

Crime in England and Wales 2006/07
Supplementary Volume 2: Chapter 3 - Intimate Violence
31 January 2008

This Home Office Bulletin includes a chapter on the extent of intimate violence revealed by the results of the 2006/07 British Crime Survey (BCS) self-completion questionnaire module. In addition, some findings from the earlier 2004/05 and 2005/06 BCS modules are reported for comparison or to supplement the 2006/07 BCS findings.

Intimate violence is defined as comprising any domestic abuse, including partner or family non-physical abuse; threats; force; sexual assault; and stalking. Partner abuse refers to non-physical abuse, threats, force, sexual assault or stalking carried out by a current or former partner. This briefing is concerned only with non-sexual partner abuse.

The findings of the 2006/07 BCS for partner abuse generally follow a similar pattern to the earlier BCS supplementary modules. Results have been grouped into those relating to the period for respondents since the age of 16, and for the last year (preceding the survey). Generally, women were at more risk for most types of non-sexual partner abuse, although the differences between men and women were less marked in relation to experiences in the last year, male victims accounting for 48.6% of total victims of severe force. It appears that men are increasingly at risk from partner abuse.

The findings indeed confirm a substantial level of female violence in partner relationships, in particular for non-physical abuse and severe force. Only in the category 'threats' from partners did male victims constitute a small minority.

The pattern of repeated partner abuse in the last year revealed by the 2004/05 BCS was generally similar for men and women. This indicates a cohort of men at the more frequent end of the spectrum suffering a similar extent of repeated partner abuse as women. However, since male victims of partner abuse account overall for less than half of total victims, the cohort number is likely to be similarly less than for women. Women tended to be more harmed by partner abuse (58% of victims against 48% for men).

Non-sexual partner abuse

Between the 2005/06 and 2006/07 interviews, there was a significant decrease in the experience of women experiencing minor force during partner abuse in the last year. In contrast, the proportion of men experiencing severe force during partner abuse in the last year was slightly higher in 2006/07 than in 2005/06 and almost equal to that of women.

Since the age of 16

Overall, 18% of men and 28% of women in current or former intimate relationships reported some form of non-sexual abuse by partners (a proportion of male victims of 39.1%). 11.3% of men and 19.0% of women reported non-physical abuse (emotional, financial), and 10.9% of men and 19.2% of women reported experiencing force (a proportion of male victims of 36.2%). Of these latter, 9.3% of men and 14.0% of women reported experiencing severe force (a proportion of male victims of 39.9%).

For those people surveyed who had experienced partner abuse of some form, the pattern of victimisation for the different categories was similar among men and women. Men accounted for 50% of those who had experienced severe force.

In the last year

Overall, 4.3% of men and 5.6% of women in current or former relationships reported some form of non-sexual abuse by partners (a proportion of male victims of 43.4%). 2.8% of men and 3.5% of women reported non-physical abuse (a proportion of male victims of 44.4%), and 2.2% of men and 2.7% of women reported experiencing force by

partners (a proportion of male victims of 44.9%). Of these latter, 1.7% of men and 1.8% of women reported experiencing severe force (a proportion of male victims of 48.6%).

For those people surveyed who had experienced partner abuse of some form in the last year, the patterns of victimisation were again broadly similar for men and women. However, men accounted for 50% of those who had experienced force and 54.1% of those who had experienced severe force.

Frequency of partner abuse

Of those who had experienced partner abuse since the age of 16, men were more likely than women to have been victimised in the last year (20% against 15%). Women were more likely than men to have experienced the last partner abuse more than ten years ago (40% against 29%).

There was little variation between the sexes in frequency of victimisation in the last year. 41% of those who had experienced partner abuse had been victimised on only one occasion (46% of men and 38% of women). 16% had been victimised twice, and 43% victimised three or more times (40% of men and 45% of women). 20% of men and 23% of women had been victimised over five times, and 9% of men and 5% of women more than 50 times/too many times to count.

Injuries and emotional effects of partner abuse

Overall, 54% of victims of partner abuse (48% of men and 58% of women) reported that they had suffered some injuries or emotional effects as a result of violence in the last year. The most common problems were mental or emotional problems (25%), minor bruising or a black eye (19%), scratches (14%), and stopping trusting people or having difficulty in other relationships (12%).

About one quarter (26%) of those who had suffered injuries or emotional effects as a result of partner abuse had seen a doctor, nurse or other health worker because of their injuries or problems in the last year. Women (30%) were more likely than men (18%) to seek medical help.

Prevalence of partner abuse (non-sexual) among adults aged 16 to 59

Percentages	Since the age of 16				2006/07 BCS			
	Men	Women	All	%male	Men	Women	All	% male
				<i>% victims</i>	<i>once or more</i>			
Partner abuse (non-sexual)	18.0	28.0	23.1	39.1	4.3	5.6	5.0	43.4
Non-physical abuse (emotional (financial)	11.3	19.0	15.2	37.3	2.8	3.5	3.1	44.4
Threats or force	11.2	21.1	16.3	34.7	2.2	3.4	2.8	39.3
Threats	1.3	10.5	6.0	11.0	0.2	1.7	0.9	10.5
Force	10.9	19.2	15.1	36.2	2.2	2.7	2.4	44.9
- Minor	4.5	14.6	9.6	23.6	0.9	1.9	1.4	32.1
- Severe	9.3	14.0	11.7	39.9	1.7	1.8	1.7	48.6
<i>From Unweighted base</i>	<i>11,184</i>	<i>12,909</i>	<i>24,093</i>		<i>11,087</i>	<i>12,751</i>	<i>23,838</i>	

Source: Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2006/07 (Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2006/07) Povey et al. Home Office Statistical Bulletin 03/08, 31 January 2008. Table 3.01

The last time victims experienced partner abuse since the age of 16

Percentages	2004/05 BCS		
	Men	Women	All
In the last year	20	15	16
- Last month	4	3	3
- Between one and six months ago	7	7	7
- Between seven and 12 months ago	8	5	6
One or more years ago	80	85	84
- Between one and five years ago	30	25	26
- Between six and ten years ago	21	21	21
- More than ten years ago	29	40	36
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,418</i>	<i>3,685</i>	<i>5,103</i>

Source: ibid, Table 3.06

Number of times victims of partner abuse had been abused by partner(s) in the last year

Percentages	2004/05 BCS		
	Men	Women	All
Once	46	38	41
Twice	14	17	16
Three to five times	20	22	21
Between six and 20 times	9	15	13
Between 21 and 49 times	2	3	2
More than 50 times/too many times to count	9	5	7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>311</i>	<i>572</i>	<i>883</i>

Source: ibid, Table 3.07

Injuries and emotional effects experienced by victims as a result of partner abuse in the last year

Percentages	2004/05 BCS		
	Men	Women	All
Some injuries/emotional effects	48	58	54
Mental or emotional problems	14	33	25
Minor bruising or black eye	16	21	19
Scratches	18	11	14
Stopped trusting people/difficulty in other relationships	9	15	12
Severe bruising or bleeding from cuts	5	6	6
Other physical injuries	2	4	3
Tried to commit suicide	-	-	3
Internal bruising or broken bones/teeth	0	1	1
Becoming pregnant	n/a	1	1
Other	5	4	4
No injuries/emotional effects	52	42	46
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>492</i>	<i>929</i>	<i>1,421</i>

Source: ibid, Table 3.15

Dewar Research

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