Fall 2014

America Davila - Breaking the Cycle: An Examination of Environmental, Cognitive, and Emotional Factors of Intimate Partner Violence Victimization in Adolescence

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2014 Ronald E. McNair Program

Abstract

Recently, intimate partner violence (IPV) has gained considerable attention as a significant social and public health problem affecting not only adults but also adolescents. Based on Bandura's social learning theory, considerable research has supported a significant link between growing up in a violent home (DV) and youth dating violence. Expanding on previous studies, we explored the cycle of IPV victimization using a sample of 1,067 adolescents (ages 18-25). We examined whether parental support, dating attitudes, and self-esteem are risk and protective factors of receiving dating aggression. The findings indicate that exposure to aggression in the family, low self-esteem, and the acceptance of dating aggression are significant risk factors while high self-esteem and paternal support appear to protect adolescents from the cycle of IPV victimization.

Keywords: intimate partner violence, parent-child conflict, teen dating violence, parental support, self-esteem, acceptance of dating aggression, victimization

Breaking the Cycle: An Examination of Environmental, Cognitive, and Emotional Factors of Intimate Partner Violence Victimization in Adolescence

Domestic violence refers to physical, sexual, psychological, or emotionally abusive behavior by one romantic partner against another [or from parent to child] (US Department of Justice). Currently, an estimated 1.5 million women and 835,000 men in the United States are annually physically or sexually victimized by their intimate partners (Tyler, Brownridge, & Melander, 2011). In addition, between 3.3 million and 17.8 million children in the United States witness domestic violence (as cited in Carlson, 2000). Furthermore, while intimate partner violence is widespread among men and women, official victimization rates appear to be significantly higher for women than for men. For instance, according to the National Coalition against Domestic Violence (NCDV), approximately 1 in every 4 women in the United States will become a victim of domestic violence at least once in her lifetime (ncadv.org). Although research on aggressive dating relationships has largely focused on the victimization of adult men and women, teen dating violence (TDV) has also gained increased attention as a very significant and pervasive public health problem (Garrido & Taussig, 2013; Tyler Borwnridge, & Melander, 2011).

In the last three decades, growing literature has revealed that dating violence during adolescence might be as alarming as in adult relationships with prevalence rates ranging from 10-30% and severe negative consequences including physical injuries and psychological problems. In fact, research has indicated that dating violence perpetration and victimization are the most common types of violence experienced by adolescents (Ali, Swahn, & Hamburger, 201; Swahn, Simon, Arias, & Bossarte, 2008). An association between TDV and later intimate violence perpetration and victimization has also been documented, especially for youth with childhood experience of domestic violence (Vezina & Hebert, 2007; Hendy, Weiner, Bakerofskie, Eggen, Gystitus, & McLeod, 2003). Based on the intergenerational

transgression of violence and the social learning theory, numerous studies have found supporting data for the association between exposure to interparental conflict and experience of parental aggression with current intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration. Hence, adolescence has become as a critical stage in the prevention of later and possibly more severe dating aggression perpetration and victimization. This study will thus expand on the literature of TDV with the objective of determining potential risk and protective factors of IPV victimization that have not been integrated in previous research.

Theoretical Framework

Preventing intimate partner violence and explaining the link between growing up in a violent home and dating aggression has become a priority for many researchers in this area. Although several theoretical perspectives have been suggested, the majority of research on teen dating violence prevention has relied on social learning as a major explanation. This theory posits that childhood experiences shape the development of behavioral and belief systems of individuals by imitating or modeling parents (Bandura, 1977). Learned behavior, particularly aggression, is in turn maintained through positive reinforcement, which influences how one constructs the acceptability of such actions and future conduct.

