



## Realisation and Relationships

Men, Masculinity, and Violence against Women: Analysis of an Intervention

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### Abstract:

Violence against women is a significant problem in all corners of the globe and is also seen as a widespread problem in India. Some efforts to reduce violence against women have started to engage men as activists in addressing this issue. The current study focuses on activists of Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women (MASVAW), a network of male activists engaged in addressing gender-based violence in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. The purpose of the study is two-fold: to determine the extent to which and how core MASVAW activists incorporate gender-equitable views and practices into their own lives; and to measure the influence of such men on the lives of men around them. The study included three groups: core activists within the MASVAW network (Group 1); men with whom the core activists had conducted outreach (Group 2); and a control group of men who had no contact with MASVAW activists (Group 3). Some of the domains that were explored included parenting, domestic work participation, husband-wife relationship, sexuality and masculinity. Men who had been the focus of MASVAW activism (Group 2) scored significantly higher on measures of gender-equitable beliefs and practices than men who had no interaction with MASVAW, suggesting that MASVAW activism is successful in many domains. The MASVAW core activists scored highest of all, suggesting that core activists do incorporate gender-equitable practices and beliefs into their private lives. However there were some areas where even the MASVAW core activists had low scores suggesting need for additional inputs.

### Introduction

#### *Context*

Violence against women, particularly violence by family members, is a significant problem in all corners of the globe. In India, like in many other countries, it is considered a private matter and as such violence is substantially under-reported. However, survey research reveals significantly high rates of violence against women in India. In a survey of 10,000 households, 50 percent of women reported physical or psychological violence and 40.3 percent of women said that they had been physically abused, which included slapping, hitting, kicking, beating, threats or use of weapons and forced sex (INCLIN, 2000; ICRW 1999). This was subsequently confirmed by the National Family Health Survey 3 (2005-06). Both structural and ideological factors contribute to the frequency of violence in India. In addition to the stigma attached to women who leave their families, women are often financially dependent on their husband's families and unable to leave violent situations. Furthermore, conceptions of masculinity and views on the appropriate relationship between men and women not only tolerate but accept violence against women as a normal part of marriage (ICRW, 2002).

The widespread occurrence and acceptance of violence against women in India has led activists to reconsider their strategies for preventing it. Until recently, interventions focused on women. Typically, activists focused on supporting and transforming the choices of women in violent situations. Men were rarely interviewed by researchers or targeted for intervention. However, it has



become clear that in order to transform the lives of women, their husbands, brothers and fathers must be the subjects of intervention as well. There is also recognition that not all men are perpetrators, and that those who are not violent may be key resources in the fight against violence (ICRW, 2002). Networks such as Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women (MASVAW) reach out to men who are not themselves violent but who may feel personally unequipped to fight violence in their homes and communities. MASVAW connects to men in a diverse range of professions and communities, creating a network of like-minded individuals that provides training and support in how to stop and prevent violence against women. MASVAW prepares these men to become activists themselves, with the aim that they will reach out to other men within their communities. Crucially, this strategy enables the movement for change to occur within the institutions where violence against women is permitted.

### ***Past Research***

Research suggests that violence against women is strongly tied to prevailing ideologies of masculinity (ICRW, 2002), and gender - power disparities. According to past studies, rates of violence against women increase when events occur that undermine masculine identities (Moore, 1994). A man may become violent when his wife challenges his authority (Fuller, 1994) or if his wife is able to earn a living, particularly if this occurs at a time when he is not able to do so (Silberschmidt, 2001). Recent studies from Bangladesh (Koenig 2003) and India (Mogford and Das 2007) additionally show that women's exposure to violence is also a result of the state of empowerment or autonomy of women. In more culturally conservative settings greater autonomy was related to greater risk of domestic conflict and violence. In less conservative settings women's autonomy ceased to be a risk factor (reported in CHSJ 2009) . Threats to male authority need not come from the household alone: one study found increased rates of violence against women in Israel when the country was under threat, but men had not yet been enlisted in the country's defense (Klein, 1999). Such men may have felt helpless given the threat to national security, as they lacked the ability to engage in acts to protect the country. Such helplessness may have triggered an increased need to assert authority in the home.

The insights from this research have triggered a new approach to working with men to stop violence against women. Interventions are beginning to target not only the behavior of men, but also the beliefs and attitudes that provoke and support their behavior. For example, MASVAW aims to equip men with the skills and legal knowledge to combat violence against women, but they also target ideologies of masculinity. Trainings, workshops, and meetings aim to engage men in an examination of their own beliefs and attitudes, as well as to discuss these beliefs and attitudes effectively in their communities.

A previous qualitative study investigated the beliefs and attitudes about masculinity and violence held by core MASVAW activists (Mogford and Das, 2007). The different domains of change that this study indicated were as follows:

- Increased understanding of violence and discrimination against women.
- Recognition of one's own discriminatory and violent practices, and efforts to change at the individual level. Sharing of household work and childcare responsibilities.
- Increased respect for wife including deepening of friendship and cessation of non-consensual



sex.

- Providing more opportunities to wife and respect for her autonomy.
- New management of conflict and anger.
- Broader range of emotional expressions.
- Better friendships with peers – more listening, sharing and depth.
- Leadership, mentoring and influencing others.

This follow up quantitative study not only tries to validate these changes through a larger quantitative examination, but also attempts to understand the effect of men's activism on other men, by examining the beliefs, attitudes, and practices of three groups: core activists within MASVAW; men with whom they have worked with in their community level campaigns; and a control group of men who had no contact with MASVAW activists. This is particularly important to understand the need and methodologies of working with men on gender issues given the increasing international focus on engaging men as active partners in the fight to stop violence against women.

### **Setting of the study**

This study was undertaken in Uttar Pradesh (UP), where MASVAW started its journey and has been most active. This North Indian state is India's most populous, and more than 80 percent of the population resides in rural areas. Uttar Pradesh is plagued by high levels of poverty. It ranks 13<sup>th</sup> out of 15 states in the Indian human development index (Govt. of India Planning Commission, 2001). The per capita income of the state is one of the lowest in the country, and five of the six districts in the current study (Pratapgarh, Gazipur, Banda, Mirzapur and Barabanki) rank far below average income for the state. UP is also far behind other states in terms of social development indicators like medical facilities, teacher-pupil ratio in primary schools, birth rate, death rate, infant mortality rate, and literacy. It is second only to Bihar in incidence of malnutrition among children under five. In addition to widespread poverty, significant disparity in the distribution of wealth exists, particularly between upper caste Hindus on the one hand and lower caste Hindus and Muslims on the other (Govt. of UP, 2006).

### ***Status of Women***

The status of women in Uttar Pradesh is also among the lowest in India. Women's autonomy is highly restricted, as is their access to basic services such as healthcare and education. Approximately one out of every fifteen maternal deaths that occurs internationally happens in Uttar Pradesh. Fewer than half of all girls are literate (42.98 percent) and 61 percent of girls marry before the age of 18 (USAID, 2008). Of the 42.98 percent of girls who are literate, only 40 percent completed eight years of school (USAID, 2008). When girls marry, they typically live with the family of their husband, a context in which they have little or no autonomy and are often mistreated (Giffeths et al., 2001). Efforts to improve the status of women have at times prompted change in name only: anecdotal evidence suggests that women elected to panchayats (local governing councils) are often not allowed to attend meetings, and at times are not even aware that they have been elected. Instead, the husband or other male family member fills her role in public meetings and in decision-making (often called



the *bahu-beti* panchayati raj where daughter and daughter-in-law are officially elected to enable the men to participate).

