories

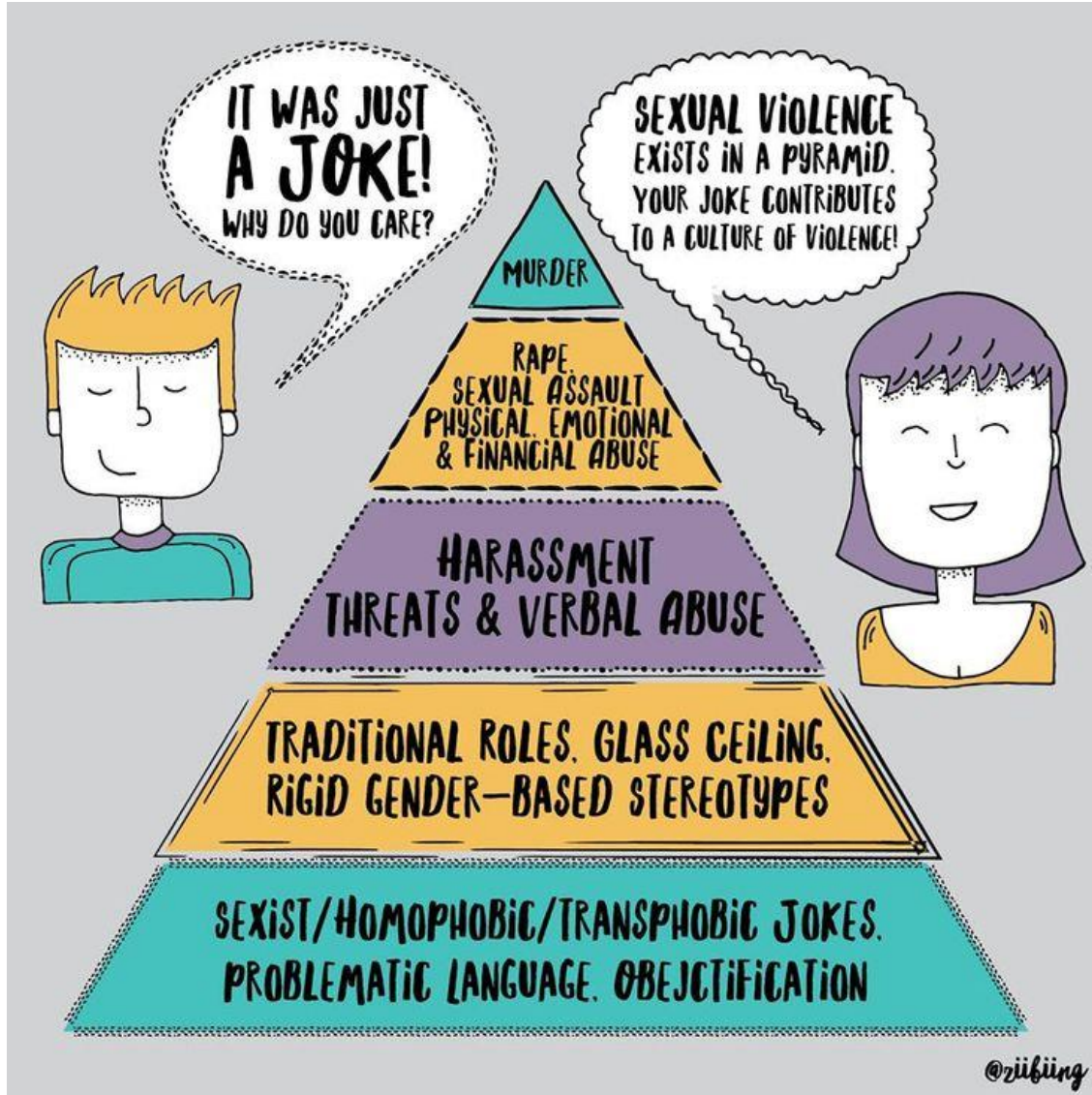
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ▶ Huge societal issue, 51% of Canadian women between the ages of 16 - 65 have reported an incident of physical or sexual violence
- ▶ Deep roots and complex causes that are rooted in gender inequality, power and privilege
- ▶ Takes many forms: physical, sexual, financial, emotional, psychological, online, faith-based, street harassment, gender discrimination and more
- ▶ Does not observe boundaries between public and private life, work and home, online or “real” life: so we need to start from the presumption it is a workplace issue

