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The appropriateness of the Duluth Model for Intimate-Partner Violence and Child to Parent Violence: A Conceptual Review

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Abstract

Research demonstrates that child- to-parent violence (CPV), an under researched form of family violence, is associated with intimate partner violence (IPV). The aim of this paper is to critically explore the influence of the Duluth model of IPV on the overarching conceptual frameworks used to explain CPV. Although gender socialisation could indeed be a factor implicated in CPV, the prefixed assumptions of the Duluth model about gender as the ultimate etiological factor, have shaped and dominated the discourses of CPV resulting in devaluation of a range of other factors pertinent for understanding this type of violence. It has been established that violence, and more specifically family violence, is a highly complex phenomenon that has history and continuity; as such contextual, multi-modal explanations are favored (Asen & Fonagy, 2017). This paper discusses the tenets of the theory and consequently, its influence on discourses around etiology and maintenance of this narrative. Future recommendations include ecological, lifespan approaches based upon tailored, evidence-based interventions.

Keywords: child-to-parent violence, intimate partner violence, interventions, adverse childhood experiences.

Introduction

Child-to-parent violence (CPV) refers to violent behavior directed towards parents or carers by children, and adolescents legally recognized as children. CPV is an under-researched form of family violence (Holt, 2013). Indicatively, it lacks widely accepted terminology and definitions while the prevalence rates and gender ratios remain somewhat unknown. Research findings are inconsistent, conflicting, and suffer from major methodological limitations (see Holt, 2012 for a review). In the United Kingdom (UK), the literature is sparse and underdeveloped, but there is growing interest in this topic among researchers (e.g. Coogan, 2014; Miles & Condry, 2015).

Limitations in the literature include a lack of large scale epidemiological studies with community samples to establish prevalence and gender ratios (Papamichail, 2018). Also, explanations regarding the origins of CPV and the mechanisms that sustain it are limited (Miles & Condry, 2015); this creates issues when considering the development of interventions to tackle family violence. The aim of this paper is to critically discuss the reliance of interpretive frameworks used to explain CPV that are based on the gendered model of adult-initiated intimate partner violence (IPV). The influence of this model goes beyond simply recognising CPV as gendered violence rather, the overarching conceptual frameworks of the literature and the associate discourses rely heavily on the approaches of these traditional, gendered models and have been adapted to understand CPV despite the important differences between them (Papamichail, 2018). According to Miles and Condry (2015), "it is striking that 'adolescent to parent violence (APV)' has emerged onto the policy agenda by 'piggy-backing' the adult-focused domestic violence and abuse agenda" (p.1080). For example, in 2013, the definition of domestic violence was altered

to include violence by young people aged sixteen and above (Home Office, 2013), while CPV was included in the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy published in 2014 (VAWG, 2014). This paper argues that the policy followed the literature and the pre-established assumptions of the topic studied, which is self-evident in chronological terms. Despite the limitations in the literature and the important differences and implications of IPV and CPV (see Miles & Condry, 2015 for a review), the Duluth model has impacted practice. For instance, the "Step-Up" intervention programme is informed by the Duluth model (Holt, 2015; Routt & Anderson, 2015).

Due to the complexity of violence (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, McCullars & Misra, 2012), researchers favor the combination of theories (Asen & Fonagy, 2017; Scott & Dadds, 2009). Research with young people with conduct difficulties suggests that there is a range of complex, interconnected dynamics that contribute to violent behavior, and which may exacerbate or ameliorate it. As a result, multi-modal explanations may be most effective. This work adopts an interactionist perspective within which individual behavior is seen as dependent upon the interplay between various dynamics (Lerner, 2006). A lifespan ecological perspective, adopted within the relational-developmental framework, views individuals as continuously interacting with their environment, adapting to it or seeking to adapt it to their own purposes (Lerner, 2006).

The Duluth Model of IPV and its impact on CPV discourses

The Duluth model is a sociological-criminological, second-wave feminist, court mandated, group programme which developed during 1980s in the USA derived from the gendered model of IPV (Pence & Paymar, 1993). Proponents of the model (e.g. Fagan &

Browne, 1994) assert that men's violence arises from patriarchal values and male privilege. Additionally, these scholars posit that IPV should be studied independently of other family violence, and general aggression research, since these models of aggression do not characterize this specific form of violence (e.g. Browne, 1987).

