

Domestic Violence and Wives' Depressive Symptoms in China: The Moderating Role of Gender Ideology

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Abstract : Domestic violence (DV) victims are at a greater risk of suffering mental health problems; however, not all victims experience the same degree of depression. Women respond differently to gender inequalities based on their gender ideologies. This study explored the moderating role of gender ideology in the relation between exposure to DV and depression. Data were drawn from a sub-sample of women aged 18-60 from the Third WaveSurvey on the Social Status of Women in China (N = 10,701). The survey adopted a stratified three-stage sampling design to select a representative sample of respondents from the country. Regression models were used to examine the moderating effects of gender ideology on the relation between DV and depression. Women who reported DV experience had more severe depressive symptoms after controlling for confounding social-demographic factors ($\beta = 0.592$, 95% CI: 0.489 - 0.695). Women's gender ideology moderated the association between DV severity and depression ($\beta = -0.049$, 95% CI: -0.085 - -0.013), despite being subjected to the same levels of victimization. The experience of domestic violence is a useful indicator for routine screening for depression in clinic and community settings. Interventions that aim to decrease depression caused by DV are more likely to be effective if they promote more egalitarian gender ideology to counter the mindset that a woman's role is confined to the home and a family suffers if the wife participates in the labor force.

Keywords : domestic violence against wives, depression, gender ideology, moderation

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