Consistent with Bandura's social learning theory, social psychologists have identified the family of origin as the most significant model of behavior where the individual must learn the necessary social skills that will prevail throughout the lifespan (Partridge, 1939). Through familial relationships, adolescents first acquire knowledge on acceptable adjustment to society, relationships, and sex. Thus, any dysfunction in family relationships and situations may be reflected in the behavior of individuals (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 2011, p. 225; Partridge, 1939). Moreover, research has indicated that exposure to interparental conflict or experience of parent aggression increases the likelihood of IPV perpetration and victimization in adolescence and adulthood. To date, a substantial body of work has

supported this hypothesis by finding a significant positive relationship between childhood experiences of DV and IPV (e.g. Simons, Simons, Lei, Hancock, & Fincham, 2012; Black, Sussman, & Unger, 2010; Milletich, Kelley, Doane, & Pearson, 2010; Grych & Kinsfogel, 2010; Maas, Fleming, Herrenkohl, & Catalano, 2010; Vezina & Heber, 2007; Garrido & Taussig, 2003; Kwong, Bartholomew, Henderson, & Trinke, 2003; Stith, Rosen, Middleton, Busch, Lunderberg, & Carlton, 2000; Foshee, Bauman, & Linder, 1999). However, when comparing the individual effects of exposure to conflict between parents and parent-child conflict, studies have found mixed results on which type of violence is a stronger predictor of IPV victimization (Herrenkohl, Sousa, Tajima, Herrenkohl, & Moylan, 2008; Carlson, 2000). Yet, some studies have suggested that exposure and direct victimization of DV, which tend to co-occur, may lead to even worse outcomes compared to experiencing only one (Tajima, Herrenkohl, Moylan, & Derr, 2010; Herrenkohl et al., 2008).

Adolescence and Teen Dating Violence (TDV)

Adolescence does not only mark the transition point from childhood into adulthood, but it also represents the beginning of dating and hence of intimate partner violence (Hickman, Jaycox, & Aronoff, 2004). National estimates of the prevalence of teen dating violence, although varying by sources and studies, have nevertheless shown alarming results. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) survey, approximately 1 in 10 adolescents (ages 7-12) have reported experiencing physical abuse by a partner in the past month and about 30% of teens (12-21) in heterosexual relationships have been victims of psychological abuse in the past 18 months (National Institute of Justice). Similarly, recent studies have also reported that about 1 in 3 adolescents in the Unites States (ages 14-20) have been victims or perpetrators of dating violence (Ybarra, Espelage, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Korchmaros, & Boyd, 2013).

Strong evidence has also indicated that IPV can lead to severe negative outcomes. Among the most frequently identified consequences have been substance abuse, sexual risk behaviors, teen pregnancy, eating disorders, binge drinking, suicidal thoughts, mental health problems such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), emotional distress, anxiety, trauma, and serious physical injuries that may require hospitalization (McDonald & Merrick, 2013; Tharp & Noonan, 2012; Maas et al., 2010; Wolitzky-Taylor, Ruggiero, Danielson, Resnick, Hanson, Smith, Saunders, & Kilpatrick, 2008; Foshee, Benefield, Ennett, Bauman, & Suchindran, 2004; Silverman, Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway, 2001; Foshee, 1996). Hence, early intervention in adolescence might be crucial in preventing young males and females from experiencing these negative consequences, especially more severe victimization in adulthood.

Gender and IPV

Although the common assumption about intimate partner violence has suggested that adult women might experience higher victimization rates compared to males, a growing number of recent studies have revealed contrasting youth patterns (e.g. Wolfe & Feiring, 2000). Specifically, research has shown that females tend to report higher rates of violence perpetration while males report more victimization (Hamby & Turner, 2013; Hendy et al., 2003; Foshee et al., 1999). Some researchers, however, have suggested that females may display more physical aggression primarily in self-defense (Vezina & Hebert, 2007; Hendy et al., 2003). For instance, Hendy et al. (2003) studied the romantic relationships of 608 college students and found that while more women reported inflicting violence against their partner than men (26%, 16% respectively), they also reported having more fear of harm from those partners. Nevertheless, very few studies have also suggested opposing results with females reporting more victimization than males (e.g. Maas et al., 2010). Hamby (2009), however, has rejected both the gender parity and extreme gender difference stance and has shown that

any gender difference in nonsexual partner violence is rather moderate with 20% of IPV perpetration committed by adult females and a slightly higher rate for female juveniles. Despite the many conflicting theories of gender patterns, differences in rates of perpetration and victimization for males and female remain unclear.