Finally, violence against women is a common occurrence in Uttar Pradesh: the state ranks second (after Andhra Pradesh) in crimes against women. Gender-based violence is vastly under-reported, both by women themselves and by policemen who may be called to such cases. However the numbers are still high. According to State Police Department Records, a total of 14,925 crimes against women were registered in 2006. These included 1,795 dowry deaths, 1,161 rapes, and 2,295 kidnappings. Women are also victimized for marrying in other castes/religions, rejecting an arranged marriage or engaging in pre-marital/extra-marital relations. Strikingly, the majority of crimes against women are committed by family members (Govt. of UP, 2006). Strong cultural norms governing masculinity, rigid beliefs about the place of women in relation to men, and socio-economic barriers to women's autonomy all contribute to the frequency of violence against women in UP. In fact, past research has suggested that violence against women is considered normative rather than exceptional (Martin et al., 2002).

### **MASVAW**

MASVAW or Men's Action to Stop Violence Against Women is a campaign, that was initiated in 2002 and has subsequently spread over forty districts in the states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal. MASVAW activists include youth in university and colleges, rural adolescents, school and university teachers, media persons, social activists, academicians, and local elected councilors in rural areas. The activists involved in the campaign believe that even in the most patriarchal society, there are men that are non-violent and want to establish a gender equitable relationship. MASVAW provides these boys and men support to be able to take a personal and where necessary, a public stand against violence against women in their society. It also provides a safe space for the boys and men to express their own concerns and emotions. The key activities of MASVAW include trainings and workshops with men on gender, masculinity and sexuality, periodic campaigns on violence against women, providing support to women who face violence by linking them up with crisis response centres and so on. MASVAW activists organize different activities in whichever space they happen to be located in – thus teachers in schools and colleges conduct classes and conduct competitions like quiz and debates; those in the media report events more sensitively, those in NGOs organize men's and youth groups and provide them periodic training and so on. One of the key principles of MASVAW has been to constantly relate to the women's movement and thus MASVAW members also participate in programmes organized by women's rights organizations in their work areas. Thus the four pillars of MASVAW activities at the community level are:

- Group education at the community level through trainings and workshops.
- Men's and youth groups and networks for learning, reflection and action.
- Periodic campaigns to raise awareness among the general community and to recruit others into the groups.
- Linking up with Women's Groups.

Detailed documentation of MASVAW and its activities are available elsewhere (Bhandari (2008), MASVAW (Undated), MASVAW (2004)



## **Current Study**

Two objectives guide the current study. Firstly, this study seeks to add a quantitative measure to previous qualitative work on the extent to which core MASVAW activists report gender equitable beliefs and behaviors in their personal lives. Secondly, we aim to understand the effect of participation in MASVAW activities through a comparison of the gender-related beliefs and practices of three groups: Core MASVAW activists, the men targeted by MASVAW activism, and a control sample of men who have not been exposed to MASVAW activism. Our objective is to identify the extent to which men who have been exposed to and or who participate in MASVAW activities reveal more gender-equitable beliefs and practices than men who have not been targeted.

## **Methodology**

*Sampling* – The study used a sampling methodology which was part convenience and part deliberate. This was done because there were very limited resources available for conducting the study. The sample size was drawn up arbitrarily. Considering the arbitrary and purposive components of the sampling methodology some care was also taken to keep some degree of randomness in the model as well, to facilitate generalization. While the total sample size was drawn up arbitrarily it was not very small at 375 persons in three groups. Participants were sampled from three groups: two intervention groups (Group 1 and Group 2) and one control group (Group 3). Intervention Group 1 comprised of men who are active in MASVAW activities either at their district level or at the state level. They were all members of their district MASVAW Forum. Group 2 or MASVAW influenced men, were drawn from a sample of villages where MASVAW members had conducted some campaign or activity.

A two stage sampling process was adopted. In the first stage five active MASVAW districts were chosen from among the twenty districts in UP where MASVAW was active. The number five was chosen arbitrarily, although a deliberate process was used to identify them. Two senior MASVAW core group members conducted a study through field visits to all twenty districts inspecting records and conducting interviews to rate and rank the district units. Various parameters used in rating and ranking districts. . Criteria used to rate and rank MASVAW district units included regular meetings and minute register maintained, maintain list of members, participation in collective MASVAW campaign, independent district unit initiated activities and so on. Based on their assessment five of the most active districts were selected for this study. These districts included Banda, Chitrakoot, Gazipur, Mirzapur and Pratapgarh. There are about 500 ‘active’ MASVAW members associated with the 20 MASVAW district team. It was decided to sample 100 among these members. It was decided to include 15 members from each of these selected districts and also include 25 persons from the MASVAW core group, which includes 2 or 3 members from each of the district fora and other members who are teachers from universities, media persons, NGO workers who are based cities and not directly affiliated to the MASVAW district units. Finally instead of 100 a total of 98 MASVAW associated individuals were part of the survey. Thus it can be said that Group One comprises of the ‘active’ members of MASVAW who participate in and sometimes direct MASVAW campaigns on issues such as property rights for women, participation of women in public life, rights of the girl child, and protection of women from domestic violence. These campaigns include activities such as candlelight vigils, street theatre, and discussion groups. Group One men also facilitate or participate in training sessions on topics such as gender, masculinity, and the causes of domestic violence.

It was arbitrarily decided to include 175 individuals in Group Two. In order to select Group Two respondents, we decided to include 35 individuals from each district. In order to introduce some



degree of randomness to the sample we asked the MASVAW activists from the District Forum of the five districts to make lists of those villages which are exposed to MASVAW campaigns and activities. From these lists, 5 villages were selected randomly and 7 people from each village were subsequently selected randomly for interview. The random selection of the seven persons who were chosen from each village was done by meeting with and talking to people randomly ie. knocking on a door and asking permission, talking to someone at a tea-shop, speaking with somebody walking on the streets etc. No effort was made to draw up house-lists or village maps to achieve randomness. The characteristic common to MASVAW Influenced group is that they had a high possibility of being exposed to activities and campaigns conducted by the MASVAW District Forum members.

For the third group it was initially it was decided to include 125 men in the third group ( making a total sample of 400), but due to some operational limitations only 100 persons were included. The method adopted in selecting this group was to include Barabanki district, where MASVAW had no activities. However the reasons why Barabanki was chosen was primarily for its convenience as it is located close to Lucknow, and the research team knew someone who was familiar with the district. A list of blocks was drawn up and five blocks chosen at random. The list of villages was drawn up for each of these five blocks and two villages were chosen at random. Random choices were made using the lottery method. Once the villages had been chosen ten men were interviewed from each of these ten villages using the random field interview method that had been adopted in the earlier stage. No matching on any variable was done in selecting the control group.

*Data Collection* – A structured survey was developed and administered orally in Hindi to respondents of all the three groups, after obtaining their verbal consent. All respondents were given a pre-tested questionnaire containing 43 questions relating to attitudes, 14 questions related to actions, and 10 questions related to decision making covering a large number of domains. Survey items covered gender-related beliefs, behaviors, and laws. Specifically, the survey was designed to measure six domains that were identified through previous qualitative work (Mogford and Das 2007) . These domains included:

- Attitudes toward gender stereotypes, violence against women and women’s autonomy.
- Male participation in domestic work.
- Male attitudes toward and participation in parenting.
- Respondents' relationship with their wife.
- Knowledge of laws that protect women and children.
- Attitudes towards sexuality, and masculinity.