According to the model, negative emotions are the outcome of patriarchal beliefs; past experiences are viewed as irrelevant, therefore any mention of men's experiences of previous victimization is viewed as "justification of violent behavior" (Pence & Paymar, 1993). The model does not address psychological issues or emotions as these are further thought to diffuse responsibility. It also does not consider bidirectional/mutual violence, construing such consideration as "victim blaming" (Dobash & Dobash, 2004). Women's violence is understood as almost entirely defensive. Advocates of the model assert that group-work is the only way of working with perpetrators of adult IPV: individual one-to-one therapeutic or family-based approaches are anathema because they are seen as entailing the risk of enabling further violence by colluding with the perpetrator (Holt, 2015).

In parallel, proponents of this model support that CPV is an asymmetrical problem of boys' violence towards mothers stemming from gender inequality and forming part of an agenda to perpetuate men's power and domination over women (e.g. Edenborough, Jackson, Mannix, & Wilkes, 2008). Consequently, it has been suggested that CPV should be recognized as gendered violence against women, and terms such as "mother abuse by children" or "son to mother violence" have been suggested as more accurate representations (e.g. Arroyo, 2017). As in the field of IPV, such approaches favour a criminal justice response to the problem (e.g. Wilcox, 2012). However, whilst

criminal justice is the appropriate route for some cases, for the majority of families experiencing CPV, a family focused, contextual approach is needed (Miles & Condry, 2015).

The influence of Duluth model goes beyond the conceptualisation of CPV as gendered violence and has the shaped the discourses of the literature, even among researchers who recognise the complex range of etiological factors (Papamichail, 2018). Borrowed from the Duluth model, violence is viewed as solely strategic, instrumental means of gaining power; according to Cottrell's (2001, p. 3) widely applied definition CPV is "...any harmful act by a child intended to gain power and control over a parent. The violence can be physical, psychological or financial." This constitutes a linear, cause and effect conceptualisation of violence, overly relying on conceptualisations of IPV and is deemed inadequate to address the multifaceted nature and complexity of the topic (Papamichail, 2018). Consequently, this paper calls for a new definition for CPV. The issues of "power" and "power intent" have also attracted a lot of attention in the literature (e.g. Coogan, 2011). In this model, "power" is conceptualized as vertical, top-down power between unequal adults, albeit reversed: the young people are seen as having power over parental decisions, whilst parents are seen as passive recipients, complying with young people's demands.

In line with the Duluth model of IPV, where alternative theories have been proposed, these have often been devalued. For example, the role of psychological distress has been criticised as a way or minimising or justifying violence (e.g. Coogan, 2014). The links of CPV with exposure to violence and young people's experiences as witnesses of IPV are often minimized with the rationale that not all these young people

become violent (e.g. Gallagher, 2015). Similarly, it has been claimed that interpersonal theories (e.g. social learning, attachment) suggest that the problem lies in the parents (e.g. Holt, 2013). It has further been suggested that a range of disciplines from psychology, psychiatry and family therapy to social work foster a mother/parent blaming culture leading to "victim-blaming" due to their focus on environmental influences rather than on "nature" (Gallagher, 2015).

Alternative, contextual and holistic approaches

Running parallel to this literature base, is an alternative body of work that has explored family violence more widely and has found disparate findings. It emerged that women were perpetrating aggression within relationship at similar, or even slightly higher rather than men (e.g. Archer, 2000; Bates, Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2014). Research also suggests that there is a high prevalence of bidirectional or mutual violence in relationships. Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Misrea, Selwyn & Rohling (2012), found in their review of 48 studies that the weighted rates indicated 59.8% of violence was bidirectional. Excluding women as potential instigators of violence effectively pathologizes women's violent behavior since it reproduces the cultural stereotype of women as "naturally non-violent".

