

Exploring the Potential for Changing Gender Norms Among Cricket Coaches and Athletes in India

Violence Against Women

1–18

© The Author(s) 2014

Reprints and permissions:

sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/1077801214564688

vaw.sagepub.com



**Elizabeth Miller¹, Madhumita Das², Ravi Verma²,
Brian O'Connor³, Sancheeta Ghosh²,
Maria Catrina D. Jaime¹, and Heather L. McCauley¹**

Abstract

This study explored gender norms with cricket coaches and athletes in India to adapt a coach-delivered gender violence prevention program from the United States for the urban Indian context. Interviews and focus groups conducted among coaches and adolescent cricketers highlight the extent to which coaches and athletes articulate prevailing inequitable notions about gender and recognition of the power coaches wield. Adapting a violence prevention program that emphasizes gender norms change may be feasible with Indian cricket coaches but is likely to require attention to defining gender equity and challenging cultural assumptions with coaches prior to implementing the program with athletes.

Keywords

gender-based violence, gender norms, violence prevention

Gender-based violence—violence against women and girls because of their gender—is a major global health concern (Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2006; Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, & Zwi, 2002; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002; World Health Organization [WHO], 2011). Evidence suggests that violence

¹Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC, Pittsburgh, PA, USA

²International Center for Research on Women, New Delhi, India

³Futures Without Violence, San Francisco, CA, USA

Corresponding Author:

Elizabeth Miller, Division of Adolescent Medicine, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, 3420 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213, USA.

Email: elizabeth.miller@chp.edu

perpetrated by males is associated with inequitable gender attitudes that link masculinity with attitudes condoning violence perpetration, including sexual violence (Abbey & McAuslan, 2004; Degue & DiLillo, 2004; Flood, 2006; Foshee, Linder, MacDougall, & Bangdiwala, 2001; Hines, 2007; Reed et al., 2008; Santana, Raj, Decker, La Marche, & Silverman, 2006; Verma et al., 2006; Warkentin & Gidycz, 2007). Thus, a growing body of programs, grounded in theories of gender and power, encourage men to recognize the importance of equity for women and to appreciate the impact that gender inequity has on their own lives as a promising strategy for promoting gender equity and ending violence against women (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Berkowitz, 2002; Gidycz, Orchowski, & Berkowitz, 2011; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Foubert, Brasfield, Hill, & Shelley-Tremblay, 2011; McMahan, Postmus, & Koenick, 2011; Santana et al., 2006). Recent studies have found that males' inequitable attitudes and behaviors are associated with poor health outcomes for men, including HIV infection, and increased violence victimization and poor outcomes for women (Barker, Ricardo, & Nascimento, 2007; Courtenay, 2000; Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2011; Santana et al., 2006). Health interventions that focus on promoting gender equity demonstrably reduce violence and substance use, increase condom use, decrease transactional sex, and increase communication between couples (Barker, Nascimento, Segundo, & Pulerwitz, n.d.; Barker et al., 2007; International Center for Research on Women & Instituto Promundo, 2007; Jewkes, Dunkle, Nduna, & Shai, 2010; Jewkes et al., 2008; Jewkes, Wood, & Duvvury, 2010; McCauley et al., 2013; Miller et al., 2012; Pulerwitz, Segundo, Nascimento, & Barker, 2006; United Nations Population Fund & Promundo, 2010). Thus, the WHO has concluded that health promotion efforts should include "changing social norms around masculinity that undermine men's and women's health" (International Center for Research on Women & Instituto Promundo, 2007, p. 1).

As adolescent boys transition into adulthood, providing tools to resist peer pressure to engage in disrespectful and harmful behaviors and encouraging adoption of positive, culturally resonant examples of masculinity may help to reduce violence against women and girls (Verma et al., 2008). Engaging young men early in their adolescent years in activities to reflect on their gender roles in society may be one potential strategy to prevent the development of inequitable attitudes and violent behaviors (Barker et al., 2007). A U.S.-based gender violence prevention program called "Coaching Boys Into Men" (CBIM) encourages athletic coaches to speak directly to their young male athletes about respect toward women and girls, and how violent and disrespectful behaviors are neither consonant with positive masculinity nor necessary for success. This program has been found to increase positive bystander intervention behaviors (i.e., interrupting disrespectful behaviors among peers) and reduce abuse perpetration among U.S. high school athletes (Miller et al., 2014; Miller et al., 2013; Miller et al., 2012). While the CBIM program has been incorporated into a variety of U.S. sports, how the messages embedded in CBIM about gender equity would resonate in other non-U.S. contexts has not been examined.

The purpose of this study was to explore gender attitudes among cricket coaches and athletes to inform an adaptation of CBIM for the urban Indian context, called "Parivartan" meaning "change." First, the power of sports and coaches as positive role models in

different cultural contexts merits exploration. While coaches teach boys the fundamentals of a sport, they may also explicitly and implicitly convey basic messages about masculinity and expectations about how to be a man (Boeringer, 1999; Moynihan, Banyard, Arnold, Eckstein, & Stapleton, 2011), including rape myth acceptance (Lyndon, Duffy, Smith, & White, 2011). The links among gender equity, sport, and socio-cultural development among youth have been explored in different settings (Gage, 2008; Katz, Heisterkamp, & Fleming, 2011; Meier, 2005), but few studies have explored these connections among youth in South Asia. In particular, cricket, considered the most popular sport in India, is distinctly masculine, with few opportunities for girls to participate. Cricket thus offers the opportunity to explore masculinity scripts in India, the extent to which coaches and athletes support such masculinity scripts, and whether cricket coaching could be a potential vehicle for challenging and changing these masculinity scripts.