CONTINUUM of GBV


- ▶ Explains how various forms of violence are related
- ▶ Control (and therefore, power) is at the heart of any analysis of violence
- ▶ Recognizes the role of social structural relations within violence
- ▶ Individual accountability must not be minimized or discarded
- ▶ Shifts emphasis from a sole focus on understanding the reasons why individuals behave in specific ways to how individual and social structural relations are interrelated and mutually sustaining
- ▶ Forecasts the escalating nature of violence

Continuum of GBV in Society



- ▶ Physical and sexual harm is built on a system of gender stereotypes and norms
- ▶ Each of these levels supports the one above
- ▶ Reducing these foundations leads to decreases in the top of the pyramid

Continuum of GBV at Work

 Escalating expressions of violence		Physical Actions	Verbal Actions
	Overt aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical assaults• Weapons offenses• Theft• Rape• Arson• Biting• Murder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inflicting psychological trauma• Hateful expressions of anger
	Mobbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sabotage• Stalking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spreading rumors• Taunting• Organizing actions against the victim
	Bullying		
	Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pranks• Property damage• Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Insults• Sexual• Discrimination
	Threatening behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Throwing objects• Destroying property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statements that elicit alarm or threaten a person's welfare
	Intimidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shaking fists or other gestures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statements that instill fear or alarm
	Disrespect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eye rolling• Laughing at a person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swearing• Using condescending language

IT'S ABOUT POWER

- ▶ Of course making a woman the object of sexual attention can work to undermine her image and self-confidence as a capable worker. Yet, much of the time, harassment assumes a form that has little or nothing to do with sexuality but everything to do with gender (Welsh, 1999).
- ▶ Sexual harassment can serve as an “equalizer” against women
- ▶ Impacts on workplaces can include:
 - ▶ Physical safety, incidents of violence and even murder
 - ▶ Decreased productivity, low morale
 - ▶ Systemic barriers to equality

INTERSECTIONALITY

- ▶ The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups
- ▶ First introduced by American scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw



The continuum of violence meets social relations of power

- ▶ The concept of a continuum of violence must include an analysis of the multiple ways in which individuals and groups are located within interrelated social relations of power
- ▶ Some aspects of an individual's identity affords them privilege
- ▶ Some aspects of an individual's identity disadvantages them
- ▶ Each individual's experience and identity is unique, however there are clues for remediation in the systems of oppression

Privilege/Disadvantages

- ▶ Not all or nothing, not a zero sum game
- ▶ Degrees of social power are attached to the various aspects of who we are
- ▶ We can refer to these different aspects of who we are as our “social identities”
- ▶ For people with privilege - it often is invisible