Research examining gender patterns in serious injury resulting from IPV is less controversial. Overall, studies have shown that aggression against women is more likely to result in serious injury (Black et al., 2009; Rennison & Welchans, 2000; Foshee, 1996). Similarly alarming, based on national homicide estimates, Hickman, Jaycox, & Aronoff (2004) found that girls are at higher risk of being murdered by an intimate partner than boys. Likewise, the Bureau of Justice Statistics has shown that approximately one third of female murder victims (12+) between 1993 and 2005 were killed by an intimate partner while this could only account for 3% of male murder victim (as cited in Fox & Zawitz, 2007). Equally significant, a meta-analysis examining 39 studies of the intergenerational transmission of spouse abuse found that the association between DV and IPV victimization is stronger for women than it is for men (Stith et al., 2000). These results, however, demand cautious interpretations due to the different operationalization and methodology utilized in the studies (Hamby & Turner, 2013). Hence, it is imperative to expand the literature on gender differences in IPV, particularly in victimization, for successful IPV prevention programs that might require gender-specific strategies.

Parenting and IPV

While IPV research has tended to focus on negative parental modeling as a major predictor of dating aggression perpetration and victimization, minimal attention and data has been collected on the influence of positive parental experiences on IPV. Yet, these studies have suggested that parental support or closeness may represent a significant protective factor for youth by attenuating the levels of risky behaviors such as TDV (Tharp & Noonan, 2012;

Maas et al., 2010; Luster & Small, 1994). For instance, findings in Sousa et al. (2011) indicated that independent of exposure to DV, stronger parent-child attachment appeared to be a significant predictor of lower risky antisocial behavior. In addition, studies have also documented parental warmth or support as an important moderator of the relationship between DV and its aversive outcomes (Margolin, 1998)**,** particularly maternal warmth (Tajima et al., 2010; Skopp, McDonald, Jouriles, & Rosenfield, 2007). One study has even found that with high levels of positive parenting, there was no correlation between IPV exposure and TDV victimization (Garrido & Taussig, 2003). Other studies have also indicated a significant negative relationship between positive parenting practices and TDV victimization (Maas et al., 2010; Garrido & Taussig, 2003). Consistent with this literature, parental detachment and harsh parenting have also appeared to increase the risk of girls TDV victimization (Vezina & Hebert, 2007). Similarly, Tyler, Brownridge, & Melander (2011) found a positive association between physical abuse and low parental warmth with dating violence victimization. The literature on parenting practices thus suggests that parental support, closeness, or warmth might be a significant protective factor of IPV victimization and a potential moderator for adolescents with domestic violence background.

Relationship Attitudes and IPV

Another popular research topic in the study of the intergenerational transgression of IPV has been the role of attitudes about aggression. Specifically, extensive research has explored the effects of the acceptance of dating violence on IPV with empirical evidence suggesting that there is an association between these two factors (e.g. Grych & Kinsfogel, 2010; Carlson, 2000; Foshee et al., 1999). For instance, a literature review on 61 empirical studies published from 1986 and 2006 (Vezina & Hebert, 2007) reported that girls expressing beliefs condoning violence in relationships are at higher risk of IPV victimization than those who did not share such attitudes. Furthermore, Ali, Swahn & Hamburger (2011) found a

significant relationship between attitudes supporting boy-girl, and girl-boy physical violence (hitting) and physical dating violence victimization. Additionally, exposure to DV has also been associated with attitudes justifying the use of violence, which is consistent with social learning (Lichter & McCloskey, 2004; Foshee et al., 1999). The present study will explore dating attitudes both as a unique predictor of IPV victimization and as a potential moderator of the cycle of IPV victimization.

The Role of Self-Esteem

Literature on the effects of self-esteem on the association between growing up in a violent home and dating violence is fairly limited, especially in the context of adolescence. Overall, studies have shown mixed results, particularly in victimization. Notably, Vezina & Hebert (2007) found that while some studies show that low self-esteem is associated with IPV, others do not find a significant relationship. For instance, an extensive review of the literature on the overlap of DV, predictors, and resilience reported that high self-esteem (also known as positive self-image) has been found to be a protective factor (Herrenkohl et al., 2008). On the other hand, a longitudinal study of gender differences in adolescent dating violence (Foshee, Linder, McDougall, & Bangdiwa, 2001) showed that while self-esteem has been associated with partner violence for adults, no association was found with teen dating violence. Yet, there are some studies linking low self-esteem to male perpetration and female victimization only (O'Keefe & Treister, 1998; O'Keefe, 1997). The current study will thus expand on this literature in order to better understand the role of self-esteem in adolescence IPV victimization and subsequent adult aggressive relationships.