Increasing commercialization of cricket in India in recent years has meant that this sport has diffused throughout the country including in rural and urban slums, and a large number of young boys and men are exploring a career in this sport (Das et al., 2014; Kerr, 2008). Parents may push their sons to become cricketers and are willing to spend time and resources to hire formal coaches for them to further their chances of becoming a professional cricket player. Schools provide facilities and trained coaches as well. In this fiercely competitive scenario where upward mobility for an aspiring cricketer depends largely upon his cricketing skills and acumen, the value of coaches increases. Most coaches are held in high esteem and with distinct reverence. Also, “masculinization” and “aggression” have become increasingly more evident in a sport that was traditionally viewed as a “gentleman’s sport,” which meant no unfair or aggressive play. Today, confrontations and aggressive behaviors among national cricket players who are considered popular male icons are not uncommon in sports media coverage (Kerr, 2008). It is in this cultural context of cricket in urban India that this study explored how cricket coaches in formal cricket coaching settings such as schools think about gender equity (if at all) and their perceived role in discussing masculinity and aggression with their young athletes.

As school-based cricket teams in urban India tend to focus on younger adolescents (i.e., as cricketers transition to high school, cricket teams are less affiliated with schools and are more community-based), and because the initial adaptation of CBIM was intended for implementation in schools, group discussions with younger male adolescent athletes participating in school-based cricket teams were conducted to assess youth perspectives on the role of their coaches and gender equity. The middle school years were also a focus for this formative research because this is a critical developmental period when many youth start establishing romantic or sexual interests for the first time during the pubertal transition (Noonan & Charles, 2009; Stein, 1995). In the United States, sexual harassment is known to increase during middle school (Bentley, Galliher, & Ferguson, 2007; Manganello, 2008; McMaster, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2002; Pellegrini, 2001). Even though younger adolescents have less experience with formal dating relationships, early gender-based conflicts occur. In a study conducted with adolescent males and females (ages 12-18) in Bangladesh, the females described being sexually harassed and touched by their male peers when out in public (Nahar, Van Reeuwijk, & Reis, 2013). Even

younger male participants reported perpetrating sexual harassment, rape, and gang rape against female peers, behaviors they attributed to cultural expectations of masculinity. The adolescent males considered their behavior normal and socially acceptable, highlighting that focusing on gender norms among younger adolescent males may be a potentially modifiable target for prevention efforts in the South Asia context.

This formative research explored how cricket coaches and aspiring adolescent athletes articulate prevailing notions about gender norms and the potential for coaches to be sources of inspiration for their athletes as well as messengers for gender equity and respect toward women and girls, with the goal of using findings to inform adaptations to the U.S.-based CBIM program. The objectives of this research were first, to understand the attitudes and beliefs regarding gender equity and respect among the coaches and athletes, including their perceptions about and experiences with violence against women; and second, to explore the feasibility of engaging cricket coaches as messengers and key influencers of young male athletes.

Method

Sample and Recruitment

A purposive sample of 24 coaches was recruited for key informant interviews from formal school-based cricket coaching programs. This sample included younger coaches with less than 5 years of coaching experience as well as older coaches with more than 10 years of experience. These coaches all worked directly with schools to provide coaching to selected boys aspiring to become competitive cricketers. Final sample size for the interviews was determined by content saturation as well as achieving a balanced sample of coaches from diverse backgrounds and experience. Coaches were recruited with the assistance of a school-based sports association in Mumbai, India. Following initial phone contact, interested coaches were asked to identify a convenient time and private place to conduct face-to-face interviews.

In addition, three focus groups were conducted with a convenience sample of young cricketers, ages 12 to 14 years ($N = 47$), who were recruited with the assistance of coaches, mentors, and physical education teachers. Two of the focus groups were conducted at schools, and a third at a local youth agency in a slum community, which provided mentoring and cricket coaching for boys. As noted above, school-based cricket teams (the focus for this adaptation of CBIM) tend to involve younger male athletes (ages 12-14); thus, the focus group discussions targeted this younger age group. These discussions were open-ended, encouraging youth to speak about their experiences with their coaches as well as examples of disrespectful or harmful behaviors they have observed among peers (especially fellow cricketers).

Research Ethics and Consent

The study protocol, including the informed consent process, was reviewed and approved by the International Center for Research on Women's Institutional Review

Board. Consent forms were translated into Hindi and Marathi and communicated to the study participants verbally as well as in writing. Male coaches who coach cricket with 10- to 16-year-old boys were eligible to participate. All participants were fully informed about the study, their right to refuse or to withdraw, and existing procedures for ensuring confidentiality of the information collected; they then reviewed and signed the written consent form. Each key informant interview with the coaches was led by a male interviewer and a male note taker and lasted approximately 30 min.

For the focus group discussions with the adolescents, parental consent forms were collected with the assistance of coaches who distributed the forms. The parental consent form was translated into Hindi, Marathi, and Urdu. Student cricketers first returned the signed parental consent form and then reviewed and signed their own assent form at the time of the focus group. Youth verbalized understanding of the voluntary nature and confidentiality of the focus group discussions.

