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Six Out Of Ten Male Drug-Addicts Abuse Their Partners

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A research conducted at the University of Granada has revealed a high rate of gender-based violence –both physical and psychological– directed by drug-addict men against their partners. The study also detailed the type of violence perpetrated. Personal control, sexual abuse, emotional neglect and emotional blackmail out of guilt are the most prevalent forms of abuse in this collective.

According to a study conducted at the Department of Pedagogy of the University of Granada, about six out of ten male drug-abusers direct some type of violence against their intimate partners. Thus, the study revealed a high rate of domestic violence –both physical and psychological– by male drug-abusers against women. The study also detailed the most recurrent forms of abuse, as well as the variables associated to them.

The study revealed that between 6.5 and 72.4% of the population admits to having committed some form of violence against their partner. The less prevalent conduct was "I forced her to abort against her will" (6.5%), and the most prevailing being "I show total disregard for her needs, wishes and interests". In addition, 63.5% of the respondents ensured that they wanted to know what their partner makes at all times of the day, their hours, whom they speak to...". The rate of physical violence oscillates between 6.5% and 21%, while psychological violence varies between 7.3% and 72.4%.

They Are Aware

The study revealed that 51% of male drug-abusers are aware of their committing violence against their partners and, although they know that such violence has a deep impact on their partners, they are not willing to break off, or to let their spouses abandon them, thus resorting to whatever strategies are necessary.

Additionally, psychological violence is more frequent than physical violence in this collective. The most representative forms of violence being, by order of incidence: personal control, sexual abuse, emotional neglect, emotional blackmail out of guilt, disregard for their ideology or religion, abuse based on gender roles, emotional blackmail through enforcement, economic abuse, emotional blackmail out of fear, loss of personal control and social isolation.

This research was carried out by Amelia Matute López, and conducted by professor Andrés Soriano Díaz. The author took a sample of 153 men aged between 20 and 65 years, attending some of rehabilitation units in Andalusia; all of them were cocaine, alcohol, heroin or heroin-cocaine abusers. The study was a questionnaire-based prevalence survey of spousal abuse, containing also some questions to obtain some information on the variables selected.

The research conducted at the University of Granada revealed that 78.8% of the couples ended in separation, although such separation was generally temporary. In most of the cases, the couple ended getting back together. "Despite their negative effect on their health and well-being, women remain in this type of relationship as a result of the pressure exerted by their male partners and of the romantic myths of unconditional and imbalanced love" –Amelia Matute states.

This research contributes to better understanding the phenomenon of gender-based violence, in a sector of the population that had not been previously studied. In Spain, there are some studies based on the general population, but not on specific sectors of the population that could be considered of high-risk, such as it is the case of drug-abusers, as this study reveals.

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