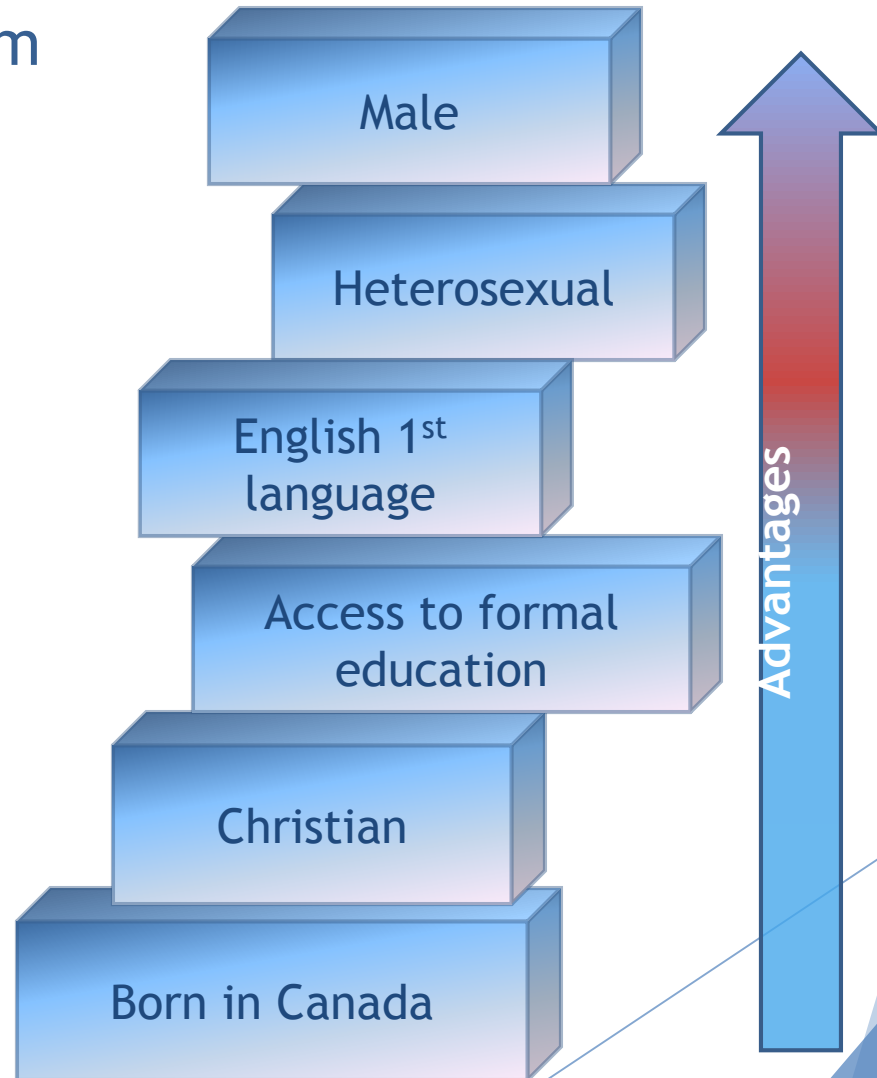
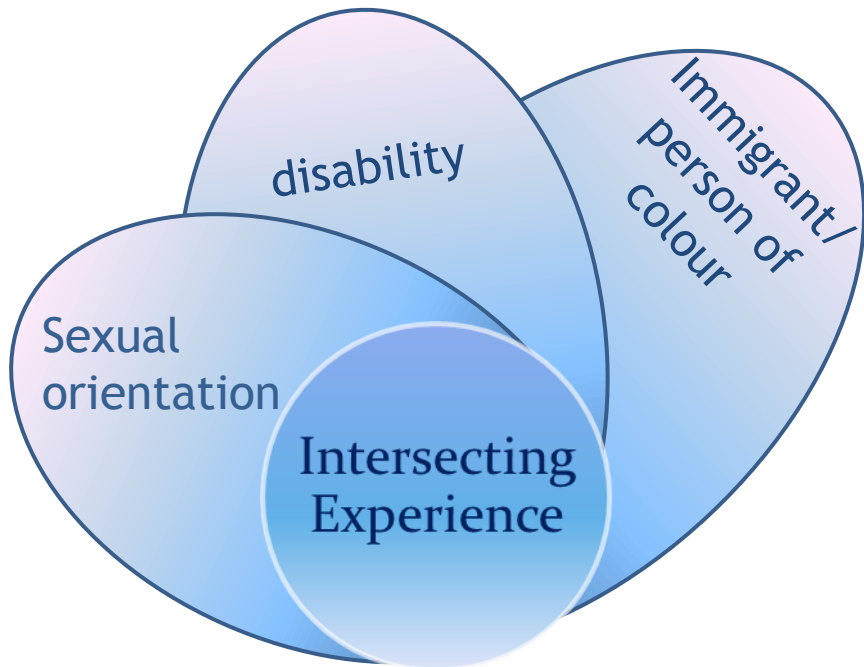




"What's the matter?
It's the same distance!"

Intersectional Analysis

“Various oppressions, together, produce something unique and distinct from any one form of discrimination standing alone...” (ORHC)



In the Workplace

The structure and dynamics of the workplace also provide advantages to some

- Formal power in one's position
- Informal power in position: years of service
- Trainers and mentors
- Access to information: being heard and understood

RESEARCH & DATA

- ▶ What is the prevalence of GBV in the workplace?
- ▶ What is some of the research telling us?
- ▶ Where are the gaps we still need to address?

How many women have experienced sexual harassment at work?

A. 52%

B. 43%

C. 30%

D. 12%

How many men have experienced sexual harassment at work?

A. 32%

B. 24%

C. 12%

D. 10%

How many workers report sexual harassment?

A. 44%

B. 28%

C. 23%

D. 22%

Who is most at risk of experiencing sexual harassment?

