

Tackling gender-based violence also requires focus on the perpetrators

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Letter

Tackling gender-based violence also requires focus on the perpetrators

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The recent piece by Mamun and colleagues highlighting gender-based violence (GBV), specifically sexual violence, in Bangladesh is particularly timely due to rising rates of GBV globally secondary to the pandemic [1,2]. Recommendations highlighted by Mamun and colleagues rightly include methods to improve the detection of GBV in victims/survivors as well as reduce its secondary negative consequences [3]. However, we wish to also highlight that a strong public health approach to managing GBV (consisting of 1) improving surveillance, 2) understanding risk/protective factors, 3) adopting and evaluating interventions and 4) implementing tangible policy actions), [2] must also focus on population based primary/secondary preventative approaches targeted towards both perpetrators and victims.

The current state of data accuracy on victims/survivors in administrative records indicate substantial under-recording when compared to national surveys; unfortunately, perpetrator data recording is even more scarce [3,4]. Improving capture of this information would provide more intervention opportunities for our public sector services, in addition to implementation of targeted preventative reform measures. Therefore, improving surveillance of perpetrators should occur alongside evidence-based interventions targeted at

children and young people who may go onto to become perpetrators. Although contemporary evidence summaries demonstrate a scarcity of effective interventions in this area, evidence does exist supporting the development of life skills, improving knowledge of abuse, challenging social norms in young people as well as modifying unsafe education environments [5]. We advocate that policy actions taken should consider preventing perpetration as well as risk of victimisation, in addition to the need for further data reporting and evaluative research in this area.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None.

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