

0497 **THE POTENTIAL OF PREMARITAL EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF PREVENTION OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: OPINIONS OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES-TO-BE AND GATEKEEPERS IN AN IRANIAN CITY**

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Changing a pattern of violent behaviour is more difficult than learning not to use violence from the beginning. Premarital education is one of several means that can contribute to building relationship skills. The object of this study was to investigate to what extent and in what way gatekeepers who educate couples at premarital educational centres, as well as husbands and wives-to-be that undergo such training consider that premarital education can help to prevent intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW). Data were gathered in an Iranian city by means of purposive sample for gatekeepers (eight instructors and supervisors) and convenience sampling for future husbands and wives (9 men and 13 women), approached at premarital educational centres. A semi-structured protocol was used to face to face interview the participants on for example, the potential role of premarital educational programs in prevention of IPVAW and their suggestions for a course curriculum. Almost all the husbands and wives-to-be and the instructors considered that premarital education could help to prevent IPVAW but none of the supervisors did. Suggestions for the course curriculum dealt with skills training rather than awareness-raising. A number of answers strongly reflected a tendency to put the blame on the victim and this calls for particular attention in future program development and prevention work.