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GENDER AND AGE DOMINATION ADOLESCENTS' MEN FACE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN FRANCE

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In France, 3.14% of men declared sexual violence during their lives, mainly during childhood and adolescence and committed by other men. What are the conditions of exposure to violence for men during adolescence? What are the different power relations that work against men?

1. BACKGROUND

Research on **Gender-based violence** provides detailed understanding of **exposure, contexts and consequences of violence** experienced by women. **Power relations** define violence, and in particular gender, race, class and sexuality. Knowledge about violence against **men**, and more specifically **sexual violence**, need to be developed. This is particularly the case in France: there is no in-depth research that **describes sexual violence experienced by men during their lives**. Moreover, available research is scattered in **different fields of investigation**: child sexual abuse, violence against bisexual and gay men, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, etc.

2. INNOVATION

This study is the **first research in France to look in detail at sexual violence suffered by men during their life with a gender approach**. The choice to **consider all sexual violence together**, irrespective of age, to understand the **evolution of men's exposure to violence** according to the **context of violence** and the **power relations** at work against them. As men are not affected by violence throughout their lives, but at **younger ages**, the question of **power dynamics between younger and older individuals** is investigated. There is only few research in the field of **age relation** in the case of childhood and in the context of violence suffered by men, even more linked with **gender**.

3. OBJECTIVE

To describe the contexts of exposure and the power relations (linked to gender and age relation) at work according to the age at sexual violence experienced by men, especially during adolescence

4. METHODS

Quantitative data: Violence and Gender Relations survey ("VIRAGE")

- Conducted by the French Institute of Demographic Studies (INED) in 2015
- A sample of almost 16,000 women and 12,000 men representative of the French population aged 20-69
- Life spaces: within school or university, within the workplace, or committed by a partner or ex-partner, within the family or close social circle and, finally, within others spaces (including public spaces)
- "Violence" or "assault" never used: description purely factual
- Questions about violence declared: frequency, age, perpetrators, etc.

Statistics analyses on 405 men report sexual violence during their lives

5 clusters constructed by hierarchical ascending classification, 4 during adolescence

Qualitative data: biographical interviews

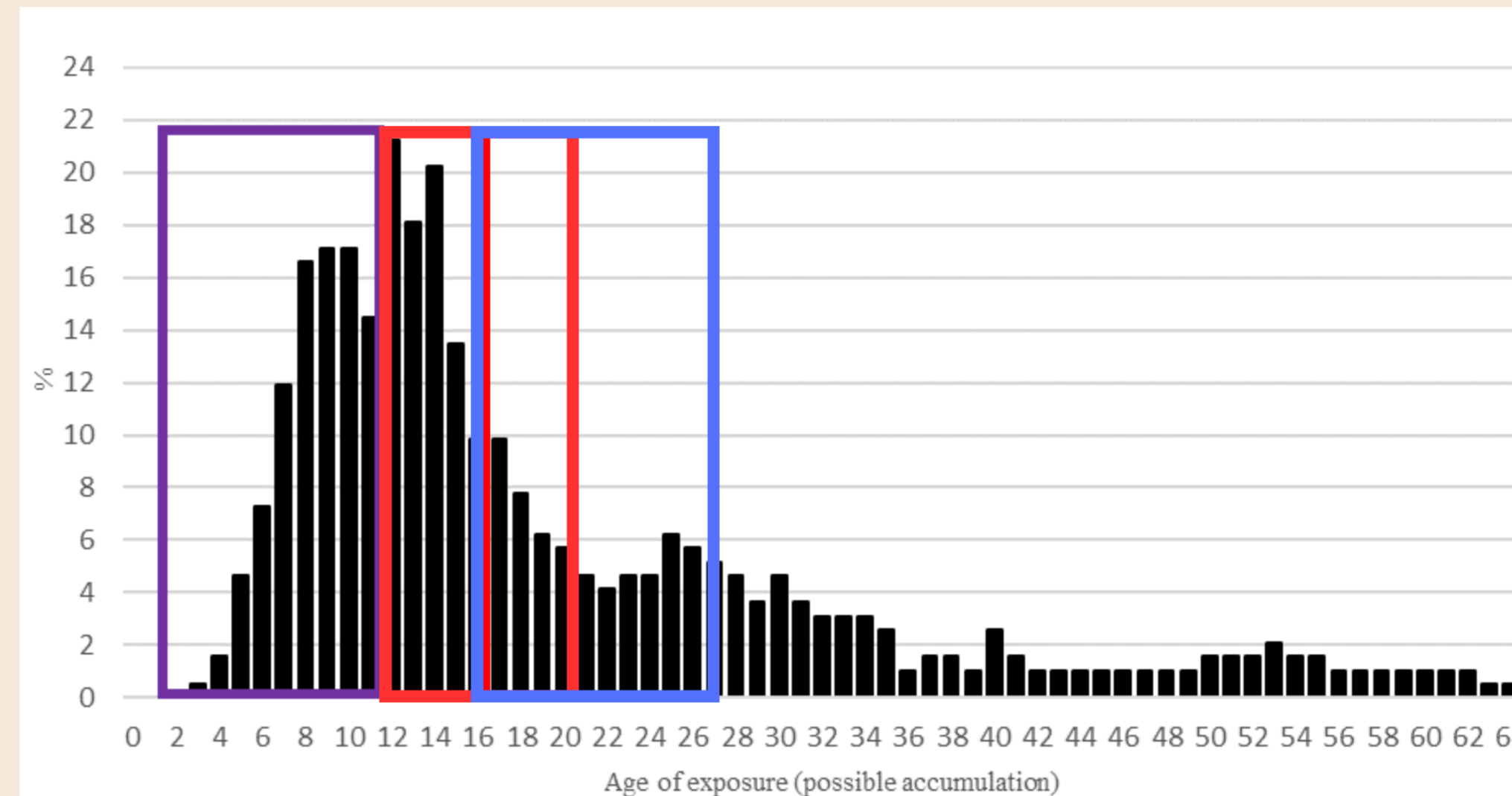
- 50 men who declared sexual violence in VIRAGE survey (follow-up interviews by phone)
- A larger sample of male victims, diversity of experiences of sexual violence and diversity of sociodemographic profiles
- Life history calendar: trajectories of violence, childhood, conjugality, sexuality, education and work, health, norms to violence, gender and sexuality

