

ABSTRACT

Understanding Domestic Violence and Multiple Partner Fertility Among Women: An Exploratory Study Linking Both These Occurrences

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This study explores the problem of domestic violence, or intimate partner violence (IPV), from the perspective of Multiple Partner Fertility (MPF) involving women. The research design chosen for this investigation is known as analytic autoethnography and is used primarily for exploring social phenomena qualitatively. As outlined by Anderson (2006) analytic autoethnography stresses the importance of three main themes: 1) the researcher's personal involvement with the social phenomenon being investigated 2) dialogue with informants beyond the self and 3) commitment to developing broad theoretical understandings of social phenomena that go beyond the (limited) data themselves. Closely guided by these three criteria, I put forward a grounded theory declaring the following: One important consequence of MPF involving women is that their biological sons (on becoming adults) are likely to repeatedly and chronically abuse their wives. Excluded from this proposition were boys who

had already crossed the age of 5 years old, or thereabouts, before their biological mothers began conceiving children by multiple sexual partners, that is to say, by men other than these boys biological fathers. In seeking to explain why MPF involving mothers is believed to negatively impact their sons' later relationships with women as wives, I made the assumption that the childbearing event is inherently harmful (psychologically) to infant boys. In particular, MPF involving biological mothers is thought to leave the earlier oedipal experience, as described by Freud (1905d; 1916—17; 1933a; 1940a) largely unresolved. As a follow-up exercise, I suggest the need for developing appropriate quantitative research strategies aimed at testing the validity of the MPF—IPV link centrally proposed by this study, especially given the small qualitative sample of 8 abused women on which it is based.

Keywords: *Domestic Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, IPV, Male Violence, Analytic Autoethnography, Oedipus complex*