- A. Older women
- B. Younger women
- C. Younger men
- D. Both older and younger women

Angus Reid Institute 2018

February 2018: Experiences of sexual harassment

52% of women have been sexually harassed

- ▶ Relatively few in the last 5 years

25% have experienced non-consensual sexual touching

Reporting

Yes - I reported 28%

- ▶ Employer conducted a serious investigation & took appropriate action 11%
- ▶ Employer was responsive but did not take any concrete action 8%
- ▶ Employer was unresponsive & dismissive 9%

No - I didn't report it to my employer 72%

Ipsos poll for Global News 2017

December 2017: Experiences of Sexual Harassment

3 in 10 women

- ▶ most perpetrators were senior at their companies

1 in 10 men

- ▶ more likely to get sexually harassed by a colleague at their level or someone in a junior position

Formal and informal reporting

- ▶ 1 in 4 complained to management (23%)
- ▶ 77% did not complain
 - ▶ 50% thought it wasn't serious enough
 - ▶ 26% thought their company wouldn't do anything about it
- ▶ Those who remained silent feared repercussions or losing their jobs

Angus Reid Institute 2014

Reasons for not reporting:

- preferred to deal with it on their own 44%
- felt it was too minor 26%
- thought the employer wouldn't respond well 21%
- were embarrassed by what happened 16%
- were afraid to lose their jobs 13%
- were afraid to lose their careers 12%
- thought no one would believe them 10%
- didn't want to talk about/revisit it 6%
- were afraid to come forward 5%

Abacus Data Poll 2017

- ▶ Millions of Canadian men and women say they witness this problem
- ▶ The experience of young women is even worse than what is reported by older women
- ▶ This sort of behaviour is not a relic of the past
- ▶ 12% of Canadians say sexual harassment is “really quite common” in their workplace
- ▶ 44% say it is infrequent, but it does happen
- ▶ Women 30 - 44 are most likely to see the problem

SUMMARY

How many women have experienced sexual harassment at work?

- ▶ 52% - Angus Reid 2018
- ▶ 30% Ipsos for Global News 2017

How many men have experienced sexual harassment at work?

- ▶ 10% Ipsos for Global News 2017

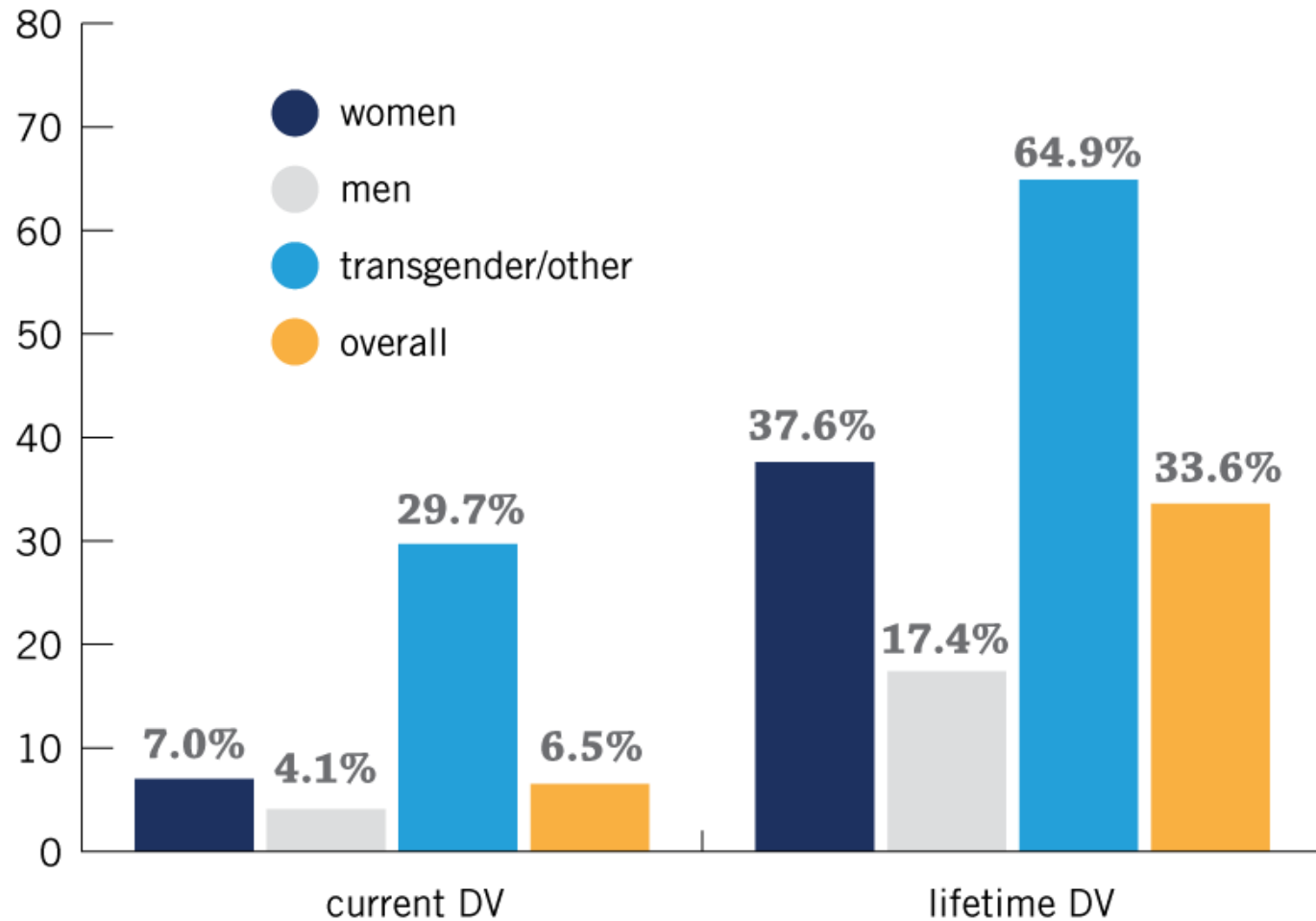
How many workers reported?