Our aim was to understand differences in the proportion of gender-equitable responses for these issues, which had been seen to be relevant in previous qualitative work. Given the ways in which these domains are interrelated, some of the items fell into more than one category. Thus the domains were not mutually exclusive. For example, the statement: “It is okay for a man to have sex with his wife even if she is not ready to do so”; was included as an item in the domain of “sexuality attitudes” as well as “attitudes toward relationship with wife.” Responses were limited to a Likert scale of: “totally agree,” “partially agree” “never thought about it” and “disagree” for questions



about beliefs and attitudes; “Yes I know” “Never heard” or “heard but know very little” for questions about knowledge of laws; and combinations of familial roles for questions about participation in domestic work and decision-making (e.g. “mostly wife,” “mostly husband,” “shared equally”). The survey questionnaire was refined after pilot testing and the survey team underwent a two day training to conduct the training.

*Data Analysis* – To analyze the data, survey items were grouped into domains and sub-domains as discussed above and responses were first coded as gender equitable or not. Responses were coded as gender-equitable only if they were non-ambivalent answers. For example, on items such as “Married women shouldn't have rights in their father's property,” only “disagree” was coded as gender-equitable while “partially agree,” “haven't thought about it” and “agree” were not. Secondly, sub-domain and domain scores were calculated by giving each gender-equitable response a value of 1, and adding the score for each sub domain and domain. Finally, sub-domain and domain scores were converted into “highly gender equitable”, “moderately gender equitable”, and “low gender equitable” depending on whether the score was more than 75 percent of the maximum domain score, between 51 percent and 75 percent of the domain score or below 50 percent of the domain score. Intergroup comparison was conducted and simple statistical tests were applied for validity of results.

### ***Limitations***

This study has two sets of limitations. The first set of limitations is related to methodology used and the second are related to the study team. The first methodology related limitation is pertains to the sampling method used. Secondly this is a cross-sectional study attempting to understand change through two comparison groups. A longitudinal study that examines change over time would have provided a more rigorous assessment of MASVAW influence. Also this is an exclusively quantitative study and follows a previous qualitative study that was conducted by MASVAW associates. A mixed-methods study could have helped in a more nuanced understanding of the reasoning and perceptions of MASVAW activists. Third, this study is based on self-reported responses and it is not possible to estimate the extent to which respondents provided “socially desirable” answers. A comparison of responses to traditionally worded statements and progressively worded statements has been conducted to reduce the impact of such socially desirable responses in the overall analysis. Finally, the study would be improved by a sampling strategy that selected for similar levels of education and socio-economic status across groups.

The second set of limitations relates to the overall mechanism through which this study was conducted. As mentioned earlier MASVAW is a campaign and has access to limited funds for its secretariat activities through a project from OXAM India. This study was designed and conducted by individuals who are closely associated with, or are part of the MASVAW Core Group in order to understand the nature and extent of changes that have taken place or are possible through a low intensity intervention like MASVAW. Thus it is not a third party assessment, and may therefore indicate some conflict of interest. The resources available for this study were limited and the participation of some field researchers was voluntary. The low resource base also limited the sample size of the study. While the study sample is small, and the researchers personally motivated, care was taken to design the study carefully and sample respondents systematically in order to avoid bias.

### **Results**

**Introduction to the Study Group***Table-1. Age and other characteristics of the 3 respondent groups.*

<b>Age Group ( in years)</b>	Overall	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
18 – 25	97	13	60	27
26 – 35	152	44	60	48
36 – 45	85	32	34	16
46 – 55	30	7	17	6
56 above	9	2	4	3
Total (n)	373	98	175	100
Mean age (in years)	32.7	34.4	32.5	31.6
Median age (in years)	31	33	30	29
Modal age (in years)	28	32	28	28
<b>Marital status and family</b>				
Married (in percent)	80	83	74.3	88
Joint / Extended Family (in percent)	57	73	53	50
Nuclear Family (in percent)	40	25	43	49
<b>Religion and Caste</b>				
Hindu (in percent)	90	84	95	88
Muslim (in percent)	7.5	12	3.5	10
Caste – General and OBC (in percent)	70	71.5	64	77
Caste – SC/ST (in percent)	29	26.5	34	23
<b>Education and Occupation</b>				
Up to 10 years schooling (in percent)	40.5	10	35	79
11 – 12 years education (in percent)	16.6	14	23	10
13 – 15 years education (in percent)	26	45	25	8
16 years or more (in percent)	17	31	17	3
Mean years of education	11.6	14.7	12	7.9
Farmer (in percent)	13	5	14	20
Wage labourer (in percent)	2	1	3	1
Artisan (in percent)	17.7	21	21	8
Business (in percent)	3.5	6	3	1
Job (in percent)	30	45	34	8
Students (in percent)	4.5	10	4	0
Occupation not known	29	12	20	62



The study group can be characterized as being primarily young and married, predominantly Hindu, with a greater representation of the upper castes and living in rural and semi-rural areas. There was some diversity in educational and occupational status between the control group and the intervention groups.

***Attitudes toward gender stereotypes, violence against women and women’s autonomy***

*Attitude towards gender stereotypes and violence against women (VAW):* The questionnaire included 43 questions related to attitudes. The table below (Table-2) shows the difference in gender sensitive responses between the three groups on 10 statements related to gender stereotypes, VAW and women’s autonomy.

*Table-2. Proportion of gender-sensitive responses to questions related to attitude among 3 groups of respondents.*

Sl. N	Statements related to Gender Stereotypes and violence against women (VAW)	Percentage of respondents giving gender sensitive answers		
		Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
1	A woman’s primary role is to take care of home and cook for her family whereas a man’s primary role is to earn for the family	67.35	40.00	6.00
2	A woman should tolerate violence in order to keep her family reputation	85.71	65.71	25.00
3	If a woman cheats on a man, it is okay for him to hit her	81.63	70.29	23.00
4	Women should always obey men’s decisions because men are the bread earners.	88.78	54.29	25.00
5	Violence Against Women means only physical abuse of women	86.73	72.00	41.00
6	There are times when a woman deserves to be beaten	77.55	61.71	22.00
7	It is a wife’s responsibility to use contraceptive because it is she who gets pregnant.	82.65	68.00	46.00
8	It’s a shame/problem if a man earns less than his wife/partner	84.69	67.43	24.00
9	Women wearing modern dresses are characterless	86.73	75.43	30.00
10	Sometimes a woman is also responsible for being raped	61.22	40.57	17.00

It is evident from the table that there is a consistent difference between the three groups with the MASVAW identified men giving the highest percentage of gender sensitive responses. The other clear indication from this table is that the MASVAW influenced men are also at a higher level of gender sensitivity in their responses compared to the men in the third group.

*Women’s Autonomy and Rights:* The questionnaire had a set of 9 questions relating to women’s autonomy and work outside the home, and as Table-3 (below) demonstrates, a similar pattern of responses was seen in this instance too.



Table-3. Proportion of gender-sensitive responses to questions related to women's autonomy and work outside home, by 3 groups of respondents.

Sl. N	Statements related to Women's Autonomy and Rights	Percentage of respondents giving gender sensitive answers		
		Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
1	Only men should participate in Panchayat meetings	96.94	72.57	54.00
2	Married women shouldn't have rights in their father's property	78.57	64.57	43.00
3	There should not be any reservation for women in government jobs	83.67	76.57	58.00
4	Women should be free to decide when and whom to marry	85.71	68.57	29.00
5	Men and women should get equal pay for equal work	94.90	89.14	88.00
6	The property rights should be equal among men and women	94.90	86.86	65.00
7	Women's free movement outside home is a shame for the family	84.69	70.29	15.00
8	Just like boys, girls should also be allowed to play outdoor games	83.67	68.57	23.00
9	Women can join in all the cultural/social gatherings in the community	88.78	85.14	47.00

*Consistency of responses:* In order to understand the consistency of responses, the scores obtained from 14 statements of the questionnaire which were worded in a traditional gender attitude manner were compared with the scores obtained from 14 statements which were worded differently, in a more progressive manner (please see Box-1 below, for examples of two kinds of gender attitude statements). It was seen that there was a higher rate of gender sensitive responses for the progressively worded responses compared to the traditionally worded responses. A consistency score was computed by taking the difference of the two scores and working out this difference as a percentage of the overall score obtained for the statements worded in a traditional gender manner. This difference score was seen lowest in the Group 1 and highest in Group 3, indicating that the MASVAW group had a higher consistency or lesser variation in their responses to a statement worded progressively compared to a statement worded traditionally. The results of this comparison are given below (Table-4).



