

## Prioritizing Barriers to Help-Seeking for Intimate Partner Violence

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The paragraph effectively highlights global prevalence but lacks regional context for South Africa. The reviewer suggests inserting a brief mention of South Africa's IPV rates or relevant national data to justify the setting selection.

The aim is well written but should explicitly reference the mixed-methods nature of the study (qualitative + quantitative) to align with the methods section and show design integration.

The table is rich but lacks indication of frequency or coding density for each subtheme. Including the frequency of occurrences or number of references per code would enhance the depth and credibility of the qualitative findings.

This section could benefit from linking relational barriers to attachment theory or coercive control theory to strengthen the theoretical integration of findings.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

### 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:



This paragraph would benefit from integrating a theoretical lens (e.g., learned helplessness theory or trauma-informed frameworks) to ground psychological explanations conceptually, rather than purely descriptively.

The authors mention “economic structures sustain dependency” — please elaborate by citing or briefly describing structural gender inequality indicators (e.g., employment gaps, property rights) to contextualize this argument within South African society.

The authors conclude that “psychological barriers are the most influential factors,” yet do not mention whether the mean differences between categories were statistically significant. Please clarify whether any inferential tests (ANOVA or t-tests) were conducted.

The discussion efficiently summarizes results but should include a clear linking statement back to the research objective stated in the introduction to improve internal coherence.

The reviewer recommends including the concept of economic coercion or financial abuse—widely discussed in IPV literature—to deepen the interpretation of economic barriers beyond mere income dependency.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.