Similarly, the assertions around controlling behavior being the sole domain (and explanation) of men's IPV has also been contradicted (Carney & Barner, 2012). Bates et al. (2014) explored IPV, aggression to same-sex non-intimates, and controlling behavior and found women were more physically aggressive, and more controlling, to their partners than men. Control was found to be a significant predictor of both IPV and

aggression to same-sex others; men and women in the higher control group perpetrated significantly more aggressive behaviors to both targets. Men's IPV is not solely motivated by the need to control and dominate women. Literature on risk factors of IPV details a number of predictors of both men's and women's IPV for example criminality (e.g. Moffitt et al., 2001); alcohol consumption (Caetano, Cunradi, Schafer & Clark, 2000); as well as by lower levels of empathy (e.g. Joliffe & Farrington, 2004) and self-control (Bates, Archer & Graham-Kevan, 2017).

There is compelling evidence regarding the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACE) on life outcomes including the intergenerational transmission of violence (Bellis et al., 2014), emotional dysregulation and psychopathology across lifespan (McLaughlin et al., 2010), substance abuse and illicit drug use (Dube et al., 2003). ACE include exposure to child-abuse and neglect, IPV, poverty, growing up in a household where the carer is mentally distressed, substance abuser, incarcerated and/or losing a parent to death, divorce or separation (Bellis et al., 2014). Additionally, the emerging body of literature is demonstrating both the longstanding impact on psycho-relational functioning (e.g. Dugal, Bigras, Godbout & Bélanger, 2016) and perpetration and victimisation of IPV (e.g. Whitfield, Anda, Dube & Felitti, 2003). The evidence presented here indicates that while gender can explain some aspects of some men's IPV, it cannot explain the problem in its totality. Rather we see within the literature that not only can women be violent, but that many relationships are characterised by violence and control from both partners, and that both men's and women's violence is more complex in nature than the gendered model allows.

Similarly, within the CPV literature, research has demonstrated that this violence is more complex and contextual than the model allows. A number of large scale studies with community samples, as well as clinical samples (e.g. Biehal, 2012), have found no statistically significant evidence that boys are more likely to be violent towards their parents than girls. Two further studies in Spain found no gender difference in physical violence, but for verbal and psychological violence, girls had significantly higher scores (e.g. Calvete, Orue & Gamez-Guadix, 2013). In contrast, and indeed similarly to more gendered studies within IPV, studies that recruit samples from the criminal justice system find that the majority of violence initiators are boys (e.g. Condry & Miles, 2013).

Police data and legal samples cannot provide generalisable results across all types of violence. Moreover, there is a tendency to underestimate physical violence perpetrated by girls unless it becomes injurious suggesting there is a higher tolerance of aggressive behavior for women; and a lack of research on whether the police take boy's assaults more seriously than girl's (Selwyn & Meakings, 2016). Additional problems with the data are that, in most studies comprising secondary analyses of legal and police data, gender is measured as a single demographic variable: any contextual information about how it mediates interactions and violent behaviors towards parents is absent.

Mothers, and particularly single mothers, are found to be the main targets of violence (e.g. Ibabe & Jaureguizar, 2010); although in a number of studies the researchers found bi-directionality of violence (e.g. Ibabe et al., 2009) and boys' generalized violence against other family members (e.g. Ibabe & Jaureguizar, 2010). Other studies have suggested, in contrast that the rates of physical violence against fathers and mothers were similar (Ibabe, Jaureguizar & Bentler, 2013). In additional studies that found mothers as

the main targets of violence, due to a high prevalence of single parent families, the statistical representation of mothers as the main targets may be biased by the type of family: in the case of single parent families the mother is the victim because there is no father as an alternative target (e.g. Cornell & Gelles, 1982).