*Table-4. Comparison of consistency of responses to differently-worded questions among the 3 respondent groups*

Averaged scored across 14 statements	<i>Proportion of Gender-sensitive Responses that were consistent</i>		
	Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
Statements worded in a traditional gender manner	79.22	63.76	33.71
Statements worded in a progressive gender manner	89.21	75.63	58.36
Variation (absolute)	9.99	11.88	24.64
Consistency score (100 - Variation/Traditional Gender Score percent)	87.39	81.37	26.91

**Male participation in domestic work**

**Box-1: Some examples of traditional gender attitude and progressive gender attitude statements**

<i>Traditionally worded statements</i>	<i>Progressively worded statements</i>
Women are not fit to take major family decisions.	Men and women should get equal pay for equal work.
It is okay for a man to have sex with his wife even if she is not ready to do so.	The property rights should be equal among men and women.
If a woman cheats on a man, it is okay for him to hit her.	Women can also perform responsible jobs like men do.

The questionnaire included a set of 4 statements related to men’s attitude about domestic work and a set of 7 statements about the men’s participation in domestic work. Analysis of the responses to these statements across the three groups is given in Table-5 below.

*Table-5. Men’s attitude towards, and participation in, domestic work: proportion of responses from 3 groups of respondents.*

<i>Statements related to Men’s attitude to domestic work</i>	<i>Answers indicating men’s participation ( in %)</i>		
A man should take part in child care activities such as feeding them, preparing them for school etc.	90.82	77.14	44
A man should take part in household activities such as cooking, washing clothes, fetching water etc.	78.57	58.29	18
Male members of the family should help children with their studies	91.84	94.29	94
A woman’s primary role is to take care of home and cook for her family whereas a man’s primary role is to earn for the family	67.35	40.00	6
<b><i>Men’s Participation in domestic work (either shared equally or predominantly men)</i></b>			
Washing clothes	69.07	45.71	16.00
Repairing house*	90.72	85.14	92.00



Cleaning the house/courtyard	52.58	36.00	9.00
Preparing food	36.08	22.29	2.00
Taking care of animals*	79.38	72.00	85.00
Fetching water	80.41	70.86	59.00
Buying household stuffs*	89.69	87.43	85.00

\* These are more or less similar across the three groups.

For the three items where men's participation was seen to be similar across each group, further analysis was done to understand women's participation in these activities and it was found that in two of these three activities if men in Group 3 had a high participation then women's participation was lower, leading to the probable assessment that in Group 1 and 2 there was a greater sense of joint responsibility compared to Group 3 where there was greater polarization of roles (other than in taking care of domestic animals).

*Table-6. Women's participation in work that showed men's participation was similar across three respondent groups.*

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Women's participation (in percentage) in these tasks, predominantly or jointly</b>		
	Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
Repairing the house	70	67	39
Taking care of animals	58	71	64
Buying household goods	77	71	44

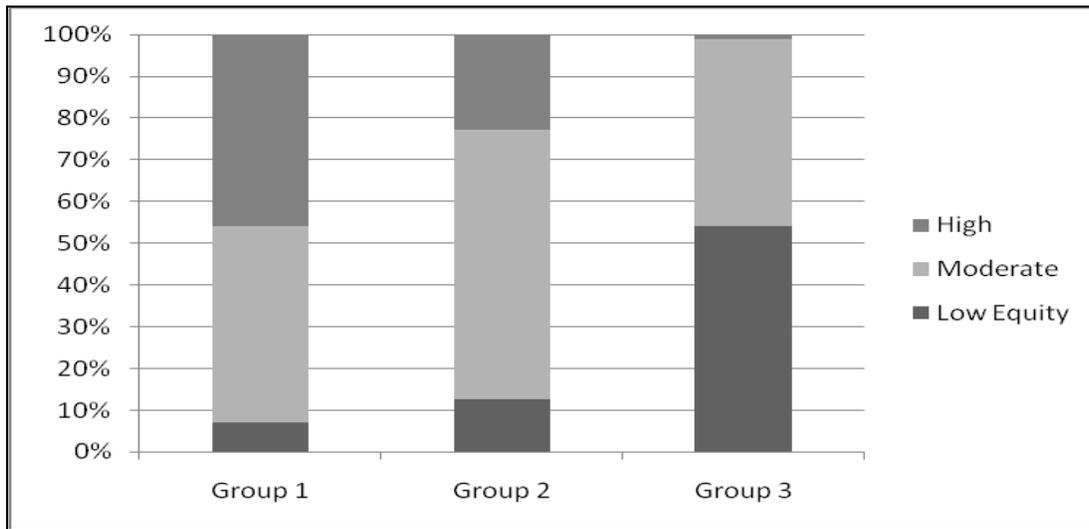
The overall analysis indicates that men who are closely associated with MASVAW are getting involved in a range of domestic activities and the difference between their participation and that of the control group is particularly high in activities like cooking, cleaning and washing clothes, acts which are traditionally considered to be the women's domain. The second group or those who have been exposed to MASVAW activities, also show significant difference from the control group in these activities. However the actual participation in such domestic work is comparatively lower than the agreement that these roles should be part of men's roles in the household.

### ***Male attitudes toward and participation in parenting***

The survey had four questions to understand the attitude of men towards parenting and four statements relating to their participation in parenting actions. In order to understand a person's overall approach to parenting a parenting score was developed in which all gender sensitive answers to parenting were given a score of one and in all cases of parenting action where men said that the work was equally shared or done predominantly by men a score of one was given and a total parenting score was computed. The maximum score on this parenting was eight and minimum was zero. The scores were then clubbed as demonstrating High Equity, Moderate Equity and Low equity depending upon whether they were between 7 and 8, 4 and 6 or 0 and 3. The chart below (Chart-1), shows the comparison between the three groups in terms of their gender equitable approach to parenting.



*Chart-1. Gender equitable approach to parenting: Comparison across the three groups.*



The graphic clearly indicates that there are big differences between Group 3 and the two other Groups. Table-7 (below) indicates the statements related to parenting attitudes and actions that were used in the study.