Data Collection and Analysis

The interviewers (primarily master of social work students) were recruited and trained for 7 days on gender issues, masculinity, and violence as well as on how to conduct interviews around sensitive topics. These trained interviewers conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with coaches, which were digitally recorded and reviewed by one of the investigators for quality assurance. To encourage each participant's full understanding and participation, interviews were conducted exclusively in the language in which the key informant was most comfortable. In addition, given varied interpretations of terms such as "masculinity," "respect," and "aggression," participants were encouraged to discuss their own definitions of these terms. Interviews assessed their coaching experience; relationships with their athletes; their attitudes and perceptions toward gender equity, aggression, and violence within and outside sports; and perceptions of their responsibility and opportunity to mentor young boys. Digital recordings of these sessions were transcribed in the same language in which the interview was conducted, de-identified, and then translated into English by a professional translator.

Focus group discussions with adolescent cricketers occurred in private locations and were facilitated by two interviewers, audio recorded, transcribed, and translated as above. Discussions focused on what constitutes an ideal cricketer, coaches and role models, notions of gender equity and masculinity norms, the nature of their relationships with coaches as well as with girls, and attitudes about abusive and aggressive behaviors toward girls, including "eve-teasing" (verbal sexual harassment). As with the coaches' interviews, youth were encouraged to define complex concepts (such as "masculinity") and share specific examples during the discussions.

Utilizing a thematic analysis approach, an initial a priori code list was developed from the core interviews and focus group questions and additional codes were incorporated as new themes emerged from the transcripts. Each transcript was coded using ATLAS.ti software (ATLAS.ti, 1997-2004; Weitzman, 1999). The first three interviews were reviewed by two investigators and an initial list of codes generated that

focused on key areas of interest (e.g., for coaches: coach as role model, attitudes toward cricket as a male sport, disrespectful and harmful behaviors among their athletes; for athletes: perspectives on good coaching, attitudes and experiences with teasing, and aggressive and abusive behaviors toward girls; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). All interviews were coded by two investigators, compared for agreement, and finalized. Additions of new codes or changes in code definitions were determined via consensus among the research team. Coding of interviews was ongoing while additional interviews were conducted. No new codes emerged after approximately six interviews were completed, suggesting content saturation was achieved. The current analysis focuses on codes related to the role of coaches' behaviors and violence prevention, gender norms, and experiences with abusive and aggressive behaviors among youth in the context of playing cricket.

Results

Coach Characteristics

Over a third (39%) of the coaches interviewed were above the age of 40. Of that group, 40% were 60 years or older. Approximately two thirds (65%) of the coaches reported having graduated from college, and another 29% had completed higher secondary school (12th standard) before getting involved in coaching as a profession. Of the coaches above 50 years of age, most had more than 25 years of coaching, indicating that many cricket coaches enter this profession at a young age and continue for many years.

The focus group discussions involved an even distribution of young cricketers ages 12 to 14. Themes, below, are presented from the coaches' interviews followed by the athletes' group discussions: first, on the role of coaches in addressing athletes' behaviors, then how coaches model and teach respect, followed by coaches' roles in addressing gender equity, and finally on aggression and violence in cricket.

Coaches' Perspectives on Their Role in Influencing Athletes' Behaviors

Most coaches recognized the impact they could have on the behavior and lives of the adolescent players whom they coach. They described heated arguments that emerge during cricket games, and the challenges in ensuring that their athletes maintain respectful behavior. However, in terms of activities that happen off the field, coaches struggled to define how far their role may extend. Some coaches articulated an understanding about their potential as role models for youth and their impact on young people beyond the outcome of cricket games. For example,

See you have to shape the personality of your boys and their commitments. In school we always tell them you should carry yourself like a cricketer with dress code and your manners (but) . . . the best coaches are parents . . . family is also responsible for shaping the personality.

How much influence we have among the children depends on this (bonding). After arriving on the field, I am entirely their coach. But outside the field I am their friend.

Other coaches defined their role as primarily building cricket skills, leaving life skills to family and others in the community:

Many a time we are unable to spend time supervising their training. We only teach them cricket, honing the skills that they already possess. How they behave depends on their personality and the qualities they display. There isn't any one kind of personality.

The relationship between coaches and athletes was rarely described as casual or friendly. Coaches noted that the boys expect and enact a hierarchical relationship (including the common practice of students bowing and touching the feet of their coach), which coaches thought could be a barrier to discussing issues beyond cricket, particularly in the school-based setting. However, with training and guidance, coaches may be able to modify the formality of these relationships, taking advantage of the respect and admiration many inspire in the boys with whom they work. Some coaches hinted at understanding this potential:

The ideal coach serves as a mirror to reflect back which we fail to see about ourselves; he or she can point out things that you may have overlooked, and thus prevent little problems from developing into major issues. In addition to being friend, guide, reinforce, and your very own "supporter," coach is someone who really cares a lot—and can contribute significantly to the quality of life of an athlete.

Boys' Perspectives on Their Relationship With Their Coaches

In the focus group discussions, boys reflected that the relationship with a coach is like a master and disciple. Boys expressed interest in having their coaches talk to them about other aspects of their lives:

My coach is my Guru, he knows if I am doing something wrong and always takes a step to explain my mistake. When I become angry because of my performance, he is the one who talks to me, he works with each and every one.

Our coach spends so much time with us in the net. You will hardly find nowadays many elder members spending such time with boys. He teaches us everything about cricket and also explains to us if we are not behaving well. This makes him special in our life.

Teaching and Modeling Respect: Coaches' Perspectives

Respectful behavior within the context of cricket and respect toward women and girls were explored sequentially with coaches. Coaches spoke openly about the respect they expect from their players, both in regard to the way they carry themselves on the field

and how athletes speak to coaches. Respect within cricket games—toward opponents, toward coaches, and toward team mates—was endorsed and recognized as an important aspect of their relationships with athletes: “My boys are very disciplined. They know if they use any foul language they would not be there next time. I teach my boys to be honest with their effort.”

