

“When hegemonic
masculinity is challenged: studying
processes of deviance and social control
through QLR”

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Introduction

- ❖ What we have studied?
 - ❖ Social representations about masculinity
 - ❖ Processes of deviance and social control
 - ❖ Abused men in Spain
- ❖ How?
 - ❖ In depth interviews → Life story (QLR)
 - ❖ Sample
- ❖ Some results
- ❖ Some questions related to QLR

It has been a taboo subject.

- ❖ Possible explanations for lack of recognition and visibility:
- ❖ Reduced number compared with women
- ❖ Prevalence of feminist sociology and queer theory
- ❖ Attribution of physical force to men
- ❖ Perceived as minor assaults
- ❖ Reluctance to accept female violence

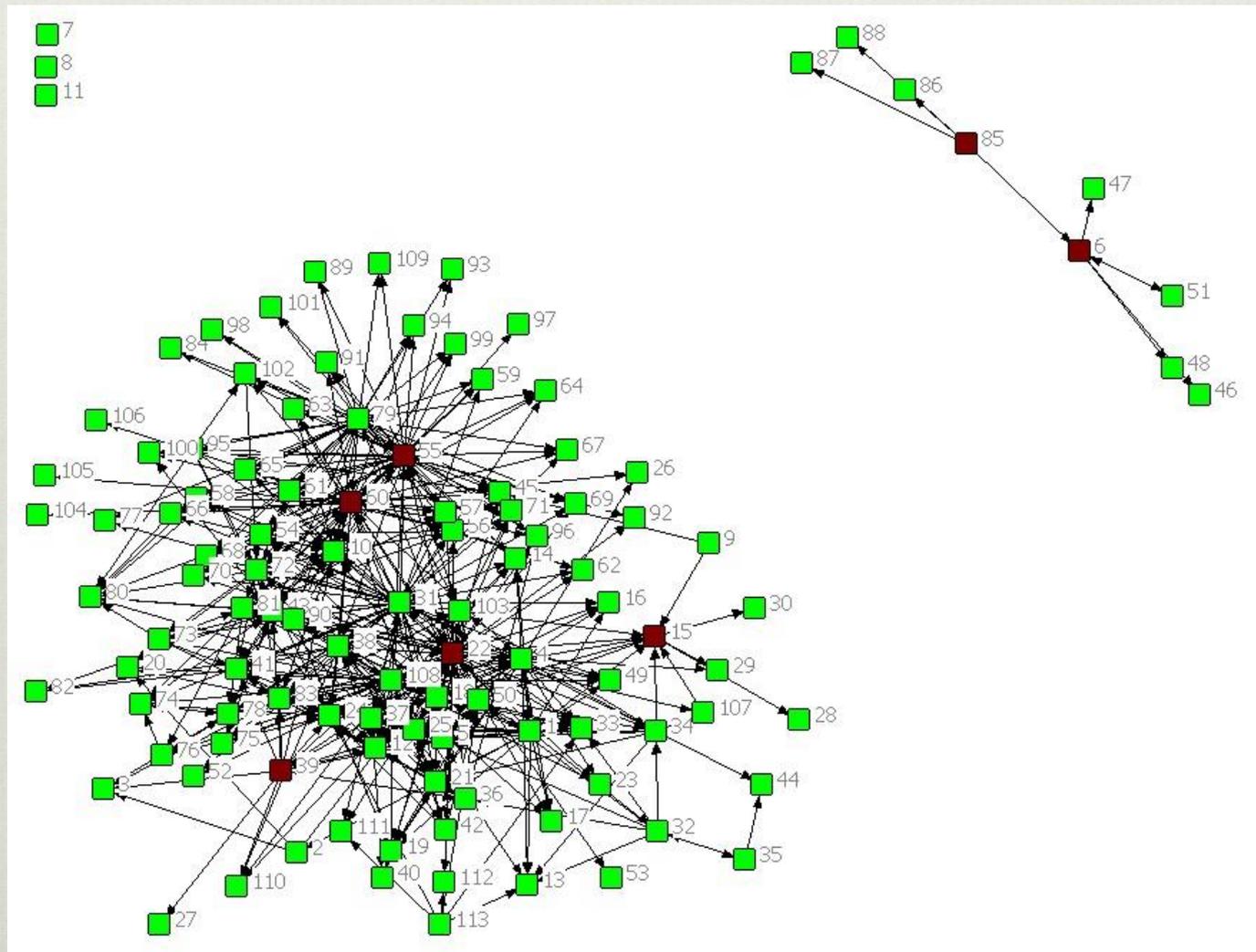
Sample

- ❖ self-declared heterosexual men who claim to have suffered or still suffer physical and/or psychological violence by their women (why heterosexual?)
- ❖ is of thirty- to sixty-year-old men of diverse social backgrounds and professional designations. Most male respondents had underage children at the time of the first interview. Contact has been made with men from different areas of Spain, but most of the men in the sample live in Catalonia.

How can we find those men?

- ❖ The first interviews with the subjects resulted from snowball sampling techniques, attempting also to find cases of men who had revealed their situation using mass media or public Internet forums (Network)
- ❖ This task itself was not easy due to an initial fear of expressing their situation. Because of that, to achieve the goals of the study, more than one interview was attempted with each subject, following the philosophy of Longitudinal Qualitative Analysis applied to the construction of life stories through successive interviews

Network of associations



Media: “an exceptional case”.

Examples related to the stories of our subjects

- ❖ TV3_Paco: “... even though violence is **primarily** exerted on women, there exists a very real **minority**: that of the abused males. Paco is among the few who dare to openly report it. (...). Although more than ninety **percent** of the people killed by their partners are women, there is another group, that of abused men, who remain **invisible** in our society nowadays.”
- ❖ Diario de Mallorca_Ramón: “Violence **against women** is a serious problem affecting our society and in the **vast majority** of cases it consists of male aggression towards women. But there is also the **opposite case**. Men abused by their wives”.