*Table-7. Statements with regard to parenting actions and with regards to statements related to parenting*

<b>Parenting Actions</b>	<b>Statements related to parenting</b>
Accompanying the child for vaccination	For children, being beaten by parents is always legitimate
Staying at home/staying awake at night with a child when he/she is sick	Just like boys, girls should also be allowed to play outdoor games
Preparing children for school or other visits	A man should take part in child care activities such as feeding them, preparing them for school etc.
Feeding children	Male members of the family should help children with their studies

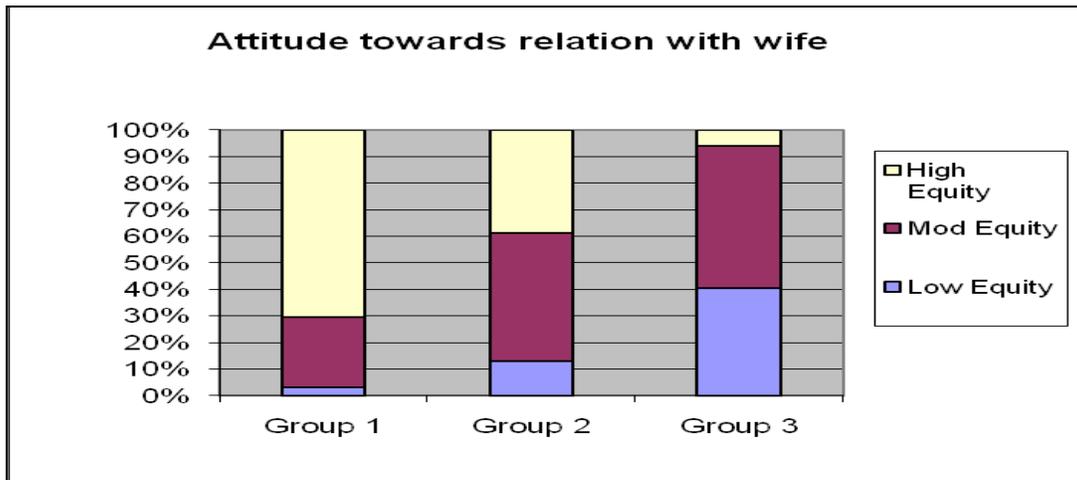
***Relationships with women***

This domain includes two sub-domains – attitude towards husband-wife relationships, and participation in decision making.

*Attitude to husband wife relationship:* The questionnaire had eight questions related to different aspect of relationship with one’s wife/spouse. A partnership score was computed by assigning one point for a gender sensitive response for each question and then adding all the points. The maximum score for this scale was 8 and the lowest score was one. The relation with wife was then categorized as highly equitable, moderately equitable and low equitable depending upon the score attained by each individual. Thus a score of 7 and 8 was seen as high equitable, between 4 and 6 as being moderately equitable and between 0 and 3 as being low equitable. The difference between the three groups on the equitability of their relationship with their wife is seen in the graphic below:



Chart-2. Respondents' attitude towards husband-wife relationships.



From this graph it is clear that Group 1 respondents have a much higher gender equitable attitude about husband-wife relationships compared with the Group 3 respondents; and Group 2 responses are, as in other situations, located in between.

**Box-2: Statements related to husband wife relationship**

1. A woman's primary role is to take care of home and cook for her family whereas a man's primary role is to earn for the family.
2. It's a shame/problem if a man earns less than his wife/partner.
3. Women should always obey men's decisions because men are the bread earners.
4. It is okay for a man to have sex with his wife even if she is not ready to do so.
5. A husband should always discuss his problems with his wife.
6. Husband and wife should decide together when and how many children they want.
7. A man and a woman should decide together when and what type of contraceptive to use.
8. It is a wife's responsibility to use contraceptive because it is she who gets pregnant.

*Partnership with women in decision making:* The study also tried to understand both men's partnership with women in decision making across different domains. The results regarding this sub-domain are summarized in Table-8 below:

Table-8. Partnership with women in decision making across different domains – responses from all 3 groups.

Domain of decision making	Proportion of respondents in the 3 groups who said women were involved in decision-making (mostly/jointly)		
	Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
Spending money on food and clothing	79.6	58.9	37.0



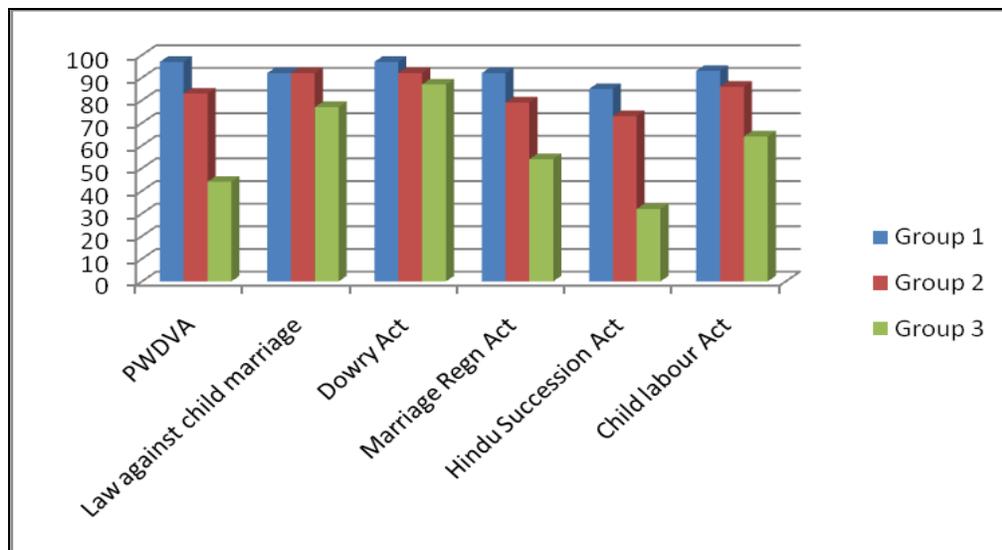
Spending money on large investments such as buying a household appliance	66.3	50.9	33.0
Regarding the health of women	67.3	58.9	47.0
Regarding the health of children	81.6	64.0	54.0
Taking a loan	54.1	36.6	20.0
Spending money in a family member's marriage	75.5	60.6	27.0

The tables show that where men from Group 1 are concerned, there is much higher participation of women either alone or jointly in decision making across all the domains enquired. The participation of women in economic decisions like investment and spending money on family marriages was found to be the case for more than two third of the men in Group 1 and this was the lowest where decisions relating to taking a loan was concerned. In contrast in Group 3 women's role in decision making was low, and except in the case of decisions related to the health of children, less than 50 percent of respondents do not consider it important to consult or take women's opinion into account. The pattern of Group 2 respondents occupying the space between Group 1 and Group 3 respondents, was repeated in this domain of enquiry as well.

**Knowledge of laws that protect women and children**

The study enquired men's knowledge of five laws which protect women and children. These ranged from the eighty year old law against child marriage to the very recent law protecting women against domestic violence. The study reveals that knowledge about the law prohibiting dowry was uniformly high across the three groups. Knowledge of each of these five laws was between 85 and 97 percent of men from Group 1 and the knowledge of men from Group 2 was not far behind. However less than 50 percent men from Group 3 knew about the recent law on domestic violence or about women's right to inherited property.

*Chart-3. Knowledge of laws protecting women and children: responses across 3 groups.*



**Attitudes towards sexuality and masculinity from a gender equality perspective**



A final domain that the study explored was men’s attitude towards sexuality and masculinity and the analysis of this domain was also done in the context of a gender sensitive human rights perspective. The results are given in Table-9 (below).

*Table-9. Attitude towards sexuality from a gender equality perspective: responses from 3 groups of respondents.*

<b>Statements related to sexuality</b>	<b>Proportion of gender-sensitive responses with regard to sexuality</b>		
	Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
1. When a man gets a woman pregnant, the child is the responsibility of the woman.	93.88	70.86	51.00
2. If a woman cheats on a man, it is okay for him to hit her.	81.63	70.29	23.00
3. Sometimes a woman is also responsible for being raped.	61.22	40.57	17.00
4. Men need sex more than women do.	62.24	48.00	60.00
5. Only men can have sex before marriage.	89.80	72.00	58.00
6. Same sex relationship should never be tolerated.	45.92	29.71	13.00
7. It is okay for a man to have sex with his wife even if she is not ready to do so.	87.76	73.14	57.00
8. Women wearing modern dresses are characterless.	86.73	75.43	30.00
9. I would be ashamed if I had a homosexual son.	36.73	34.86	10.00
10. Women who carry condoms on them are ‘easy’.	75.51	64.00	26.00
11. To have sexual desire is natural and one should not be ashamed of it.	79.59	74.29	70.00

The overall difference between Group 1 and Group 3 are similar to other domains, however the two questions which relate to homosexuality provide the lowest scores for the men in Group 1.

