



3rd Global Conference on Psychology

24 - 26 October 2025

Oxford, United Kingdom

Intergenerational Transmission of Violence-Related Myths in Post-Soviet Societies: A Structural and Psychosocial Perspective

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ABSTRACT

"This study investigates how public beliefs, commonly referred to as "myths"—regarding gender-based violence (GBV) are transmitted across generations in post-Soviet societies, with Azerbaijan serving as a representative case. While GBV is often approached as a personal or interpersonal phenomenon, our research frames it as a culturally embedded outcome of ideological, institutional, and intergenerational legacies.

One of the most salient findings was the generational divide in attitudes toward GBV-related myths. Participants aged 46–55—who were socialized under Soviet ideology—demonstrated consistently higher levels of myth acceptance than those aged 18–25. Although education correlated inversely with myth endorsement, its protective effect appeared attenuated among the older cohort. This suggests that ideological conditioning from the Soviet era may override the influence of later educational attainment.

Particularly notable was the persistence of myths related to economic and psychological violence among older, less-educated individuals. This trend likely reflects the historical invisibility of these abuse forms within Soviet-era discourse. In contrast, younger respondents, particularly those with university education, were markedly more critical—likely benefiting from broader access to open dialogue, digital platforms, and feminist critique.

We argue that addressing GBV in post-Soviet contexts requires more than informational outreach. It calls for strategic interventions that challenge inherited norms, disrupt generational silence, and reframe collective memory. Structural transformation, targeting ideology as much as policy—remains crucial in dismantling the cultural scaffolding that perpetuates gendered harm."

Keywords: Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Post-Soviet Societies, Intergenerational Beliefs, Structural Violence, Myth Acceptance