Present Study

In accord with the literature and current estimates of victimization, it appears that adolescents are at very high risks of IPV victimization and its aversive outcomes, particularly for those with prior experience of domestic violence. In addition, results have shown that

females tend to report more instances of serious physical injury and even death than men. Hence, it is important to identify the most predictive and moderating factors related to the well-supported link between domestic violence and subsequent intimate partner violence in order to develop effective preventive efforts for specific targets. In addition, while major research has focused on unique predictors of IPV based on parenting, self-esteem, and attitudes about violence in relationships, there is little knowledge on their potential moderating influence. Using data from 1,067 participants ages 18-25, we aim to provide a better understanding of IPV victimization and possible risk and protective factors such as family, beliefs, and emotions that may contribute to the prevention of IPV in adolescence.

Research Questions

1. Are childhood experiences of domestic violence associated with IPV victimization?
2. Does parent-child conflict and aggression predict more IPV victimization compared to exposure to interparental conflict alone? Can experiencing both increase the likelihood of victimization?
3. Are parental support, dating aggression attitudes, or self-esteem independent predictors of IPV victimization? Can they moderate the intergenerational transgression of victimization?
4. Are protective and risk factors gender-specific?

Methods

The data for this study was collected from a larger study.

Participants

The sample consisted of 1,067 participants from ages 18-25 (M=18.63, SD=1.125). The majority of respondents were female (69.2%) and White (45.8%). From the complete sample, 4.2% identified as Latino, 4.1 % Asian, 3.8% Black, and .4 Hawaiian or Pacific Islander participants. In the original study, participants were recruited from psychology courses at a

private university and were given extra credit for their participation. Informed consent was obtained and participants were notified of their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Procedure

The procedures of the study were approved by the institutional review board (IRB) for the original data collection. Highly trained research assistants obtained informed consent prior to assessment and provided information for additional psychological services. Participants were then asked to complete a series of online surveys measuring cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and psychological factors. In accord with the present study, responses to questionnaires assessing interparental conflict, parent-child relationship, teen dating violence experiences, self-esteem, and relationship attitudes were gathered from the original study. Demographic information was also obtained from the respondents.

Measures

Dependent Variable:

Teen Dating Violence Victimization: Experiences of dating violence was assessed using the *Conflict in Adolescent Dating Relationships Inventory* (CADRI; Wolfe, Scott, Reitzel-Jaffe, Wekerle, Grasley, & Pittman, 2001). CADRI is a 70-item survey that asks respondents to indicate how often certain abusive behaviors have occurred in their current or previous relationships "during a conflict or argument" in the past year. Questions are asked in pairs with half measuring the respondent's behavior and to the partner's behavior. For the purposes of this study, only reports of victimization were analyzed. Participants were instructed to rate the frequency of each item on a 4-point scale ("never," "seldom," "sometimes," "often"). A combined score was computed with higher scores representing more aggression experienced. The criteria for IPV included sexual, physical, and verbal-emotional abuse subscales. Examples of sexual victimization include four items such as "during a conflict with my current or ex-boyfriend/girlfriend in the past year: he/she forced

me to have sex when I didn't want to." Physical abuse includes items such as "he/she threw something at me" or he pushed, shoved, or shook me." Verbal-emotional aggression was operationalized with items such as "he/she spoke to me in a hostile or mean tone of voice" and "he/she insulted me with put-downs." All of these subscales have demonstrated strong internal consistency with .51 for sexual abuse, .83 for physical, and .82 for verbal-emotional (Wolfe et al., 2001).

Predictors and Moderators:

Interparental conflict: Exposure to conflict between parents was measured based on retrospective data collected from the *Conflict Tactics Scale-Interparental Version* (CTS-IP; Straus, 1979). The CTS-IP is an 18-item revised version of the CTS. Participants were asked to evaluate the frequency in which their parents had engaged in certain behaviors during a conflict in the past year. Questions were asked in pairs with the first measure representing mother-to-father behavior and the second father-to-mother. Sample items include: "discussed the issue calmly" and "used a knife or gun." Participants were instructed to indicate how often each parent (or stepparent) performed each behavior from: 0) never, 1) once, 2) twice, 3) 3-5 times, 4) 6-10 times, 5) 11-20 times, 6) more than 20 times, and P) happened in the past, but not in the last year. Scores from both parents was combined into a composite sum score. Higher scores represented more frequent exposure to violence between parents.