- ▶ 28% Angus Reid 2018
- ▶ 23% Ipsos for Global 2017

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV) IN THE WORKPLACE

- ▶ Gender-based violence does not observe societal boundaries
- ▶ For many survivors of domestic violence - workplaces interactions are one facet of that violence
- ▶ However, many workplaces are reluctant to incorporate strategies to address DV - viewing as a problem outside their jurisdiction

How many Canadian workers have experienced domestic violence?



Workplace Impact

Among those who experienced DV...

53.5%

experienced DV at or near
the workplace

Workplace Impact

Among those who experienced DV...

38%

reported that DV
affected their ability
to get work

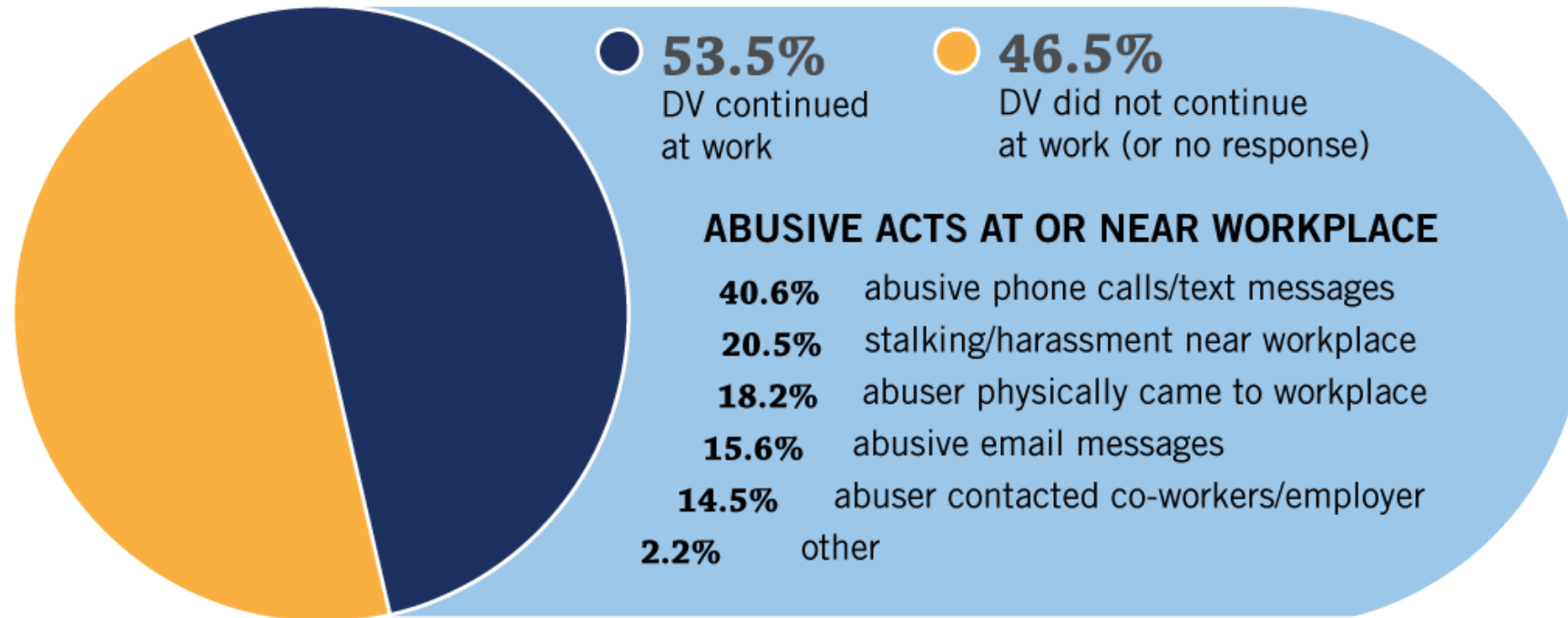
Workplace Impact

Among those who experienced DV...

81.9%

found that DV negatively affected their
work performance

DV at the Workplace



DV at the Workplace

- ▶ *“Constant phone calls prevented me from doing my job properly, as it tied up the phone required for business.”*
- ▶ *“He pretended to be security and dragged me out of work.”*
- ▶ *“[The abuser] would phone my workplace to see what time I had left, and phoned when I arrived to make sure I was actually going to work.”*
- ▶ *“My ex-husband threatened to call my employer to tell them lies about me.”*

Getting to Work

- ▶ *“I would have to find a safe house because of violence at night. Then I would be without work clothing or school uniforms for the kids. My children and I would be too emotionally upset to go to work and school the next day.”*
- ▶ *“Sleep deprivation affected [my] ability to focus at work or get there on time.”*
- ▶ *“I ended up taking a lot of time off and for the most part no one really understood exactly why I was gone for so long.”*
- ▶ *“[I] lied about injury and absence due to fear and not able to admit to abuse at that time.”*

Negative Impact on Performance

- ▶ *“I was tired and distracted yet work was a place where I felt safe.”*
- ▶ *“...there’s no doubt it had impact, but I took pride in my ability to stay focused and on task with a professional presentation. However, those were very difficult times.”*
- ▶ *“Dealing with my ex-husband left me feeling anxious, tired due to lack of sleep. It affected the pleasure my work usually gives me.”*

COMMON FACTORS: DV & SEXUAL HARRASMENT AT WORK