Reflecting this notion of teaching respect as an aspect of discipline, coaches recognized their role as authority figures for players, but were hesitant to extend that role into the personal sphere of players’ lives without proper training and the tools to do so. Although many of the coaches described an ideal coach as one who can guide athletes on and off the field, they reported lack of confidence and skills to comfortably and successfully make this transition.

The topic of respect toward women provoked a wide spectrum of responses. Some coaches endorsed respecting women as important, but felt that learning this respect should come from family, not from their influence as coaches:

It is very important to tell them that they should respect women. Yes, it is very essential. Another thing I would like to say is that such attitudes cannot be developed by school alone. I would say that the family background of a child is important because no matter how much we teachers work on them, such messages can get reversed as he goes home. This can make a lot of difference. No matter how much of value education we give to the child, only a conducive home environment will support the child in learning such things.

Other coaches spoke passionately about respect toward women. The basis of this respect was not founded in gender equity or equal treatment, however; rather, it was from the perspective of family respect. Coaches’ comments reflected more traditional gender roles and expectations that women are to be respected because they are “mothers” or “sisters”: “Respecting women comes from motherhood. If a child or a person respects his mother he will surely respect other women.” “Our mother is a first teacher in our life. She is also a woman. Our sister helps us. She is also a woman. You are respecting them, so why can’t you respect other women?”

Disrespectful behavior witnessed among athletes and most commonly reported by coaches was inappropriate language. Coaches felt comfortable disciplining athletes when hearing such disrespectful language, but did not connect such discipline with the need to explicitly address gender inequities implicit in such language. Only a few coaches admitted using such language themselves, such as comparing a boy’s bowling with that of a girl: “These boys tease the other boys, saying that they are playing like girls or women. I tell them, ‘Sorry, I will not accept such words.’” “Even in Indian matches, if one doesn’t ball or bat perfectly, they curse/scold using the name of mother or sisters.”

Whatever may be your professional position in society, be it the “security guard” or a “peon,” one should never show disrespect to a women. If any of my students will be disrespectful towards girls or women, I will definitely punish their behavior and tell them such behavior is a matter of dishonor.

For coaches, then, teaching and expecting respect from their athletes are generally regarded as part of maintaining discipline and honor, but do not necessarily extend to how their athletes use language that is degrading toward women. Coaches had varied responses to what constitutes disrespectful language toward women and girls and their role in addressing such language or behaviors, with many emphasizing that such education was the responsibility of the family.

Respect: Athletes' Perspectives

Athletes' reflections on respect concurred with those of the coaches. They described respect as something reflected through language and listening to elders. Respectful language off the field was generally something that was the purview of family. Respectful language toward coaches was endorsed, but generally, players openly discussed the use of disrespectful and baiting language on the field as an acceptable part of being a cricket athlete that was rarely addressed by coaches. Players endorsed and recognized differences between using respectful language on and off the field. Usually, such disrespectful language was directed at other boys, that is, boys putting down other players by comparing them with girls. As one athlete reflected,

It is normal for a player to tease each other and exchange abusive language when a match is on. We do not think that's abuse, we use those words to demoralize the opponent team's confidence. It's part of the game and every player does that, even international players.

We do listen to our parents in almost all matters; they are the ones who decide. My mother has taught me how I should speak with elders in my family and among my relatives. Everyone learns about respect from their parents.

Saying to someone during the match "you are playing like a girl" is not something very serious. We try to boost the confidence of our fellow players by saying like this.

It is very important during a match to make your opponent player angry, to antagonize others, to make them upset. Most of the captains of the team use abusive language to control his team mates. These are very normal. I don't think we should call this bad language.

Thus, while both boys and coaches agreed about the importance of using respectful language with elders and family as normative behavior, there was a noticeable gap in understanding the relationship between respect and gender inequitable attitudes and behaviors, with both coaches and boys describing language that is degrading toward women as part of the cricket game. For example, it is not clear whether boys perceive that respect toward girls outside of their family is a social or familial expectation, and whether coaches in fact recognize the importance of monitoring their boys' language within the cricket setting and beyond. Coaches and boys were asked to discuss their attitudes regarding gender differences more broadly.

Gender Attitudes: Coaches' Perspectives

Coaches were asked to think about gender norms, their own attitudes toward gender, and the behavior of their athletes toward girls. These discussions produced fewer examples and more probing was necessary. Some coaches were not as comfortable discussing gender and changed the subject, whereas other coaches did recognize some gender inequities and the importance of stepping in. For instance, "She is also someone's sister and someone's child . . . and if you have to misguide and misbehave with her, I would say it does not look good but very bad."

Coaches appreciated that limited equality exists between boys and girls. Within the confines of their role as coaches, many expressed equitable views toward female inclusion. As the discussion moved further and further from the sphere of cricket, however, coaches revealed attitudes that demonstrated limited recognition of discrimination against women and their own acceptance of such gender discrimination: "India is a male dominated country . . . Gents have more power. But ladies are coming forwards." "Yes, some deserve (respect). There is nothing wrong in saying this. Some women have a low image. It may be because of their obligation or economic situation." "Some women are illiterate, so men take advantage of them. Men oppress such women because they think no one will bother (about) this." For the most part, coaches did not express an understanding of gender inequities and gender roles, noting simply that cricket is a male sport.