Parent-child Conflict: Conflict and aggression between parent and child was measured using the *Conflict Tactics Scale-Parent-Child Version* (CTS-PC; Straus, 1998). This is a 15-item scale measuring the frequency of different types of parental behaviors experienced by the respondent during a dispute or an argument in childhood. Participants were asked to answer each item twice; one for their mother and one for their father. All items were assessed on an 8-point scale ("never," "1-10 times," "11-20 times," "20-30 times," "about once or twice a month," "about once or twice every 2 weeks," "about once or twice a week," "more

than twice a week"). Sample items included "explained why everything was wrong," "shouted, yelled, or screamed," and "slapped you on the face or head or ears." A composite score was computed for both parents with higher sum scores representing more frequent experience of parent-child conflict.

Dating Aggression Attitudes: Participants' attitudes about dating aggression was based on their responses to the C-EBAA scale. This is a 27-item measure scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0=Strongly Disagree to 3=Strongly Agree. Questions to this measure are divided into four main variables assessing dating violence norms: perceived prevalence of dating violence, gender stereotyping, perceived negative sanctions for using dating violence, and prescribed dating violence norms. Sample items include "it is OK for a guy to hit his girlfriend if she did something to make him mad" and "guys sometimes deserve to be hit." Scores for each variable were summed to create a composite score. Higher scores for each construct represented: higher perceived prevalence of dating violence; more traditional stereotypes; greater perceived negative sanctions for using dating violence, and the more accepting of dating violence (Foshee et al., 2001). (Note: scores from "perceived negative consequences" and "prevalence of dating violence" were reversed so that higher scores would account for a negative perspective of dating aggression).

Self-Esteem: General self-worth was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RES, 1965). RES is widely used 10-item scale that measures global self-worth including positive and negative perspectives. Items are scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly disagree." Examples of the survey include items such as "on the whole, I am satisfied with myself" and "all in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure." For the purpose of data analysis, negative perspective statements were reversed such that low scores to individual responses would be interpreted as disagreeing or strongly disagreeing

(e.g. 1=Strongly Disagree, 4=Strongly Agree). Hence, high overall scores represent low self-esteem.

Parental Support: Parental closeness or support was measured based on the participants' reports of their relationship quality with parents. This data was collected using the Family Connectedness section of the *C-PCS* scale (Resnick, Bearman, Blum, Bauman, Harris, Jones, Tabor, Beuhring, Sieving, Shew, Ireland, Beaaringer, & Udry, 1997). This portion consists of two 7-item questionnaires that assess how close a person feels to mom or dad on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 ("not at all") to 5 ("very much"). Some sample items include "most of the time, your mother/father is warm and loving toward you" and "how much do you think she/he cares about you?" Higher scores represent higher closure to either parent.

Results

Prevalence Rates

Overall, 79% of participants reported some type of dating aggression victimization in the past year. In terms of gender, there was no statistically significant difference between men and women experiencing IPV victimization. Verbal-emotional violence was the most common form experienced, with approximately 77% of respondents reporting some degree of victimization. Sexual-victimization was the second most experienced type of victimization with a 33% prevalence rate. Physical aggression was fairly uncommon, with only 9.3% of participants experiencing it at least once and 78% reporting never being physically victimized.

The sample also reported high levels of exposure to interparental conflict and experience of parent-child conflict. For instance, 83% of participants reported witnessing parental aggression at least once in the past year; males and females did not differ. In terms of parent-child conflict, approximately 88% of sample indicated receiving some type of

aggression from a parent in the past; mean differences between males and females were non-significant.

Risk Factors

Before testing the research questions, correlations were used to explore significant associations among all the variables (see Table 1). Notably, prior domestic violence experience was significantly associated with IPV victimization. Similarly, there were significant correlations among dating aggression attitudes, self-esteem, and IPV victimization. The directions of these correlations, however, were different with greater acceptance of dating aggression and low self-esteem being linked to high levels of victimization. On the contrary, gender was not significantly associated with any variable.