*Table-10. Attitude towards masculinity from a gender equality perspective: responses from 3 groups of respondents.*

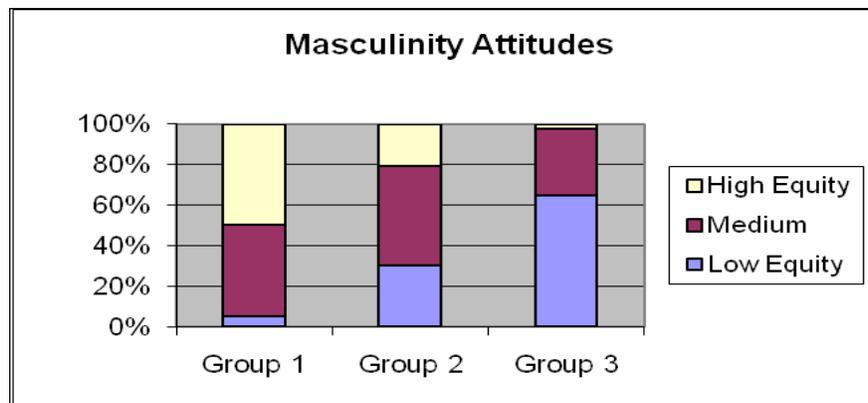
<b>Statements related to masculinity</b>	<b>Proportion of gender-sensitive responses with regard to masculinity</b>		
	Group 1 (N=98)	Group 2 (N=175)	Group 3 (N=100)
To be a man you need to be tough	31.63	19.43	1.00
A man should have the final word in family decisions	92.86	68.00	24.00
It’s a shame/problem if a man earns less than his wife/partner	84.69	67.43	24.00
It disgusts me when I see a man acting like a woman	63.27	46.29	18.00
Women should always obey men’s decisions because men are the bread earners.	88.78	54.29	25.00
If someone insults me, I will defend my honor, even if it means using violence	59.18	41.14	10.00
If a woman cheats on a man, it is okay for him to hit her	81.63	70.29	23.00



Men need sex more than women do	62.24	48.00	60.00
Only men can have sex before marriage	89.80	72.00	58.00
No matter what I think, I have to join in if my friends are involved in a fight	72.45	48.57	30.00

This set of statements includes the one statement (“to be a man you need to be tough”) which has the least number of gender sensitive answers for men of Group 1, however for the same statement the proportion of gender sensitive responses obtained from the two other groups is also very low. A masculinity score was obtained by converting all gender sensitive responses to a score of 1. The cumulative scores were then divided into three groups – high equitable, moderate equitable and low equitable depending upon whether it was between 8 to 10, 4 to 7 or 0 to 3 respectively. The resultant graphic comparing the three groups is given below (Chart-4).

Chart-4. Respondents’ attitude towards masculinity issues.



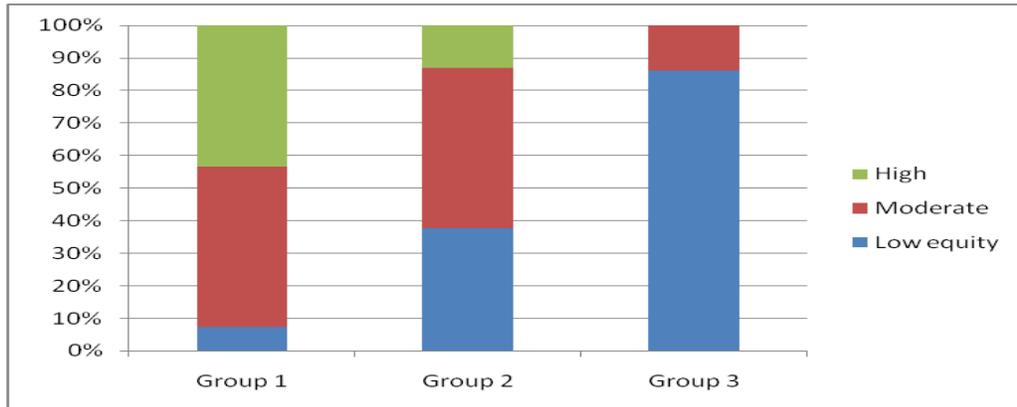
**Conclusions, Discussion and Recommendations**

*The emerging differences observed between the three groups of respondents*

An overall gender equitable attitude score was created by giving each domain an equal weightage with scores of 1, 2 and 3 for low, moderate, and high gender equity, and adding the scores across all seven domains. The maximum score thus obtained was 21. A cumulative score up to 12 was considered low equitable, between 13 and 17 moderate and 18 to 21 as high equitable. A total of 43 percent of Group1 respondents were overall high equitable in their attitudes whilst none in Group 3 could be considered high equitable. Six individuals from among the 98 in Group 1 were high equitable in all seven domains and one person from Group 2 also obtained the maximum score. Only 7 percent of the men in Group 1 were in the low equity category while 86 percent of Group 3 belonged to this category. While an overwhelming 93 percent of Group 1 belonged to the high and moderately equitable categories nearly 62 percent of Group 2 also belonged to the high and moderate gender equitable categories, as Chart-6 (below) illustrates.



Chart-5. Proportions of respondents with high, moderate or low overall gender equity attitude scores across 3 groups.



These results clearly reveal that across the board, Group One MASVAW activists consistently provided more gender-equitable responses than Group Two, and Group Two provided more gender-equitable responses than the control group (Group 3).

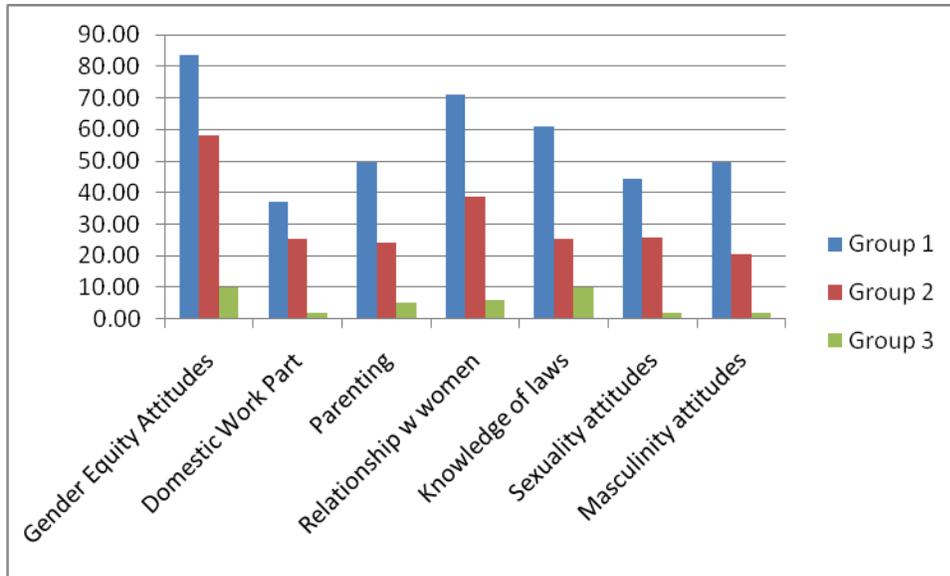
While analyzing the background characteristics of the groups, educational status was seen as an important confounder. In order to understand the effect of MASVAW’s intervention, the effect of education was controlled to understand the independent effect. This was done by restricting the analysis to only those who had more than 10 years of education and then comparing the results between the three groups. For the purposes of this analysis an overall gender score of more than 15 (out of 21) was considered a favourable outcome and Odds ratios (OR) were calculated comparing the different groups. Group 1 (Masvaw members) was compared with Group 3 (Control), Group 2 (Masvaw Influenced) compared with Group 3, and Group 1 compared to Group 2. The Ors obtained were as follows:

- Group 1 against 3; OR - 31.76 ( CI - 4.17 to 664.20)
- Group 2 against 3 ; OR – 12.75 ( CI - 1.72 to 264.02)
- Group 1 against 2 OR 2.49 (CI - 1.35 to 4.60)

The ORs show that the difference between the groups continues to be statistically significant even when the influence of education is removed.