For instance, in the UK, Biehal (2012), found that *single* mothers were more likely to be targets of violence. However, in the same study, fathers were as likely as mothers (in two parent households) to be targets of young people's violent behaviour. It is worthy to note that Biehal (2012) recruited young people coming from seven different types of families (e.g. single mother, mother and father, mother and partner, single father, father and partner, adoptive parents). This implies that when there is a father to attack, they are also likely to be targets of CPV. Furthermore, young people who were coming from single mother families, were more likely to have witnessed IPV. Although gender can indeed be a factor, the association of single parenting with CPV might be mediated by violence within families, the quality of parent-child relationships and attachment in the face of adversity, conflicts around divorce and parental relationships with each other, socio-economic status and neighbourhood safety, existence of physical and mental health problems, and neglect (e.g. Margolin & Gordis, 2000). There is also a high probability that fathers are under reporting such attacks. This is further supported by the IPV literature according to which, men are less likely to report experiences of violence victimization than women due to the stigma associated with male victimisation and/or the fact that men's victimisation by women is not taken seriously (Steinmetz, 1978). This is a finding seen within men's accounts where they report often feeling unable to ask for help

for IPV (Tsui, 2014), or often finding formal sources of support to be unhelpful (Machado, Hines & Matos, 2016).

The sole focus on parents as targets of violence has resulted in other types of possibly co-existing violence being ignored. For example, there is evidence of young people's violence against parents being linked to violence against siblings (e.g. Fitz-Gibbon, Elliott & Maher, 2018). Interestingly, perpetration of violence against siblings and in school, within the CPV literature are not found to be gendered (Howard, 2015). Papamichail (2018) found that violence against parents co-existed with violence against siblings and severe conduct problems in school, based on the accounts of both young people and professionals. Scholars who draw conceptually on the Duluth model to explain CPV omit young people's behavior against siblings and in school from their considerations (e.g. Wilcox, 2012). This omission has resulted in sibling violence and school behavior being left out of conceptualisations of CPV, despite the importance of such data in understanding the topic studied holistically. Dichotomising domains of young people's lives such as family versus school, and isolating factors, such as psychological characteristics from their context, provides a fragmented picture that impedes a holistic view of the topic studied.

Furthermore, there is lack of sufficient empirical data to support the hypothesis that violence is used for power and control in political, strategic terms to dominate mothers (e.g. Nowakowski-Sims & Rowe, 2015); the voices of young people are largely missing from the literature. Indeed, the majority of CPV studies found that the motivation of the violence was to control parents and parental decision making (e.g. Calvete et al., 2014). Nevertheless, whilst control is a common theme amongst studies within CPV, there is no

investigation regarding *why* young people seek control (Nowakowski-Sims & Rowe, 2015). An innovative small-scale study in the UK concerning parents' experiences using two online public message boards showed that parents constructed young people in two ways: as a "lit-fuse" or as a "ticking time-bomb" (Holt, 2011, p.458), referring to explosions of anger as both inevitable and unpredictable. These accounts are indicative of young people's high emotional intensity, unpredictable and impulsive mood swifts, and inability to self-soothe during distress. Findings of a recent study build on this by indicating emotional dysregulation, lack of mentalizing skills, impulsive control, and a key thread of 'intensity' running throughout young people's accounts regarding abandonment and neglect while the parent-child relationships were highly emotionally-charged (Papamichail, 2018); something, which is common in family violence (Asen & Fonagy, 2017). These characteristics contradict the dominant conceptualization of violence as a linear, strategic, cause and effect process to gain power and control in order to dominate mothers or parents in political terms.

Regarding the traditional, vertical model of power, researchers have attempted to explain the reversal of power between young people and their parents. For example, Calvete et al. (2013) suggested that "symmetric" child-parent relationships in the European context resulted in young people's "over-empowerment", explaining the rising incidence of young people's violence against parents. The authors have not empirically tested parenting styles, so at this time, the suggestion must be regarded as speculative. Moreover, the assumption that all families in European or Westernised countries employ "symmetric" parent-child relationships is an overgeneralization (Kuczynski, Harach & Bernardini, 1999). Holt (2013), in her Foucauldian theoretical analysis of power

relationships, recognised the limitations of the traditional model of power within the realm of CPV suggests that the physical, legal, economic and political resources, and the knowledge power of parents within the family is equal to the power of young people. Poor, single mothers, for example, have little power in any of these dimensions. This perspective misses the interdependency of child-parent relationship (Kuczynski et al., 1999), and the dialectic relationship of individuals and family as a system within the larger society (Overton, 2014). Young people's lack of economic agency until the age of 18 means that if parents have minimal power, the same will probably be true of their children. For example, since the beginning of the financial crisis in 2008, the number of children and young people in care has been steadily increasing in the UK (Jones & Tuly, 2017): as parents are pushed into economic hardship, young people suffer as well.