Cope social attributions

- ❖ “I think there are many **men who would not report abuse because of pride, of not wanting to say ‘my wife beats me’**. I **felt embarrassed to leave my house**. I’d go outside, look to the side, see the neighbourhood and go back in. **I was ashamed** because indoors she had told me everything and neighbours heard everything. I felt ashamed and I felt humiliated. Nobody can take this away. In fact, if you go to the police, you know what you’re going to find. **I have heard women saying ‘what! Is this an abused man? There is no such thing as an abused man!’**.” (Ramón)
- ❖ “Everybody in the neighbourhood has seen you. They do not know why you were taken to the police station, **but they always think of the same reason**: because he has assaulted her, he has insulted her ... but maybe that's not the way it is.” (Enric)

Cope social reactions

- ❖ “There are those who get to know more than others about this issue. Look, for example, on the day I went to do report physical injury, an employee who saw the wound on my forehead asked me what happened. **I answered 'my wife beat me'. And she began to laugh.** I was serious and then she became serious too, and said, **'I'm sorry, I thought you were joking'.**” (Alberto)
- ❖ “I used to tell about this to my parents, my closest friend... and basically nobody else. Because, what can you do? what can you say? **Your friends will comfort you at first, but as soon as you've turned the corner, they will laugh.** Look... when something's happened in your life... and you tell them, but it is not normal **and it is shocking**, you are going to be laughed at, and if you're unlucky in your face!” (Alberto)

Some men's strategies to cope with their situation

- ❖ Related to (in)visibility
 - ❖ Demonstrate veracity
 - ❖ Use media
 - ❖ Search for social capital
- ❖ Related to masculinity
 - ❖ Denial physical abuse. Potentiate psychological aggression
 - ❖ Distance themselves from hegemonic masculinity
- ❖ Use perception of institutional violence

Forms of aggression

- ❖ “When you were together were there any instances of physical violence? -he is asked- No. Zero. **Because I knew her. I saw how I was supposed to behave.** That is, accept everything she says and everything she wants. And I **just try to get some space at home.** Either you go home or I will call the local police told me screaming. And I knelt before her. (...). We were going home to their parents every day, every day! **My family was totally forgotten, and my friends too.**”
(Juan)

New forms of masculinity

- ❖ “I’ve never wanted to be like my father. He was all, I sit here and you bring me food, bring me this, bring me that ... such was education during those years. But I wanted a different model. If you ask my son, ‘have you ever seen your mother iron?’, he’ll say ‘no’ ‘have you seen dad ironing?’ He’ll tell you ‘always’. **My son sees me do the shopping, cooking, ironing... things that are natural.** They aren't women things, they are natural things.” (Juan)

Fatherhood and 'institutional violence'

- ❖ “It was not a matter of leaving my partner, it was a matter of **leaving a child** you have been feeding, changing diapers ... Psychologically, it affects a lot.” (Enric)
- ❖ "I have been an abused man. I have been physically and psychologically abused, **but what makes me suffer more is the persistent abuse of justice that has separated me from my daughters**” (Paco)

(Re)Define discourse on gender-based violence

- ❖ Complexity of defining social and legal position
- ❖ VULNERABILITY?
- ❖ I'm a victim?
- ❖ I have to compare with women position in IPV?
- ❖ Items to compare with women? Necessary?
- ❖ How I understand feminism?

A kind of conclusion

- ❖ “Ramón, we can say it clearly, there’s a sentence that confirms it, **you are a victim of gender domestic violence**”. To this Ramón replies: “Well, you can say this if you wish, **but legally and socially it is not so**. I am a victim of domestic violence. This should be clear because **I am a man and not a woman**” (Ramón).

Some questions related to QLR

- ❖ How QLR could be useful when studying processes of deviance and social control?
- ❖ How QLR could minimize problems of discourses derived from non-normative social experiences and taboo subjects?
- ❖ How QLR could help us to present and organize our results (in this type of research)?

How QLR could be useful when studying processes of deviance and social control?

❖ DEVIANCE:

- ❖ Exists an initial fear to express their situation. → successive interviews helps with the interaction with the interviewer
- ❖ QLR provides further insight into these men's experiences, helping clarify the complexity of the subject and minimize the difficulty of expressing conflict.
- ❖ New dimensions could emerge through the process of interaction

How QLR could minimize problems of discourses derived from non-normative social experiences and taboo subjects?

- ❖ Successive interviews helps to control the prospective and retrospective process of the construction of their story and their actual identity discourse.
- ❖ Reviving their experiences (repeatedly) involves rethinking some questions about their own situation as:
 - ❖ I'm a victim? (vulnerability)
 - ❖ I have to compare with women position in IPV?
 - ❖ How I understand feminism?
 - ❖ ...

How QLR could help us to present and organize our results

- ❖ *Paco: “You feel out of society”*
- ❖ *Ramón: “I have a phone that is given to battered women”*
- ❖ *Enric: “It’s hard to recognize that you’re a battered man”*
- ❖ *Sergio: “I would like that somebody listen to me”*
- ❖ *Ángel: “Sometimes seems that the ‘macho’ can’t explain this”*
- ❖ *Juan: “I’d never want to be like my father”*
- ❖ *Alberto: “Your friends will laugh if you explain this”*
- ❖ *Manel: “It’s hard to detect it. Because of that, you cannot communicate”*
- ❖ *Emili: “I didn’t feel physically abused because it doesn’t hurt”*
- ❖ *Luis: “I recognize that I also bit her”*

Thanks to all