To determine whether witnessing conflict between parents, experiencing parent-child conflict, or both predicted victimization, regression analyses were conducted. Findings indicated that both types of family aggression uniquely predicted IPV victimization. Their association with the dependent variable was positive, which means that more frequent parent-child or interparental conflict is linked to a higher likelihood of receiving violence from a partner. Together, these two variables constituted close to 8% of the variance of IPV victimization. In addition, the interaction of interparental and parent-child conflict also contributed significantly to the prediction of victimization above and beyond their main effects (see Table 2).

Multiple regression analysis then tested whether self-esteem and attitudes regarding aggression uniquely predicted IPV victimization. Dating aggression attitudes was identified as a positive predictor of receiving dating violence, with more acceptance of dating aggression associated with a higher likelihood of becoming a victim of dating aggression. The last significant predictive factor identified was self-esteem. Self-esteem negatively predicted IPV victimization, meaning that low self-worth is associated with a higher

likelihood of receiving violence in a romantic relationship. In addition, while parental support and gender were also included in the regressions, they were not unique predictors.

Moderation Analysis: Protective Factors

The second aim in this study was to examine potential moderators while also controlling for gender. Hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted for each predicted moderator: parental support, self-esteem, and dating aggression attitudes. Before conducting the analysis, the sum scores of each variable were centered in order to avoid any possible problem with multicollinarity. For each moderation analysis, domestic violence, the potential moderator, and gender were entered in step 1. In the second step, the interaction of the independent variables were entered: DV x Mod. When controlling for gender, the second step also included Mod x Gender, and Gender x DV. In addition, a third step was added to include a three way interaction with gender: DV x Mod x Gender.

Examination of the interaction terms including domestic violence and the moderator showed significant moderating effects of parental support and self-esteem (see Table 2). The interaction of dating aggression attitudes with prior experience of violence at home, however, was not significant. Notably, the findings indicate that regardless of gender, support from one's father has a significant moderating effect on the association between exposure to interparental conflict and IPV victimization. Specifically, the direction of the interaction suggests that having support from a father can attenuate the effects of exposure to conflict at home on the likelihood of engaging in a violent romantic relationship (see Figure 1). In addition, we found that maternal support was also significantly associated with a lower likelihood of receiving IPV (β= -.280, p=.000). However, this association was only significant for males and at high levels of prior domestic violence experience, which is similar to Figure 1. These results suggest that for males, being very close to either parent can buffer the influence of growing up in a home with one or more types of violence and

experiencing IPV victimization. Equally important, the moderation analysis showed a significant interaction effect of self-esteem in the link between exposure to interparental conflict and IPV victimization. This result indicates that as self-esteem levels increase, the likelihood of experiencing IPV victimization decreases (see Figure 2).

Discussion

This study provides information about factors related to dating aggression victimization in adolescence. Consistent with the literature, the findings indicate that IPV victimization is a very prevalent issue in adolescence with close to 8 out 10 adolescents in our sample reporting some instance of victimization. Most of this victimization involved verbal-emotional abuse (77%), but sexual victimization (33%) was also a fairly common form of violence experienced in adolescence relationships while physical victimization was relatively uncommon (9.3%).

While research on IPV victimization tends focus on physical aggression only, the present study also included sexual items, which have been often omitted by previous research (Hamby & Turner, 2012; Hamby, 2009). However, as suggested by Hamby (2009), romantic relationships may primarily be sexual in nature and is thus important to include sexual abuse as a measure of IPV. Nevertheless, the prevalence of physical victimization supports the literature. For instance, in the past ten years, the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) has reported a prevalence rate of physical violence victimization ranging from 8.8% to 9.4% (Center for Disease and Control). Furthermore, while females tend to be documented as receiving more violence in intimate partner aggression, our results provide support for recent studies that show similar or no gender difference in victimization (Hamby & Turner, 2012; Hendy et al., 2003).