Gender Attitudes: Athletes' Perspectives

The boys' reflections on gender differences and inequity were similar to their coaches. Respect for women is almost always discussed in terms of respect for a mother or sister. They also reflected on their own interactions with girls, both positive and negative. There was considerable reticence discussing "girlfriends" during the focus group discussions. In contrast, "eve-teasing," a term in India used to refer to sexual harassment, was discussed in detail as common and expected among themselves and their peers, and not regarded as something to be avoided.

Aggression and Violence: Coaches' Perspectives

Moving beyond gender norms, coaches were asked to reflect on aggression and violence, to provide insights for how to adapt and translate the CBIM gender violence prevention program. For coaches, aggression was discussed through two different lenses. Some coaches viewed aggression as a type of drive to be better, do better, and excel. They described aggression positively as a passion to win and as part of the game, a common and general behavior that is expected of boys. However, this type of aggression, while not negative, may not be as appropriate outside of the context of sports. The second lens through which aggression was viewed was more clearly negative, wherein athletes become antagonistic during matches: "Aggression is performance and is definitely necessary, but abusing and using foul language is not aggression; I would say that it is bad manners. It's the passion to win, determination to do well."

Regardless of the lens, while coaches define aggression in different ways, most of the coaches identified aggression as an expected aspect of the cricket game and most agreed that a certain level of aggression is valued in cricket:

See, aggression to a point is okay with me. It is essential to be aggressive. If you are not motivated enough you will not get into sports teaching. Aggression is definitely there and for that one needs to set one's limits so that one is aware that you have crossed your own personal limits in aggression, and is able to pull back.

When one has an aggressive personality, there are bound to be some destructive components in your overall make-up. I would like to say that energy is putting together a combination of mental energy, physical energy and energy from the "soul" (spiritual energy) towards achieving something. When this happens you are fully charged with energy. When there is no need for such intensity, our energy levels remain dormant. Aggression is something that brings out the destruction factor in you. This can even lead to personal loss.

Although most of the coaches recognized the importance of aggression on the field to improve an athlete's performance, they regarded the use of aggressive behaviors in other spheres of life with concern. While promoting controlled aggression on the field, the coaches did raise the importance of timely intervention when actual violence breaks out during games. Their responses varied, however, from talking to the team to suspending the players involved.

Aggression and Violence: Athletes' Perspectives

Boys shared more explicit stories regarding fights and aggression in cricket. They described using baiting language and bullying during practice. Some boys suggested that although they knew violence was wrong, they felt it was difficult to control their emotions once provoked, and that coaches rarely stepped in to stop such aggression. These reflections, in combination with those of the coaches, suggest that aggression on the field is not uncommon and, in fact, that such aggression and outbursts were expected and tolerated in cricket. The players also revealed not having an understanding of how to manage their anger in the heat of competition, and that such angry outbursts were not unexpected.

Discussion

The purpose of this formative study with cricket coaches and athletes was to explore gender norms and attitudes related to violence and aggression that operate within the community of cricket coaching and among young athletes to inform the adaptation of a U.S.-based gender violence prevention program focused on gender norms change. Interviews with coaches and focus groups with young male cricket athletes highlight the extent to which coaches and athletes articulate prevailing inequitable notions about gender as well as recognition of the power coaches wield. Coaches recognize their role in maintaining discipline as well as their role as authority figures for many of the boys.

With training and reinforcement, coaches could be effective messengers for boys about stopping disrespectful and harmful behaviors toward women and girls and promoting gender equitable attitudes. Recent studies have documented the prevalence of gender inequitable and harmful attitudes held by young males in South Asia, including a study that found that 28% to 51% of adolescent males aged 15 to 19 years held attitudes supportive of wife beating (Dalal, Lee, & Gifford, 2012). Coaches are well positioned to identify and intervene when their athletes participate in disrespectful behaviors. Understanding how to motivate coaches in the Indian setting to actively educate and intervene while maintaining their authority and “saving face” (Hall, Teten, DeGarmo, Sue, & Stephens, 2005) presents a significant challenge as CBIM is adapted for the urban Indian setting.

As role models and disciplinarians, coaches may have opportunities to discuss other aspects of life with their players. The boys who participated in this research confirmed that aggression is common in cricket, dealing with anger is a challenge, and that they would respect and invite the involvement of their coaches both on and off the field to discuss appropriate behaviors. But there remains the possibility that players may feel reluctant to engage in such conversations, and that coaches would be hesitant to probe further. Most coaches have not been trained or encouraged to think of their impact beyond the mechanics of teaching cricket skills. Any coaches’ training and ongoing support for coaches would need to provide opportunities for coaches to discuss any discomfort, and to become more comfortable with pushing boundaries with players and actively facilitating new discussions with their players. Adapting a violence prevention program that emphasizes gender norms change may be feasible with Indian cricket coaches, but is likely to require attention to defining gender equity and challenging cultural assumptions with coaches prior to implementing the program with athletes.

Coaches’ comments reflected their distinctive authoritarian role that both coaches and boys highlighted as an aspect of cricket in India. Coaches may not see being feared as a negative characteristic; instead, having athletes fearful of them affirms their role as a leader and authority figure. Because of this cultural expectation about the hierarchical structure deeply embedded among coaches and athletes, in any violence prevention program, coaches would need guidance on how to create a comfortable space for interaction on issues beyond cricket. Furthermore, coaches would need to be guided and trained explicitly on how to address social issues such as respectful behavior and stopping violence against women beyond the sports field, and how their role as coaches extends beyond simple mechanics of cricket play. Coaches might also require additional support on how to interact with athletes around sensitive issues, as most coaches are likely to be reluctant to embrace a more casual, and less authoritarian, tone in their interactions with their athletes.