In order understand the difference between the three groups across the different domains a comparison was made of the (high) equity distribution of persons in each of the three groups. The results are shown in the graphic below.

Chart-6. Comparison of distribution of high-equity respondents across 3 groups.



This graphic shows that across the seven domains not more than 10 percent of men in Group 3 (control group) showed high gender equitable attitudes, whereas for men of Group 1 a highly equitable attitude was found in nearly 85 percent of men in the case gender equity, 71 percent of men in attitudes towards husband wife relationship, and 49 percent of men in the case of parenting. In the same group the percentage of men with a high equitable attitude was comparatively lower in the case of domestic work participation and sexuality. However even for these domains the difference between men with high gender equitable attitudes in Group 1 and Group 3 was between 18 to 22 times ( 37 percent : 2 percent in the case of domestic work participation and 44 percent : 2 percent for sexuality.)

***MASVAW activists and activities are influencing other men***

The men who belonged to Group 2 had been influenced by MASVAW core members through discussions, invitations to and participation in trainings and campaign activities, and in some instances, they were also involved in casework around violence against women. They were found to be far more rights and gender sensitive than the control group (Group 3), which was composed of men in a district of UP where MASVAW does not operate. And this trend held true across all domains. Odds ratio were calculated between the scores for high equity between Group 1 and Group 2, and Group 2 and Group 3, to understand whether these differences were statistically significant. Table-11 (below) shows that the differences between Group 1 respondents one and Group 2 respondents, and that between Group 2 respondents and those from Group 3, were statistically significant across all domains. Interestingly, the odds ratios for the difference between Groups 1 and 2 were much smaller than the odds ratio for the difference between Groups 2 and 3, indicating the difference in gendered understanding across different domains was much more between the MASVAW influenced, and the control group than between MASVAW activist and MASVAW influenced.

*Table-11. Odds-ratios for all domains across 3 groups showing statistically-significant differences between Group 1 and Group 2, and Group 2 and Group 3.*

Domain	Group 1 and Group 2	Group 2 and Group 3
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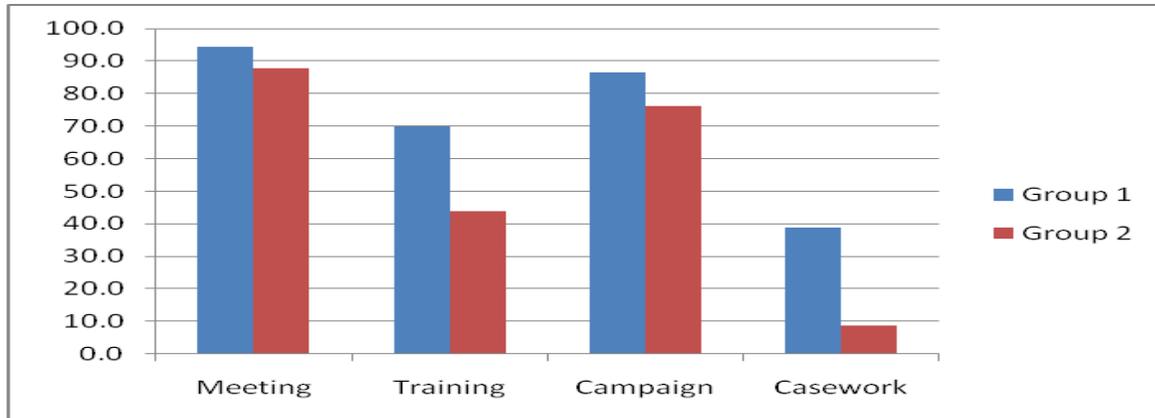
Gender Equity Attitudes	3.62 (CI 1.97 -9.57)	12.57 (CI 6.19 - 25.5)
Domestic Work Part	1.76 (CI 1.03 - 2.99)	15.47 (CI 4.03 - 59.12)
Parenting	3.1 (CI 1.83 - 5.25)	6 (CI 2.36 - 15.23)
Relationship w women	3.89 (CI 2.8 - 6.6)	9.66 (CI 4.22 - 23.41)
Knowledge of laws	4.62 (CI 2.72 - 7.85)	3.02 (CI 1.46 - 6.24)
Sexuality attitudes	2.30 (CI 1.36 - 3.88)	16.96 (CI 4.43 - 64.71)
Masculinity attitudes	3.78 (CI 2.2 - 6.5)	12.69 ( CI 3.29 - 48.68)

Note: all results significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

These results clearly indicate that MASVAW activists are able to influence others with respect to gender equity domains explored in this study. If one considers the consistency measurement that has been referred to earlier, the MASVAW activists and MASVAW influenced had consistency scores which were very similar (87.4 and 81.4) and the consistency score of the control group was much lower (26.9) indicating lesser consistency in their responses. Having statistically shown that the MASVAW group and MASVAW influenced group are very different in terms of their understanding of gender issues, we would also like to make it clear that it is impossible to know whether the beliefs these men express are practiced consistently in their relationships. It may well be that the MASVAW activists and their associates are more familiar with gender sensitive, politically correct responses having been exposed to such messages. Even if they are only providing what they *know* is the “right” answer, it is significant that they have been consistent throughout a large range of questions covering a variety of domains. At the very least, their understanding of how one *should* behave, or at the very least their understanding of the “right” answers to questions about men and women, are significantly different from men who have had no contact with MASVAW. Changing minds is often considered the first step to changing behaviors; therefore this in itself may be considered encouraging for the intervention.

*Participation in MASVAW activities:* The study also explored the participation of respondents in different MASVAW sponsored activities. Interestingly it emerged that even among the MASVAW activists there were eight activists who had not participated in any of the four different kinds of activities that were explored – meetings, trainings, campaigns and casework, but 85 had participated in two or more of these activities. For the MASVAW influenced or Group 2, a majority or 65 percent had participated in at least one activity. The following bar graph (Chart-7) shows that among those who participated in MASVAW activities, the most common participation were in meetings and campaigns. Not surprisingly a much larger number of men from Group 1 attended trainings or were involved in case work.

