

Written Brief on Considerations & Recommendations for Addressing Intimate Partner & Domestic Violence in Canada

It is imperative that the author of this brief submit a warm and heartfelt thank you to this Standing Committee for the labour of love in dedicating time to conduct this valuable and important study that will benefit many women and girls and further anyone who has or is likely to become a victim of intimate partner violence and or domestic abuse within Canada.

The author of this brief identifies as a Black Female Millennial who has grown up in a faith-based community (Christian) and subscribes to Christian values. Furthermore, the author has experienced intimate partner violence in a previous heterosexual relationship. In Submitting this brief, the author would like to underline a few considerations and recommendations in addressing intimate partner violence and domestic violence within Canada.

Intimate Partner and Domestic Violence is and can be responded to and viewed very differently based on an individual's socialization (meaning that in approaching this study it is important to understand that Canadian's are diverse and come from diverse cultural backgrounds and these cultural backgrounds come with their own sets of values, beliefs which can influence how one would respond to intimate partner and domestic violence whether as the perpetrator and or as the victim) Approaching this study and understanding that this issue cannot only be studied from the lenses of western societal and cultural norms will be key in understanding how to navigate and carry out dialogue on this matter.

A consideration for separately studying intimate partner violence within the aboriginal community should be looked at further, due to readily available statistics and information that suggests an elevated risk of intimate partner violence against Aboriginal women. Furthermore, the author also believes separately studying the experiences of Black women and girls as victims of intimate partner violence within Canada. It is proven that the lived experiences of Black Canadians are sometimes unique to this specific group. This study should aim to examine intimate partner violence among the LGBTQ+ community and seek to understand either similar and or varying complexities. Understanding different barriers faced by different racialized and or minority groups would be enlightening in terms of developing public policy tools and resources.

The Government should pro-actively consider mechanisms that facilitate an opportunity for Canadians who are willing to share their lived experiences with intimate partner and domestic violence. Such information could provide valuable information to this committee that would aid in building strategies and developing educational tools and resources that help survivors and perpetrators. Working with women who have lived experiences as well as professionals and researchers in this area will provide diverse insight. The individuals who provide insight must also be from diverse backgrounds. The tools and information that would serve as educational awareness needs to be marketed to the appropriate target audience to ensure that the efforts of the Canadian government are not performed in vain.

Focus should be given to developing judgemental free resources for individuals who are perpetrators of violence. A wholesome approach to combatting this issue cannot solely focus on

the victims but attention must be given to those who are perpetrators and or likely to become preparators.

Increasing mental health resources specifically for young people who have been involved in intimate partner violence. The author notes that one of the hardest things she experienced was struggling to find communities, spaces, and mental health resources in which could provide aid following her experience. Furthermore, these resources must ensure to include BIPOC professionals and effectively service BIPOC communities and other communities that would require it most. Resources should be focused on being distributed equitably instead of equally.

Discussion and thought should be given to what kind of legislation can be enacted within Canada that ensures that all employers within Canada have domestic violence policies that ensures to accommodate employees who experience intimate partner and domestic violence. This could be through ways of having appropriate trained professionals who work as representatives and to support employees undergoing the experience. There must be appropriate and reasonable allocated paid leave for victims of domestic and intimate partner violence and such policies must be established in a way that protect the confidentiality of employees and furthermore seek to ensure that policies be established through a GBA+ lenses as a start, to ensure additional such barriers are not presented, specifically to those who are apart of equity groups within Canada.