While coaches seemed to recognize some dimensions of gender inequities and were willing to consider being positive bystanders ready to intervene when witnessing harmful or disrespectful behaviors, many of the coaches maintained gendered attitudes about cricket and about the differences between boys and girls. As boys and girls are rarely interacting together when the cricket coaches are present (largely because cricket remains a male-dominated sport), there was little discussion regarding coaches’

experiences intervening in disrespectful exchanges between boys and girls. Some coaches cited disappointment in “girls of today,” blaming girls for provoking derogatory comments through their dress choices or their behavior. Any adaptation of a gender-based violence prevention program would need to directly engage cricket coaches to examine their own prejudices and behaviors before they could be asked to be messengers of gender equity and non-violent behaviors among their athletes.

The findings from this formative research underscored the importance of first educating coaches about the impact of gender inequity on both men and women in India and their role in nurturing more gender equitable behaviors among the young males they oversee in cricket coaching. Thus, the adapted program (described elsewhere, see Miller et al., 2014)—“Parivartan”—involved a 3-day training of the coaches in recognizing and reflecting on gender inequitable practices in addition to several monthly intensive workshops on how to recognize disrespectful and harmful behaviors and to talk to athletes about sensitive topics such as sexual harassment. This is in marked contrast to the approach used in the U.S. CBIM program implementation, which involves a 60-min training with coaches that introduces them to the rationale for CBIM and how to use the training cards to discuss core topics with their athletes. As engaging men and boys in stopping violence against women and girls is a globally recognized public health strategy (Barker et al., 2007), identifying how much training on gender equity is necessary before coaches are ready to participate actively and positively in preventing violence against women remains a critical question as this program (and similar gender transformation programs) is adapted for different cultural settings.

In summary, the key informant interviews with coaches and focus groups with young student cricketers highlight the extent to which coaches are highly respected, influential role models for young cricketers in urban India. Findings underscore that while cricket coaches and athletes articulate prevailing inequitable notions about gender, coaches may be willing to consider being messengers for their athletes about stopping violence toward women and girls. Such efforts, however, will require training coaches in why gender equity is important, the role of gender inequitable attitudes in perpetuating violence against women, and skill building in how to speak to their young athletes about such critical social issues.

Acknowledgment

We wish to thank the many coaches and athletes who participated and shared their stories with us.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: The Nike Foundation provided funding support for this study.

References

- Abbey, A., & McAuslan, P. (2004). Longitudinal examination of male college students' perpetration of sexual assault. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 72*, 747-756.
- ATLAS.ti. (1997-2004). ATLAS.ti: The Knowledge Workbench (Version 5.0). Berlin, Germany: Thomas Muhr, Scientific Software Development.
- Banyard, V. L., Moynihan, M. M., & Plante, E. G. (2007). Sexual violence prevention through bystander education: An experimental evaluation. *Journal of Community Psychology, 35*, 463-481.
- Barker, G., Nascimento, M., Segundo, M., & Pulerwitz, J. (n.d.). *How do we know if men have changed? Promoting and measuring attitude change with young men: Lessons from Program H in Latin America*. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: Instituto Promundo, Horizons Program.
- Barker, G., Ricardo, C., & Nascimento, M. (2007). *Engaging men and boys in changing gender-based inequity in health: Evidence from programme interventions*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization.
- Bentley, C. G., Galliher, R. V., & Ferguson, T. J. (2007). Associations among aspects of interpersonal power and relationship functioning in adolescent romantic couples. *Sex Roles, 57*, 483-495.
- Berkowitz, A. (Ed.). (2002). *Fostering men's responsibility for preventing sexual assault*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Boeringer, S. (1999). Associations of rape-supportive attitudes with fraternal and athletic participation. *Violence Against Women, 5*, 81-89.
- Courtenay, W. H. (2000). Constructions of masculinity and their influence on men's well-being: A theory of gender and health. *Social Science & Medicine, 50*, 1385-1401.
- Dalal, K., Lee, M. S., & Gifford, M. (2012). Male adolescents' attitudes toward wife beating: A multi-country study in South Asia. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 50*, 437-442.
- Das, M., Ghosh, S., Verma, R., O'Connor, B., Fewer, S., Virata, M., & Miller, E. (2014). Gender attitudes and violence among urban adolescent boys in India. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, 19*, 99-112.
- Degue, S., & DiLillo, D. (2004). Understanding perpetrators of nonphysical sexual coercion: Characteristics of those who cross the line. *Violence and Victims, 19*, 673-688.
- Flood, M. (2006). *Why violence against women and girls happens, and how to prevent it: A framework and some key strategies*. Canberra: The Australia Institute.
- Foshee, V. A., Linder, F., MacDougall, J. E., & Bangdiwala, S. (2001). Gender differences in the longitudinal predictors of adolescent dating violence. *Preventive Medicine, 32*, 128-141.
- Gage, E. A. (2008). Gender attitudes and sexual behaviors: Comparing center and marginal athletes and non-athletes in a collegiate setting. *Violence Against Women, 14*, 1014-1032.
- Garcia-Moreno, C., Jansen, H. A. F. M., Ellsberg, M., Heise, L., & Watts, C. H. (2006). Prevalence of intimate partner violence: Findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence. *The Lancet, 368*, 1260-1269.
- Gidycz, C. A., Orchowski, L. M., & Berkowitz, A. D. (2011). Preventing sexual aggression among college men: An evaluation of a social norms and bystander intervention program. *Violence Against Women, 17*, 720-742.
- Hall, G. C. N., Teten, A. L., DeGarmo, D. S., Sue, S., & Stephens, K. A. (2005). Ethnicity, culture, and sexual aggression: Risk and protective factors. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 73*, 830-840.