Even for the most democratic types of parent-child relations, absolute symmetry of power between young people and their parents is rare and perhaps impossible. The power asymmetry in parent-child relationships is apparent: parents control resources, children lack political and economic power as a social group, they are relatively invisible at policy level, and they lack the power of authority derived from adult status (Punch, 2005); this also ignores the developmental stages of the life cycle. Violence should not be confused with power, as violence commonly occurs when power is weak (Ardent, 1970). Indeed, powerlessness is related to violence: violence becomes a substitute for power and control (Gilligan, 2000).Whilst such analyses are concerned with power, they also fail to take into account that the majority of literature is adult-centred. Young people up to 16 years old, cannot participate in research unless parents also provide their consent (BPS, 2014). Additionally, this analysis omits the powerlessness embedded in encountering

situations such as chronic exposure to IPV and psychological distress that are associated with violence against parents, and are detrimental to both parents and young people. A model of parent-child relations as power-asymmetrical and interdependent, in contrast, can contextualise power within the parent-child relationship and account for the reality that despite absolute differences in power between young people and their parents, both have resources on which they can draw to exercise power (Kuczynski, 2003).

Miles and Condry (2015), Nowakokowski-Sims and Rowe (2017), and Papamichail (2018) have found that young people who were violent against their parents, have been powerless within the family setting due to chronic direct or indirect exposure to violence and neglect. Despite the evidence of the link between CPV and ACE (e.g. Papamichail, 2018), and despite the impact of such experiences on a child's development, very little research has applied the terminology of ACEs, even among studies that found exposure to IPV and child abuse (e.g. Ibabe et al., 2013).

The evidence presented here highlights the issues with the widely used and indiscriminate terminology of "perpetrators" and "victims" in the CPV literature. This perspective is rooted in traditional gender approaches of IPV that view both groups as relatively homogenous (Bates, 2016), and it creates a dichotomy that is often too simplistic in understanding the dynamics of CPV (Papamichail, 2018). For CPV, the lines between "perpetrators" and "victims" are often blurred, and clear distinctions are not common (e.g. Miles & Condry, 2015). The terminology used is reflective of how CPV is treated in practice; yet Papamichail (2018), found bi-directionality of violence between young people and their parents (physical and psychological) during an intervention aiming to tackle CPV. This leads us to question the quality of assessments especially

around risk and the interactive character of parent-child relationships which raise important ethical concerns. The *absence* of consideration of bi-directional violence and quality assessments not only runs the risk of pathologising and criminalizing young people further but, given that bi-directional violence is more dangerous and results in more injuries (Bates, 2016), there are serious safety concerns raised for parents and young people. Whilst the "perpetrator" and "victim" terminology is obviously appropriate for unilateral violence, the indiscriminate application of these terms risks a lack of assessing for bi-directional violence, missing the context in which violence is instigated, and resulting in simplifying a complex phenomenon.

Given the findings regarding ACE discussed above, it is surprising that very few studies especially in the UK context have investigated the role of developmental trauma (Van der Kolk et al., 2009). The studies that examined the psychological profiles of young people who are violent against parents, however, found characteristics congruent with emotional and behavioral outcomes of developmental trauma. These characteristics include rage, depressive symptoms, low self-esteem, substance abuse, lack of emotional regulation, borderline personality difficulties, problems with attention and concentration and social maladjustment (Biehal, 2012; Calvete et al., 2014). It has been consistently shown that children who experienced prolonged trauma are at risk of using aggression to manage perceived powerlessness and helplessness (Ford, Chapman, Mack & Pearson, 2006). According to the developmental trauma model, environmental factors such as prolonged ACE, rejection, coercion, cruelty and neglect results in young people resorting to defiance of rules and authority and violent behavior as self-protective reactions.