- ▶ Rooted in larger dynamics of women's inequality - they are gender-based forms of violence/discrimination
- ▶ Both occur in the context of a relationship important to the woman
- ▶ Leaving work or leaving an abusive partner to avoid the abuse will have significant negative consequences (economic, emotional) on the woman's life - she may feel 'trapped' or see herself as having limited options
- ▶ Many effects of living are similar
- ▶ Women likely to be isolated and to be fearful about the consequences of reporting
- ▶ In both cases a supportive workplace can help a woman to feel less isolated, can encourage her to report/disclose and can support her as she takes steps to address the problem
- ▶ An unsupportive workplace will keep her isolated

Domestic violence comes to work (video)



GABRIELLE - PATRON

RÉPONSE - 01

ENGAGING MEN

- ▶ Many GBV workplace initiatives focus on supports for women, and rightly so
- ▶ However, there are lost opportunities in engaging men to:
 - ▶ Be better educated on what to do when they see violence and harassment
 - ▶ Understand the roles they can play, and address the barriers to doing so
 - ▶ Accelerate gender equity initiatives, thereby reducing violence and harassment
- ▶ Intentional strategies to engage men also are needed for the significant goals of *culture change, and preventing the violence from happening in the first place*

ENGAGING MEN

- ▶ The overwhelming and disproportionate amount of this violence is perpetrated by men; therefore it cannot be resolved as a “women’s issue”
- ▶ Preventing GBV and harassment in the workplace requires:
 1. Challenging harmful aspects of masculinities that contribute to this violence
 2. Promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination for women and girls
 3. Challenging and changing social norms and culture that perpetuates misconduct

ENGAGING MEN - CULTURE CHANGE

- ▶ Gender inequality and men's privilege in the workplace are critical to the perpetuation of GBV and harassment in the workplace
- ▶ Men's privilege in the workplace is well documented, here are a few...
- ▶ Gendered double-standards in leadership
 - ▶ Men: Passionate, Assertive, Decisive
 - ▶ Women: Emotional, Bossy, Bitchy
- ▶ Pay equity, family responsibility,
- ▶ QUESTION: If you rise to a high level in your organization, will anyone assume you slept your way to the top?