- Hines, D. A. (2007). Predictors of sexual coercion against women and men: A multilevel, multinational study of university students. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 36*, 403-422.
- International Center for Research on Women & Instituto Promundo. (2007). *Engaging men and boys to achieve gender equality: How can we build on what we have learned?* Retrieved from <http://www.icrw.org/files/publications/Engaging-Men-and-Boys-to-Achieve-Gender-Equality-How-Can-We-Build-on-What-We-Have-Learned.pdf>.
- Jewkes, R., Dunkle, K., Nduna, M., & Shai, N. (2010). Intimate partner violence, relationship power inequity, and incidence of HIV infection in young women in South Africa: A cohort study. *The Lancet, 376*, 41-48.
- Jewkes, R., Nduna, M., Levin, J., Jama, N., Dunkle, K., Puren, A., & Duvvury, N. (2008). Impact of Stepping Stones on incidence of HIV and HSV-2 and sexual behaviour in rural South Africa: Cluster randomised controlled trial. *British Medical Journal, 337*, a506. doi: a50610.1136/bmj.
- Jewkes, R., Sikweyiya, Y., Morrell, R., & Dunkle, K. (2011). Gender inequitable masculinity and sexual entitlement in rape perpetration South Africa: Findings of a cross-sectional study. *PLoS ONE, 6*(12), e29590.
- Jewkes, R., Wood, K., & Duvvury, N. (2010). "I woke up after I joined Stepping Stones": Meanings of an HIV behavioural intervention in rural South African young people's lives. *Health Education Research, 25*, 1074-1084.
- Katz, J., Heisterkamp, H. A., & Fleming, W. M. (2011). The social justice roots of the Mentors in Violence Prevention Model and its application in a high school setting. *Violence Against Women, 17*, 684-702.
- Kerr, J. H. (2008). A critique of the development of the Competitive Aggressiveness and Anger Scale. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 9*, 721-728.
- Krug, E. G., Mercy, J. A., Dahlberg, L. L., & Zwi, A. B. (2002). The world report on violence and health. *The Lancet, 360*, 1083-1088.
- Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., Foubert, J. D., Brasfield, H. M., Hill, B., & Shelley-Tremblay, S. (2011). The Men's Program: Does it impact college men's self-reported bystander efficacy and willingness to intervene? *Violence Against Women, 17*, 743-759.
- Lyndon, A. E., Duffy, D. M., Smith, P. H., & White, J. W. (2011). The role of high school coaches in helping prevent adolescent sexual aggression: Part of the solution or part of the problem? *Journal of Sport & Social Issues, 35*, 377-399.
- Manganello, J. A. (2008). Teens, dating violence, and media use: A review of the literature and conceptual model for future research. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 9*, 3-18.
- McCauley, H., Tancredi, D., Silverman, J., Decker, M., Austin, S., McCormick, M. C., Virata, M. C., & Miller, E. (2013). Gender-Equitable Attitudes, Bystander Behavior, and Recent Abuse Perpetration Against Heterosexual Dating Partners of Male High School Athletes. *American Journal of Public Health, 103*, 1882-1887.
- McMahon, S., Postmus, J. L., & Koenick, R. A. (2011). Conceptualizing the engaging bystander approach to sexual violence prevention on college campuses. *Journal of College Student Development, 52*, 115-130.
- McMaster, L. E., Connolly, J., Pepler, D., & Craig, W. M. (2002). Peer-to-peer sexual harassment in early adolescence: A developmental perspective. *Development and Psychopathology, 14*, 91-105.
- Meier, M. (2005). *Gender equity, sport and development*. Working Paper. Geneva, Switzerland: Swiss Academy for Development Boezingenstrasse 71. Retrieved from http://assets.spor-tanddev.org/downloads/59_gender_equity_sport_and_development.pdf