Moreover, the results provide support for the intergenerational transgression of violence with domestic violence being significantly related to IPV victimization. For instance, in a

meta-analysis examining 39 studies on the IGT of IPV, Stith et al. (2000) found a significant association between growing up in a violent home and becoming a victim of spouse abuse (r= .17, $p < .001$). In addition, our findings indicate that even when accounting for experiences of parent-child conflict and aggression, high exposure to interparental conflict is still a significant unique predictor of IPV victimization. Consistent with previous research, this finding suggest that while prior victimization in the family of origin can increase the likelihood of TDV victimization, witnessing violence between parents may represent a greater risk factor (Black et al., 2010). This strong relationship is consistent with the social learning model. Through vicarious or personal experiences of violence at home, individuals can learn that violence is acceptable or justified in dating relationships, they may learn to model the behavior of the victimized parent, or they may simply learn to believe that they do not deserve love or respect, hence increasing the likelihood of becoming a victim of IPV in future relationships. Thus, gaining interest in dating and sex while growing up in a dysfunctional family may impair adolescents from acquiring the necessary and acceptable social skills to healthy relationships (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 2011, p. 225; Partridge, 1939).

The second objective was to determine if parental support, self-esteem, and dating aggression attitudes were significant predictors of TDV and potential moderators of the IGT of dating victimization. After accounting for significant associations between interparental conflict, parent-child conflict, and IPV victimization, attitudes regarding dating aggression and self-esteem also predicted victimization. However, while most studies have found that greater acceptance of dating violence significantly predicts more IPV perpetration, we also found support for the predictive effect of IPV victimization. This is consistent with Ali et al. (2011), who conducted a study on attitudes affecting physical dating violence perpetration and victimization by surveying 4,131 adolescents from an urban community school. Cross-

sectional logistic regression analysis suggested that attitudes supporting both, boys hitting girls and girls hitting boys, were significantly associated with IPV perpetration and victimization (Ali et al., 2011). We also found support for the few studies suggesting that high self-esteem predicts lower victimization (e.g. Herrenkohl et al., 2008; O'Keefe & Treister, 1998). Overall, these analyses reveal that aggression in the family of origin, the acceptance of dating violence, and low self-esteem are significant risk factors of IPV victimization.

Results from the moderator analysis indicated that support from a parent and self-esteem are significant protective factors for at-risk adolescents growing up in a violent home. Consistent with the literature, having support from a parent can buffer the likelihood of receiving violence in a dating relationship. For instance, Tharp & Noonan (2012) found that more parent-child closeness/respect was a significant predictor of less acceptance of IPV and other risk behaviors. In addition, while no published study has shown significant results of paternal closeness as a predictor of IPV, our findings indicate that the relationship between growing up in a violent home and IPV might depend on the level of closeness to a father, regardless of gender. Specifically, adolescents with high closeness to their father were significantly less likely to experience IPV victimization than those with low closeness but only when exposure to interparental conflict was high. Through social learning, high closeness, support, or warmth from a male authoritative figure would increase the adolescent's sense of protection and self-worth by learning that they deserve love and respect. Another possibility is that since father-to-mother abuse appears to be more common according to official estimates, adolescents who are very close to their fathers would be more likely to model his behavior as the abuser rather than the abused as posited by the social learning theory. Hence, adolescents would be less likely to experience IPV victimization. Furthermore, Garrido & Taussig (2013) also suggested that adolescents may develop better

coping strategies, particularly when dealing with domestic violence, by having a close relationship with their primary caregiver whom they can approach for anything. Thus, it might be that fathers were the main caregivers for this particular sample. Future work should further explore the association between father-to-mother, mother-to-father, and primary caregiver with parent-child relationship in relation to the IGT of violence in order to better understand the moderating effect of paternal support.

In terms of self-esteem, findings show that high levels of self-worth is significantly associated with a decreased likelihood of becoming a victim of IPV. These moderation effects, however, are stronger when exposure to interparental conflict are high. These results suggests that even when adolescents witness interparental conflict with great frequency, they can become resilient to the cycle of IPV victimization if they have a high positive self-image. A possible interpretation of this finding is that adolescents who have high levels of self-worth and previous experience with domestic violence might be more likely to recognize the signs leading to aggressive relationships and less likely to tolerate such abusive behaviors. Another possibility is that self-esteem might not be as affected by mere exposure to interparental conflict as it would be through direct aggression from parents. This was suggested by our analysis, which found no significant interaction effect of parent-child conflict and self-esteem (see Table 2).

