Exploration of Police Officers’ Understanding of IPV and their Perceptions of Risk Assessment Screening in New Brunswick:
Working Towards an Evidence-based Strategic Response

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NEW BRUNSWICK CONTEXT


Domestic/intimate partner violence is a priority foci in the strategy.

Examination is needed of police response to IPV to inform the identification of best practices for reducing IPV in New Brunswick.

The Fredericton Police Force has an intervention strategy developed and now has an IPV coordinator; the Saint John Police Force is in the process of establishing a new strategy; and Moncton has a specialized domestic violence court involving the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).
# Research Team

**Principal investigator:**
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**Co-investigators:**
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**Collaborator:**
- Paul Mazerolle, Griffith University

**Partners:**
- Fredericton Police Force
- Saint John Police Force
- RCMP

**Project funding:**
- Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Insight Partnership Development grant
**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

**Overall objective:**

- Document police responses for IPV that make a difference in preventing/reducing IPV in order to develop a strategy template for police intervention in New Brunswick.

**Specific objectives:**

- Understand how police officers are currently responding to IPV calls;
- Assess current attitudes and perceptions of IPV within the current cultural police context;
- Understand how the use of risk assessment screening tools influence the strategies used by police officers responding to IPV;
- Identify training needs among police officers that may be required to maximize use of best practice in the police response to IPV;
- Prepare an evidence-informed template for IPV intervention for police in New Brunswick.
METHODOLOGY - QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Survey on attitudes and perceptions of New Brunswick police officers with regard to IPV. (2013-14)

Review police files to capture their actual response to IPV cases in their communities. (2014-15)
Surveys

Sent to all police forces across New Brunswick

Online questionnaire administered in the Spring and Summer 2014 – Adapted from Mazerolle (2013)

- Demographics
- Intimate partner violence definition
- Causes/nature of IPV
- Responding to IPV calls
- Risk assessment tools
- Decision-making about best response
- Training on the issue of IPV
SURVEY RESPONDENTS

231 Officers agreed to participate

127 officers completed the full survey
32 completed some of the survey
72 answered only demographic questions and definition of IPV

159 surveys with sufficient data for analysis
(73% male)
(M age = 41.8 years, SD = 8.9)
New Brunswick Regions Represented

Greater Fredericton Area (24%)
Greater Moncton Area (17%)
Greater Saint John Area (14%)
Campbelton / Bathurst / Dalhousie Area (12%)
Edmunston (7%)
Other NB areas with less than 10 respondents (26%)
PRELIMINARY SURVEY FINDINGS

• Respondents made **arrests** in IPV cases within the 12 months prior to the survey between 0 to 100 times, averaging 5.27 arrests (SD = 10.61)
  
  • Engaging in non-arrest responses as well = **under analysis**
Preliminary Results - Training

Training Mediums on IPV already received

75.4% have received some form of training on IPV

- Police Academy
- In-house workshops/conferences/seminars
- External workshops/conferences by experts
- Workshops/Conferences/Seminars (self-paid)
- Self-directed reading
- e-learning
- Mentorship
- Other

Percentage

0 20 40 60
71.7% reported that they would benefit somewhat to a great deal from additional training on IPV.

Average Rating of Perceived Learning Medium Effectiveness

1 = VERY INEFFECTIVE, 2 = SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE, 3 = NEUTRAL, 4 = EFFECTIVE, 5 = VERY EFFECTIVE
PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- Degree of worry about harm to self or colleagues during IPV-related incidents?

\[
\text{Very worried} \\
\text{Moderately worried} \\
\text{Slightly worried} \\
\text{Not worried at all}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
0 \\
10 \\
20 \\
30 \\
40 \\
50 \\
\end{array}
\]

= 83% of respondents
**Next Steps**

- Presentation of survey results to partnering agencies
- Consultations
- Review of police files
- Strategy Template