The combination of insecure attachment with developmental trauma that occurs within children's care-systems may result in young people having difficulties in regulating their emotions, and thus in feelings of powerlessness and helplessness. This is of particular importance given that violent behavior has been argued to be a means of gaining power and control (Coogan, 2011; Cottrell, 2001). Therefore, violent behavior might be used as a form of immediate, short-term empowerment. Lack of trust and safety is related to problems of sustaining healthy relationships and may explain feelings of isolation (Papamichail, 2018). According to developmental trauma theory, breaking rules, hurting vulnerable others, such as peers and animals, and violence against authority figures such as teachers and parents, represent a shift from survival coping to victim coping and are motivated by a desire to regain the ability to feel safe and in control (Ford et al., 2006). Furthermore, this theory offers a way of relating psychological difficulties in forming and sustaining social relationships to violent behavior.

Certainly explaining CPV solely as a result of psychological distress would result in devaluing young people's agency and moral judgment, rendering them as helpless and incomprehensible. No research that we have found has attempted to do this. It would be over simplistic to claim that psychological distress is the sole cause of violence against parents, or that it plays a role for every young person who exhibits violent behavior against parents. Nevertheless, when emotional needs and psychological distress are not addressed, the risk of offending – or directing violent behavior towards others – is significantly increased (Chang, Larsson, Lichtenstein & Fazel, 2015). Furthermore, such unaddressed needs are not only linked with offending and reoffending, but also predict chronic psychological distress in adulthood (Rutter, 1999).

ACEs are the most important predictors of attachment styles (Waters, Merrick, Treboux, Crowell & Albersheim, 2000). Insecure attachments have been consistently linked to family violence and conduct difficulties (Fonagy, 1999). A limited number of studies within the field of CPV however, outside the UK, have sought to apply attachment theory directly to their results. For instance, a study that considered all cases of “parent battering” in Baden-Wurttemberg state in Germany, demonstrated that “distorted early parent-child interactions” (Du Bois, 2005, p.47) was a common denominator among families experiencing CPV. In Spain, Calvete et al. (2014) found that young people were emotionally deprived, and that the physical or psychological absence or unavailability of parents was an important characteristic of families within which CPV took place.

The discourse around interpersonal theories, such attachment leading to “victim blaming”, indicates that there is a need for parental and professionals’ training and education regarding attachment and its application in interventions rather than an attempt to conceal it by rejecting its role. Contemporary attachment theorists do not claim that mothers should exclusively be the primary care-givers (Mercer, 2011). Attachment quality depends on a range of factors such as the presence of psychological distress, social support, socio-economic status and parents’ own developmental history to name just a few. As Sroufe (1988, p.26) observes, “blaming the mother is as inappropriate as blaming the child”. In a similar fashion, Fonagy (1999) stresses the ways social injustice affects attachment quality and links with violence. Furthermore, attachment theory, does not view children as passive in attachment formations: in contrast, attachment is studied as a dynamic, interactional process and it is established that children’s behavior impacts

attachment quality and parental attachment (Mercer, 2011). In short, acknowledging the importance of attachment does not mean blaming its absence on mothers.

Recommendations for practice.

Research has demonstrated that whilst the Duluth model remains popular in practice, there is little evidence that it is effective in reducing IPV (see Bates, Graham-Kevan, Bolam & Thornton, 2017 for a full review; Babcock, Green & Robie, 2004). Dutton (2006) reviewed both its lack of efficacy and concluded that it is impeding effective treatment and judicial responses. To avoid making similar mistakes in tackling CPV, there is an urgent need for evidence to be informing practice. This includes through more research utilising representative samples and methodologically rigorous external evaluations.

Conflict within family relationships is not unsurprising due to their interdependent nature (Finkel, 2007); but there is a need to understand specific risk factors for what can escalate this conflict to violence. Research (e.g. Bates et al., 2017a) that demonstrates the multifarious nature of IPV supports calls for including these within theories of general aggression such as such as the General Aggression Model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002).