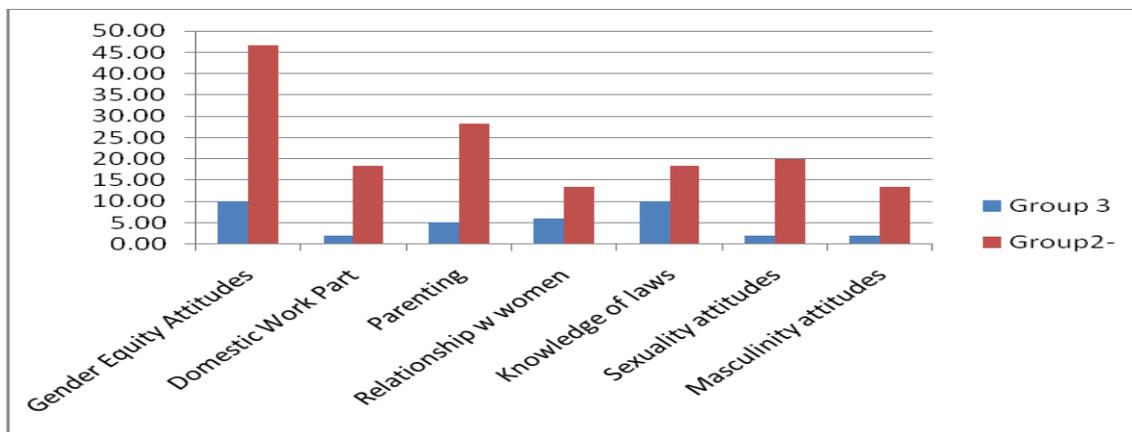
*Chart-7. Most common MASVAW activities that respondents of Groups 1 and 2 participated in.*



A scale was created to understand participation in MASVAW activities by multiplying the number of times a person has participated in an activity. A score of 1 point was given to each activity, and a score of 1 was given for participating once, 2 for participating between 2 and 4 times, and 3 for participating more than four times in any particular activity. The average participation score for MASVAW activists was a little over 8 while that of those from Group 2, or who they had influenced was only a little more than 3.

Interestingly nearly 35 percent of those whom we are considering MASVAW influenced (Group 2) had not participated in any MASVAW activity. The scores of those who were part of Group 2 but had not taken part in any MASVAW activity was compared with the Group 3 to understand whether the MASVAW influence is environmental or specific to individuals who participate in MASVAW activities. The results show that across all domains the scores of those in Group 2 who did not participate in any activity (Group '2-') is higher compared with the control group. When the two groups were compared with the overall gender equitable attitude score it was found that the odds ratio for individuals of Group 3 (control group) having a low gender equitable attitude score was 6.14 times higher ( CI 2.9 – 13 at p 0.05) compared to individuals of Group 2 who had not attended any MASVAW events. Clearly, there was a MASVAW effect in the region where MASVAW activities were being implemented and this went beyond the mere participation in MASVAW activities indicating probably a change in overall social standards / expectations.

Chart-8. Comparison of gender equitable responses between Group 2- respondents and Group 3 respondents.



***Well begun but still half done: Areas that need to be strengthened***

For the MASVAW activists it may not be enough to know that that their gender related knowledge and attitude across different domains is far higher than those who can be considered ‘controls’ and that the men they have been working with also display far higher levels of gender and rights compliant knowledge and attitudes. It may be seen as a matter of concern that only 43 percent of the MASVAW activists group were found to be of high gender equity in the overall analysis. This study also indicates those areas or domains where there is further scope for change, even though change has started. Clearly the study has limitations in its exploration of the behavior or actions of men. In the two domains relating to action that were explored were – domestic work and parenting, MASVAW activists were seen to be more involved in household activities than either of the other two groups. However, when we look at the scores for the domain of domestic work participation, less than 40 percent of MASVAW activists were highly equitable, and a shade less than 50 percent were highly gender equitable in terms of their parenting attitudes. Similarly the high equity score for the domain related to sexuality was obtained by less than 45 percent of the group and that related to masculinity, was a little less than 50 percent of the group. Some of the statements which indicated the need for further discussion and training among MASVAW activists, are indicated in Table-12, below:

*Table-12. Statements and actions where gender sensitive responses were lower among Group 1 respondents.*

<b><i>Statements and actions where gender sensitive responses were lower</i></b>	<b><i>Gender-sensitive responses (percent)</i></b>
To be a man you need to be tough.	31.63
Participation in preparing food.	36.08
I would be ashamed if I had a homosexual son.	36.73
Same sex relationship should never be tolerated.	45.92
If someone insults me, I will defend my honor, even if it means using violence.	59.18
Sometimes a woman is also responsible for being raped.	61.22
A woman’s primary role is to take care of home and cook for her family whereas a man’s primary role is to earn for the family.	67.35

The response pattern to these statements seems to indicate the issue of homosexuality is an area of concern. Another interesting pattern that emerges related to masculinity, is that the statement which relate masculinity to women (or are relational) have drawn much more equitable responses compared to those which deal with men’s own notion of what it means to be a man (being tough , notion of honor, etc.). This is not surprising because MASVAW leaders’ own understanding and work around masculinity has been more recent and still evolving compared to the work which is relational ( especially in the context of women).

***Gaps or areas that were not sufficiently explored***

This study was a limited attempt to understand the differences across three different groups of men, those who were closely associated with MASVAW activities in leadership positions, those who were involved in MASVAW public activities as participants and those who had no knowledge of MASVAW. On the basis of the differences in the response to a set of questions, an attempt was made to understand the changes that MASVAW may be able to bring about in core activists’ understanding of gender equality and women’s rights as well as the change their own public activities



bring about in their intended participants. The results from this study are encouraging, although these may need to be validated in future interventions through a more longitudinal analysis. However, a quick examination of the domains investigated shows that there are some areas which this study is unable to provide any information. One such domain relates to the actual practice of violence and gender discriminatory practices. Another domain which is often related to violence, and about which some data had emerged from the earlier qualitative study, relates to the management of anger by men. This study did not explore this dimension because the researchers were not certain whether a set of questions would be an appropriate way to do so. Another dimension that this study starts to explore, but does not go sufficiently deeply into, relates to the issue of sexuality. While attitudes related to sexuality are explored dimensions related to sexual relationships, sexual violence, or even contraceptive practice were not explored in sufficient detail. One of the reasons for leaving these aspects out of the study was related to the nature of the field investigators who were involved in the study. Some of the field investigators were students in the department of social work at a local university, and though they were trained in field investigation, the researchers felt that they were not adequately equipped to investigate issues related to violence or sexuality in any great depth, and that attempting to do so, would affect the nature of field investigator – respondent relationship and the responses and vice versa. The overall tenor of the questionnaire and statements was therefore kept simple and straightforward.

### ***Areas for future action***

Interpersonal violence has been highlighted as a serious area of concern by the women's movement. The work with men which led to the formation and strengthening of MASVAW also draws upon this concern. However there is an increasing demand that the work with men needs to move beyond the area of interpersonal violence and to address the larger violence and discrimination that patriarchy is implicated in. Work with men needs to challenge the deeply ingrained social norms and relationships around gender which influence among others things, son preference and sex ratio, dowry, early marriage and childbirth, and women's control over their own sexual lives and sexuality. Work with men can also explore deep social divisions around caste, religion and ethnicities. Not only are these areas of discrimination and violence, but these become defining identities of men, fueling a cycle of mistrust, animosity, discrimination, contests and conflicts.

While work with men needs to understand and respond to social divisions, it also needs to understand and address masculinities as the understanding of self (man) in terms of his own locations along social (caste, ethnic, religious), sexual and gendered axes. This calls for greater action in the so called public and personal domain of relationships, but also needs deeper reflection on understanding ones' own self. The work in MASVAW had started as a simple response to the increased violence that our colleagues in the women's movement had highlighted. It started as a measure for men taking some accountability for the gendered violence and discrimination that we saw around us, but the more we are working with ourselves and our colleagues on this issues, we realize that we have perhaps just begun to unravel a very complex issue and we not only need more effort and persistence, but also support from our colleagues and friends who feel the importance and need of such work.

### **Acknowledgements**

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