- Miller, E., Das, M., Tancredi, D., McCauley, H., Virata, M., Nettiksimmons, J., et al. (2014). Evaluation of a gender-based violence prevention program for student athletes in Mumbai, India. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 29*, 758-778.
- Miller, E., Tancredi, D., McCauley, H., Decker, M., Virata, M., Anderson, H., et al. (2012). "Coaching Boys Into Men": A cluster-randomized controlled trial of a dating violence prevention program. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 51*, 431-438.
- Miller, E., Tancredi, D., McCauley, H., Decker, M., Virata, M., Anderson, H., et al. (2013). Twelve-month follow-up of a cluster-randomized controlled trial of a coach-delivered dating violence prevention program. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine, 45*, 108-112.
- Moynihan, M. M., Banyard, V. L., Arnold, J. S., Eckstein, R. P., & Stapleton, J. G. (2011). Engaging intercollegiate athletes in preventing and intervening in sexual and intimate partner violence. *Journal of American College Health, 59*, 197-204.
- Nahar, P., Van Reeuwijk, M., & Reis, R. (2013). Contextualising sexual harassment of adolescent girls in Bangladesh. *Reproductive Health Matters, 21*, 78-86.
- Noonan, R. K., & Charles, D. (2009). Developing teen dating violence prevention strategies: Formative research with middle school youth. *Violence Against Women, 15*, 1087-1105.
- Pellegrini, A. D. (2001). A longitudinal study of heterosexual relationships, aggression, and sexual harassment during the transition from primary school through middle school. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 22*, 119-133.
- Pulerwitz, J., Segundo, M., Nascimento, M., & Barker, G. (2006). *Promoting more gender-equitable norms and behaviors among young men as an HIV/AIDS prevention strategy*. Washington, DC: Population Council.
- Reed, E., Silverman, J. G., Raj, A., Rothman, E. F., Decker, M. R., Gottlieb, B., et al. (2008). Social and environmental contexts of adolescent and young adult perpetrators of intimate partner violence. *American Journal of Men's Health, 2*, 260-272.
- Ryan, G., & Bernard, H. (2000). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 769-802). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Santana, M. C., Raj, A., Decker, M. R., La Marche, A., & Silverman, J. G. (2006). Masculine gender roles associated with increased sexual risk and intimate partner violence perpetration among young adult men. *Journal of Urban Health, 83*, 575-585.
- Stein, N. (1995). Sexual harassment in school: The public performance of gendered violence. *Harvard Educational Review, 65*, 145-162.
- Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (2000). *Full report of the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence against women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.
- United Nations Population Fund, & Promundo. (2010). *Engaging men and boys in gender equality and health*. New York: Author.
- Verma, R., Pulerwitz, J., Mahendra, V., Khandekar, S., Barker, G., Fulpagare, P., & Singh, S. K. (2006). Challenging and changing gender attitudes among young men in Mumbai, India. *Reproductive Health Matters, 14*, 135-143.
- Verma, R., Pulerwitz, J., Mahendra, V., Khandekar, S., Singh, A. K., Das, S. S., et al. (2008). *Promoting gender equity as a strategy to reduce HIV risk and gender-based violence among young men in India*. Washington, DC: Population Council.
- Warkentin, J., & Gidycz, C. (2007). The use and acceptance of sexually aggressive tactics in college men. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 22*, 829-850.
- Watts, C., & Zimmerman, C. (2002). Violence against women: Global scope and magnitude. *The Lancet, 359*, 1232-1237.

Weitzman, E. A. (1999). Analyzing qualitative data with computer software. *Health Services Research, 34*, 1241-1263.

World Health Organization. (2011). *Violence against women: Intimate partner and sexual violence against women*. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs239/en/>

Author Biographies

Elizabeth Miller, MD, PhD, is the chief of Adolescent Medicine and an associate professor of pediatrics at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. Trained in medical anthropology as well as internal medicine and pediatrics, her research focuses on the impact of gender-based violence on young women's health. She conducts research on brief clinical interventions to reduce partner violence and unintended pregnancy as well as gender-based violence prevention programs in the community, such as "Coaching Boys into Men" (CBIM) described in this article.

Madhumita Das, PhD, is a senior technical specialist with the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) with more than 12 years of experience in academic research and communicating results to policy makers. She holds a doctorate in demography from the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India, and has been working in the development sector since 1999. Her expertise includes providing technical support in processing and management of large-scale data as well as qualitative research focusing on the reproductive health of women, gender studies with a special focus on men and boys, gender-based violence, and HIV/AIDS.

Ravi Verma, PhD, regional director of the ICRW Asia Regional Office, has more than 25 years of research experience in the area of reproductive health, gender mainstreaming, and HIV/AIDS in India and other countries in Asia. He has a PhD in social sciences from the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai, India and master of arts in psychology, University of Allahabad, India. He has worked extensively on promoting gender equity, working with men and boys. He has been instrumental in creating programs promoting gender equity, including a program called Gender Equity Movement in Schools (GEMS), which is with young schoolchildren, and International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), with men ages 18 to 59 years.

Brian O'Connor holds a master's degree from Columbia University and is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists. As the director of Public Education Campaigns and Programs for Futures Without Violence, he crafts national and international violence prevention public awareness and action campaigns for the organization, which focus on reaching men, parents, coaches, teachers, military families, and teens. His efforts have enabled local adaptations of these programs in communities around the world. In particular, his work engaging men and boys to help end violence against women was instrumental in the development of the international CBIM initiative.

Sancheeta Ghosh, MPS, is a research associate formerly with ICRW (while the study was conducted) and now with Breakthrough. She has more than 5 years of experience in academic and programmatic research. She has submitted her doctoral dissertation in development studies under an Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Fellowship from the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, India, and holds a master's in population sciences from the International Institute for Population Sciences. Her area of expertise includes quantitative and qualitative research in reproductive health, maternal health, gender and development, and program management.

Maria Catrina D. Jaime completed her master's in public health at the University of California, Davis. Currently, she is a senior clinical research coordinator in the Division of Adolescent Medicine. She has been the project manager of the CBIM research study and has worked closely with athletes and coaches in 16 public high schools in Sacramento, California. She is involved in adaptation of CBIM for middle schools and the CBIM national program evaluation. She is currently a doctoral student in the Department of Community and Behavioral Health Sciences at the Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh.

Heather L. McCauley is assistant professor in the Division of Adolescent Medicine, Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She holds an ScD in social epidemiology and an ScM in global health from Harvard University. Her research focuses on the health impacts of gender-based violence against women and girls. She was part of a team developing and testing violence prevention interventions for pregnant women in urban slums in Mumbai, India, and measuring the sexual and reproductive health impacts of sex trafficking in South Asia. She was also the data analyst for the evaluation of the U.S.-based CBIM program.