Regarding CPV, the impact of these conceptualisations is already evident in practice (e.g. Holt, 2015). Despite the lack of supporting research evidence, programmes based on those premises are currently employed to tackle CPV resulting in a formulaic one-size-fits-all approach. For example, there are group-based programmes running that not only lack external, independent evaluation and evidence base, but in which all young people attend the same programme and the content of each session is pre-arranged and

fixed. Young people with or without a range of experiences such as: domestic violence; those from foster-care and adoptive families; experiencing learning and psychological difficulties; prior exposure to physical violence; and young people whose violent behavior varies widely in severity; are all grouped together in the same programme (Papamichail, 2018).

Such approaches lack the flexibility to engage with individual biographies and circumstances, and there is a risk of traumatising, or re-traumatising further parents and young people. This is especially true amongst those programs that work with foster and adoptive families where traumatic experiences are statistically higher; they do not assess for or incorporate a trauma informed model. None of the interventions that work directly with young people who are violent against their parents has been evaluated for traumatised children in the UK (Selwyn & Meakings, 2016). Of particular concern is that Home Office (2015) guidance with regard to CPV underscores that one-size-fits-all approaches are not effective and can even be dangerous, yet, a number of intervention programmes presented as exemplars in the same report adopt precisely such approaches.

We argue that there is a need to call for attention to ACEs and trauma. In contrast with the claim that a comprehensive assessment of the young person is not needed as knowledge of all factors is not necessary for a solution to be found (e.g. Coogan, 2014), this paper underlines the need for comprehensive formulations and multi-systemic, trauma informed assessments of the child’s and family’s difficulties within the wider social system. We call for contextual, tailored and evidence-based practice. The lack of research informed, and evidence-based practice has been flagged as something unique to

IPV (in comparison to other types of violence; Bates et al., 2017b), yet there is a growing concern that CPV is following a similar trend.

Conclusion

This review explored the influence of the Duluth model on the overarching conceptual frameworks used to explain CPV. It is worthy to underline the main parallels identified between the literature of CPV and the Duluth model of IPV: 1) both assume a linear, cause and effect conceptualization of violence while assuming that violence is used by “perpetrators” in pursuit of self-interest and “power intent” in political terms; 2) both apply the terminology of “perpetrators” and “victims” assuming both groups are homogeneous; the terminology used is reflective of how young people’s violence against parents is treated in practice (e.g. separated services); 3) both accounts devaluate the role of psychological distress, interpersonal and intra-familial factors, impulse control problems and other socio-economic adversities; 4) both bodies of literature view and describe psychological distress, past experiences and familial contexts as “justifications of violence” and “victim blaming”; 5) both ignore other types of violence that may co-exist in conceptualising the phenomena, and 6) both the Duluth model and the interventions informed by it within the realm of CPV lack formal and independent evaluations and they are not informed by evidence based practice.

The categorization of CPV as gendered violence (VAWG, 2014) is problematic because it excludes fathers as targets of violent behavior, and girls as instigators of violence; exclusions which cannot be justified by the data available. Interestingly, because in practice both genders are instigators of violence against parents as well as

targets of violent behavior, interventions that are informed by the Duluth model and use the "Power and Control" wheel, de-gender the descriptions in each wheel for both young people and parents (Holt, 2015). These contradictions between theory and practice reveal the shortcomings of the reliance of CPV in the adult-initiated, second wave feminist understandings of IPV. Furthermore, this categorization runs the risk of stigmatizing both young men and fathers who are targets of violent behavior, and whose accounts are largely missing from the literature. It also fails to consider negative impacts of patriarchy on boys. This is not to claim that there are no gender dynamics involved. The fact that mothers are still seen as primary care-givers is the outcome of gender assigned roles, however there is not convincing evidence that gender is the sole explanatory factor of CPV. In addition to gender, equal attention should be given to intrapersonal, interpersonal, systemic family factors as well as additional social factors.

Although this paper is based within the discipline of psychology, it recognises that psychological and emotional factors do not stand alone as explanations of violence towards parents. However, it underscores the need to incorporate individual, interpersonal and systemic factors and underlines that it is the interplay of biological, psychological and social factors that researchers need to investigate. This work therefore seeks to open the way towards dialogues and encourage inter-disciplinary work.

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