Thematic and biographical analysis of interviews

Approach to violence as a pathway, including trajectories of exposure, silencing, qualification and enunciation

5. RESULTS

Age of violence of men over their life (accumulation possible if violence occurs more than one year)



Temporality of violence (approximated by age of exposure) structure the contexts of sexual violence

Whatever the period of life, gender and age relation are linked to violence against men

Perpetrators by their gender, adulthood and family relationship, according to age of violence for men victims in family and close social circle

	0-11 years old	12-17 years old
Adult men perpetrators	57.7	27.8
Adult men within the family	46.3	6.9
Adult men outside the family	11.4	20.9
Other perpetrators	42.3	72.2
Other perpetrators within the family	24.7	14.7
Other perpetrators outside the family	17.7	57.5

1. VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY AND CLOSE SOCIAL CIRCLE: 0-11 YEARS OLD

- Older men perpetrators
- Gender and age domination linked to family hierarchies
- Identify easily "violence" as such during adulthood: difference between the "child" victim he was and man he is today

Philippe, 59 years old, assaulted by his grandfather from 6 to 11 years old

Obligations to do things to an adult... [...] You have to masturbate your grandfather at six

Bernard, 64 years old, assaulted from 3 to 13 years old by a cousin (14 years old), a priest and a teacher

When things happened, I wasn't able to understand what was going on. You can't force to have sex with a child who doesn't know what it is

2. RESIDUAL OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: 12-17 YEARS OLD

- Older men perpetrators, but non-adult
- Gender and age domination linked to family hierarchies
- Identify easily "violence" as such during adulthood, but less then 0-10 years old

He didn't force it, but I still had, I don't know, some kind of moral obligation to listen to my big brother. I mean, I was still too young to understand and realize what was going on

Bastien, 39 years old, raped from 11 to 15 years old by his elder brother

3. VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: 13-16 YEARS OLD

- School or boarding school
- Often in the context of harassment at school
- Gender, age linked to social class
- Without naming "sexual violence"
 - A teenager cannot be a victim, he is a man under construction
 - To refuse violence limiting impact on masculinity

Johan, 44 years old, "stupid game" at boarding school (13-14 years old)

Have you experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence?

Sexual, no. Well, yes, well... it wasn't really violence, but... You see, in boarding school, it is a contest between guys [...] They were the ones from the city, [...] so we were the "racist country bumpkin"

What happened?

It was big willy competition. Masturbation competition. Oh, wait yes! About violence, we also had abs exercise forced sessions.

4. VIOLENCE ON SPACES OF SOCIALIZATION BETWEEN MEN: 12-20 YEARS OLD

- Hobbies, spaces of socialisation
- Without always mentioning "sexual violence"

Fabian, 60 years old, assaulted by his music teacher and older boys (around 12 years old)

When I was a young teenager, I was abused by men actually, you see. It was my music teacher, a 45-year-old man, something like that. And then there were other events too. That is to say... with older boys... it's a bit difficult for me to tell you all this.

Something has happened with a coach at the football club. It was one-off touching, so a hand would hang out and caress the crotch or buttocks. [...] I had confirmation from at least one friend who had also been subjected to this behaviour.

Aymeric, 44 years old, "something" with a football coach (12-14 years old)

5. THE BEGINNING OF SEXUALITY: 8-25 YEARS OLD

- Principally gay men (15-25 years old)
 - "Confusion" or "non-consent situation": difficulty to speak of "violence"
 - Protect the whole LGBT community
 - Limiting impact on the already subordinated masculinity
 - Sexualisation of the age difference
- More rarely heterosexuals men (8-15 years old)
 - Young men, with much older Women
 - Although they name other forms of sexual violence, those committed by women are not considered as such

Do you ever accepted sex without wanting to?

Without wanting to? Not at all, no. I don't know, maybe it's not very precise, but I think of things... and in particular gay encounters, clearly, where it's implied that you don't dare to say that you're not sure. [...] But not... I have trouble saying "non-consent", I would rather say... where things, well... we feel a little bit in a kind of... how can I put it? in a corridor, it has to come, here, [...] A little bit of that... that is... a confusion.

Do you feel that you were a sex education?

Yes, in the sink estate, we spoke, yes... And I had my first sexual experience with a teacher, I was eight, a neighbour of my mother.

Jordan, 31 years old, sexual experiences with other men (16-25 years old)

Joël, 62 years old, rape by brothers at 7, "sexual experience" with woman neighbour (8 years old)

6. CONCLUSION

- Gender and age domination** throughout the period when men are exposed to sexual violence
- Childhood**: gender and age domination linked to family hierarchies and "easy" to qualify as such
- Adolescence**: gender and age at the intersection with **sexuality and class** domination, difficulties to name violence (masculinity issue)
 - Four spaces/contextes of exposure during adolescence:
 - Residual of **domestic violence**
 - Violence in the **school environment**
 - Situations of **male socialisation**
 - First experiences of sexuality**
- Some spaces of victimisation in adolescence extend into **early adulthood**, but after 30 years old, men are very rarely victims

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