ENGAGING MEN - CULTURE CHANGE

- ▶ Gender inequality and men's privilege are real issues - but they do not mean all men are bad...
- ▶ You can be a good man stuck in a bad system (or at least one that is bad for lots of different people)
- ▶ Men can also be part of the solution when addressing culture change for gender equality:
 - ▶ Leadership and policy driver roles
 - ▶ Bystanders
 - ▶ Changing gendered norms
 - ▶ Modelling behavior

ENGAGING MEN - BARRIERS

Participating may be challenging because some men:

- ▶ Don't feel it's their place to lead gender initiatives
- ▶ Don't have a roadmap
- ▶ Have concerns that taking part may strain existing relationships with male colleagues.
- ▶ Don't fully understand what inequality costs them as leaders of teams and organizations, or as members of families, communities, and economies

DESIGN OF EVERYDAY MEN - Deloitte

- ▶ Recent study release by Deloitte looking into the cultural constraints on men in the workplace
 - ▶ What is preventing men from being agents of change on gender initiatives in the workplace? What is it inherent in men's gendered workplace identities that may impact his.
1. **"It's on me."** Pressure to solve it ourselves, reluctance to ask for help.
 2. **"I'm terrified of failure"**. Men go to great lengths to mask failure
 3. **"I can't turn to anyone"**. Difficult for men to create personal relationships where men can show vulnerability.
 4. **"Show me it's OK"**. Lack of male role models, and seeing that behavior modelled from above.

<https://doblin.com/our-thinking/the-design-of-everyday-men>

DESIGN OF EVERYDAY MEN - Deloitte

► 3 Calls To Action:

1. “Always on, always available” expectation for success is a leading cause of gender inequality in workplaces.
2. Workplace cultures reflect the leadership - how do you lead, how do you build community, how do you nurture people and help them grow?
3. Actions speak louder than words. Model this behavior, be personal, show your imperfections, make mistakes, take parental leave and vacation, check-in on people who seem to need it the least.

GAPS & CHALLENGES

- ▶ Are there really best practices?
- ▶ Uneven legislation?
- ▶ Talk the talk, but do your workplace walk the walk?
- ▶ Long-term commitments.
- ▶ Reluctance to deal with challenging issues.
- ▶ Change is required outside of your workplaces as well.

PROMISING PRACTICES

- ▶ Leadership conviction
 - ▶ Words, deeds and resources
- ▶ Culture change commitments
 - ▶ Long-term, properly resourced
- ▶ Start with an organizational review
 - ▶ Effective policies & procedures in place
- ▶ Everything is linked - progress is linked to other gender equity, diversity and inclusion outcomes
 - ▶ There is a business case for this!!!

ORGANIZATIONAL REVIEWS

- ▶ Not solely about identifying gaps, but about asking questions and searching for opportunities where organizations can build on what they may be already doing
- ▶ Takes into consideration legislation, current policies and procedures, collective agreements, current education and training programs, the organization's code of conduct, and values and goals
- ▶ A necessary first step is to learn about the problem
 - ▶ listen to reports (formal and informal) from all organizational members
 - ▶ conduct surveys and/or interviews with organizational members

Organizational Culture



PROMISING PRACTICES

Everything is connected.

Broad gender equity initiatives will be likely to reduce violence.

Demonstrated leadership for the highest levels.



A Manhattan construction company has rolled out gender-neutral “Men and Women at Work” signs - a “female-friendly initiative” that “encourages women to enter the industry by creating a gender-neutral workplace environment,” CEO Richard Wood

DISCUSSION / Q & A

- ▶ Lot of wisdom in the room - let's discuss and learn from each other.
- ▶ What are your biggest challenges?
- ▶ What are some successes?
- ▶ What are your greatest needs?
- ▶ What is the role of government?