

Survey finds male abuse approval 6.18.06

More than half of women questioned at a Glasgow university said they approved of wives hitting their husbands.

The Glasgow Caledonian students were among 6,500 women surveyed from 36 universities for an international study into attitudes on domestic violence.

Of the 200 women, 60% said it was acceptable for women to hit their husbands while 35% admitted assaulting their partner.

A total of 8% admitted injuring them - the highest rate in the study.

The injured men suffered bruises, cuts or broken bones.

Among European students, only English women were more likely to have carried out assaults, with 41% admitting that they had punched or kicked their partners.

However those inflicting injury was less than in Scotland, at 5%.

Just under a quarter of those in Scotland admitted there were occasions when it would be acceptable for a husband to slap his wife.

Worldwide, more than 4,800 female students approved of assaulting their partner and 2,000 admitted to pushing, shoving, slapping, throwing objects and twisting their partner's arms or hair.

The findings, printed in the Sunday Times, will be published next month in the European Journal of Criminology.

Professor Murray Straus, co-author of the study, told the paper there was a need for better rehabilitation programs for women with violent tendencies.

"This study raises questions about why there's so much violence between partners whether they're married, cohabiting or dating," he said.

"The bottom line is that we need make the same 'big deal' about violence by women as we do about men who behave violently."

In recent years, the Scottish Executive has spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on raising awareness of domestic abuse, including a helpline for victims which received more than 20,000 calls in 2005 - an increase of 38% on the previous year.

David Smith, honorary professor of criminology at Edinburgh university and editor of the European Journal of Criminology, said he found the results "surprising".

"The number of women who admit to assaulting men is interesting as it's well known that men are more violent than woman."