



Preventing Domestic Violence

None in Three is funded by the European Union

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW - PERPETRATORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Longitudinal predictors of domestic violence perpetration

Longitudinal research offers an important method for recognising the risk factors that influence domestic violence perpetration by indicating the temporal ordering and strength of potentially changeable predictors. Some findings from longitudinal studies:

- Substantiated physical abuse and neglect in childhood and adolescence is associated with a greater likelihood of perpetrating physical abuse in adulthood (Sunday et al., 2011).
- Adversity in the family of origin, including poor economic circumstances (Gomez, 2011), parental drug use and criminality (Fergusson et al., 2008), poor relationships with parents in childhood and adolescence (Linder & Collins, 2005), being raised by a single parent (particularly by a single father; Gomez, 2011), and witnessing parental violence (Costa et al., 2015), appear as significant risk factors for perpetration of domestic violence in adulthood.
- The use of illicit substances is associated with being more than twice as likely to perpetrate domestic violence in young adulthood, compared with individuals who did not report illicit drug use (Melandar et al., 2010).
- Poor friendship quality, characterized by conflict, poor conflict resolution, and lack of both disclosure and closeness in adolescence, predicts domestic violence perpetration in early adulthood (Linder & Collins, 2005).

Psycho-social predictors of domestic violence perpetration

- Perpetrators have been found to hold hostile and negative beliefs about the opposite gender and to attribute blame for their own violence and other negative events to their partner's personality or behaviour (Henning et al., 2005).
- Witnessing and experiencing abuse in childhood does not only lead to internalizing aggressive norms and externalizing behaviour, but also to a wide range of other internalizing psychological and behavioural outcomes, such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, social withdrawal, post-traumatic stress, dissociation (Moylan et al., 2010), and acceptance of positive attitudes towards sexual violence (Debowska, Boduszek et al., 2015).
- Perpetrators tend to externalize blame and often attribute the cause of their violence to poor self-control or emotional control, or other factors beyond their control, such as stress, anger, or their partner's characteristics (Stuart et al., 2006).
- Male perpetrators believe that they are inherently superior to females in all aspects. They believe there are certain traits and behaviours considered appropriate for men and women and expect their partner to adhere to her role (Pornari et al., 2013).
- Perpetrators with increased psychopathic traits (such as lack of empathy) are more sexually aggressive (DeGue & DiLillo, 2004).

- █ Individuals displaying increased callous/unemotional traits are not constrained by guilt or remorse in interpersonal relations. Therefore, the lack of emotional responsiveness results in the inability to relate with and attach to victimised individuals. Consequently, stereotypical perceptions of victim culpability in the context of domestic and sexual violence are likely to be formed (Debowska, Boduszek et al., 2015).

Demographic predictors

Research examining sociodemographic risk factors for domestic violence has generally focused on age, gender, and socioeconomic indicators.

- █ Risk for domestic violence tends to decrease with age, with older individuals being less likely to be perpetrators (Caetano et al., 1995).
- █ Men are more likely than women to be perpetrators of domestic violence, particularly in more severe forms (Egami et al., 1996).
- █ Socioeconomic status has been shown to be a robust correlate of domestic violence, with most studies indicating that low educational attainment, poverty, and employment instability are related to higher risk of violence (Kaukinen, 2004).
- █ Male partners who are unemployed or report lower levels of education, prestige, and income are more likely to abuse their female partners (Fox et al., 2002).

References

- Caetano, R., Vaeth, P. A. C., & Ramisetty-Mikler, S. (2008). Intimate partner violence victim and perpetrator characteristics among couples in the United States. *Journal of Family Violence, 23*, 507-518
- Costa, B.M., Kaestle C.E., Walker, A., Curtis, A., Day, A., Toumbourou, J.W., & Miller, P. (2015). Longitudinal predictors of domestic violence perpetration and victimization: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 24*, 261-272.
- Debowska, A., Boduszek, D., Dhingra, K., Kola, S., Meller-Pruniska, A. (2015). The Role of Psychopathy and Exposure to Violence in Rape Myth Acceptance. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 30*(15), 2751-2770.
- Egami, Y., Ford, D. E., Greenfield, S. F., & Crum, R. M. (1996). Psychiatric profile and sociodemographic characteristics of adults who report physically abusing or neglecting children. *American Journal of Psychiatry, 153*, 921-928
- Fergusson, D., Bowden, J., & Horwood, L.J. (2008). Developmental antecedents of interpartner violence in a New Zealand birth cohort. *Journal of Family Violence, 23*(8), 737–753.
- Fox, G. L., Benson, M. L., DeMaris, A. A., & Van Wyk, J. (2002). Economic distress and intimate violence: Testing family stress and resources theories. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 64*, 793-807.
- Gomez, A.M. (2011). Testing the cycle of violence hypothesis: Child abuse and adolescent dating violence as predictors of intimate partner violence in young adulthood. *Youth & Society, 43*(1), 171–192.
- Henning, K., Jones, A. R., & Holdford, R. (2005). “I didn't do it, but if I did I had a good reason”: Minimization, denial, and attributions of blame among male and female domestic violence offenders. *Journal of Family Violence, 20*, 131–139
- Kaukinen, C. (2004). Status compatibility, physical violence, and emotional abuse in intimate relationships.

Journal of Marriage and Family, 66, 452-471.

Linder, J.R., & Collins, A.W. (2005). Parent and peer predictors of physical aggression and conflict management in romantic relationships in early adulthood. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 19(2), 252–262.

Melander, L.A., Noel, H., & Tyler, K.A. (2010). Bidirectional, unidirectional, and nonviolence: A comparison of the predictors among partnered young adults. *Violence and Victims*, 25(5), 617–630.

Moylan, C. A., Herrenkohl, T. I., Sousa, C., Tajima, E. A., Herrenkohl, R. C., & Russo, M. J. (2010). The effects of child abuse and exposure to domestic violence on adolescent internalizing and externalizing behavior problems. *Journal of Family Violence*, 25, 53–63.

Pornari, C.D., Dixon, L., & Humphreys, G.W. (2013). Systematically identifying implicit theories in male and female intimate partner violence perpetrators. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 18, 496-505.

Stuart, G. L., Moore, T. M., Hellmuth, J. C., Ramsey, S. E., & Kahler, C. W. (2006). Reasons for intimate partner violence perpetration among arrested women. *Violence Against Women*, 12, 609–621.

Sunday, S., Kline, M., Labruna, V., Plelcovitz, D., Salzinger, S., & Kaplan, S.L. (2011). The role of adolescent physical abuse in adult intimate partner violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 26(18), 3773–3789.