

PROTECTION VERSUS SELF-DETERMINATION: Implications of Mandatory Intimate Partner Violence Policies in Quebec

An Abstract of the Thesis by
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Since 1986, Quebec has implemented mandatory IPV policies, which require police officers to report all cases of intimate partner violence when they have reasonable grounds to believe a criminal act occurred. These policies pose an ethical dilemma, as they may violate the human right to self-determination of victims/survivors. Guided by a critical feminist approach, therapeutic jurisprudence, trauma-informed approaches, and the concept of empowerment, this research investigates the consequences of mandatory IPV policies in Quebec and provides recommendations to enhance the support services offered to victims/survivors of IPV. Semi-directed interviews with multidisciplinary actors revealed diverse impacts of the policies and suggestions for enhanced support. While mandatory policies are designed to protect victims/survivors, they also have several negative repercussions. The findings emphasize the need for careful review and improvement of these policies to address their anti-therapeutic effects and underline the importance of a comprehensive, balanced, and trauma-informed approach to support victims/survivors better.

Key words: mandatory policies, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, human rights, protection, self-determination, therapeutic jurisprudence, trauma-informed, empowerment