Furthermore, while dating aggression attitudes appear to be a significant unique predictor of receiving dating violence, they did not demonstrate any significant moderating effect. That is, the acceptance of dating aggression did not significantly affect the association between growing up in a violent home and IPV victimization. Unfortunately, to our knowledge, this has been the only study interested in the moderating effect of dating aggression attitudes in the intergenerational transgression of IPV. However, while we did not find any significant interaction effect for this sample, this topic should be expanded in the

literature of teen dating violence to determine if the acceptance of dating aggression associated with a greater risk of IPV victimization for at-risk adolescents.

Limitations

A few additional limitations should be noted with regards to this study. First of all, the sample of this study consisted of adolescents attending a private university with the majority of respondents identifying as White, which might not be very representative. Secondly, all information was collected using retrospective self-reported data. As with all studies using self-report data, it is possible that social desirability and poor recall might have affected the accuracy and frequency of IPV victimization and prior domestic violence experience reports. In addition, while we did not find gender differences in victimization, research has suggested that males tend to report more physical victimization while females report more sexual victimization (e.g. Hamby 2009; Swahn et al. 2008; Hendy et al., 2003; Foshee et al., 1999). However, recent findings have suggested that different operationalization and criteria of TDV have played a major role in the lack of consensus in victimization rates. For instance, Hamby & Turner, (2013) showed that when TDV was defined as merely physical aggression, males tended to report significantly higher rates of victimization compared to females (7.9% and 4.5%, respectively). On the contrary, when sexual, physical injuries, and fear-inducing incidents are included in the criteria of TDV, females victimization rates tend to be higher (5.1%) than for males (3.1%). Hence, gender differences in IPV victimization should demand further exploration, particularly in relation to type of violence, severity, injury, and motivation. In addition, while we only focus on IPV victimization, future work may also include perpetration in relation to the moderators included in the present study. Finally, more longitudinal studies should be conducted to account for more severe and frequent exposure to violence at home and in intimate relationships.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the intergenerational transgression of intimate violence victimization and examine the influence of parental support, self-esteem, and the acceptance of violence in the likelihood of becoming a victim of IPV. Overall, our findings highlight very important implications for preventing and reducing intimate partner violence victimization in adolescence. First of all, we have identified potential targets for preventive and intervention programs. These at-risk groups include youth who meet one or more of the following factors: prior experience of family aggression, having low self-esteem, or being more accepting of dating aggression. In addition, while the cycle of IPV continues to be supported by research including the present study, we find that with high support from a father and high self-esteem, growing up in a violent home may not lead to intimate partner violence victimization. Hence, increasing paternal closeness and self-esteem may be significant intervention efforts. These findings indicate that prevention programs should consider environmental, emotional, and cognitive factors as the start point of any effort against IPV and the cycle of victimization. Thus, we find support for a few, but not the only, risk and protective factors that can possibly help break the cycle of IPV victimization for adolescents.

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Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among IPV Victimization, Environmental, Cognitive, and Emotional Variables

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	*M* (*SD*)
1. IPV Victimization	-	.274**	-.147**	.247**	-.172**	.018	10.9(8.5)
2. Domestic Violence		-	-.370**	.224**	-.141**	-.021	24.3(22.7)
3. Parental closeness			-	-.161**	.276**	-.062	44.1(6.8)
4. Dating aggression attitudes				-	-.088	.058	22.3(4.5)
5. Self-esteem					-	.056	32.6(6.4)
6. Gender						-	N/A

** *p < 0.01 level* (2-tailed).

Table 2

Summary of Multiple Regression Analyses for Unique Predictors and Moderators

Variable	Standardized Coefficients *(β)*	Adjusted R^2	ΔR^2
Main Effects		.180	.185***
Interparental conflict	.209***		
Parent-child conflict	.128*		
Self-esteem	-.109*		
Dating aggression attitudes	.197***		
Parental closeness	-.034		
Gender	.059		
Interactions			
IP x PC	.110**	.085	.008**
IP conflict x Closeness to dad	-.119***	.093	.012***
PC conflict x Closeness to dad	-.030	*ns*	*ns*
IP conflict x Mom x Males	-.216***	.144	.039***
IP conflict x Self-esteem	-.100*	.127	.010*
PC conflict x Self-esteem	.032	*ns*	*ns*
DV x Dating aggression attitudes	.012	*ns*	*ns*

Note: IP =interparental conflict; PC= parent-child conflict; DV=any type of family aggression at home.
**p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.*

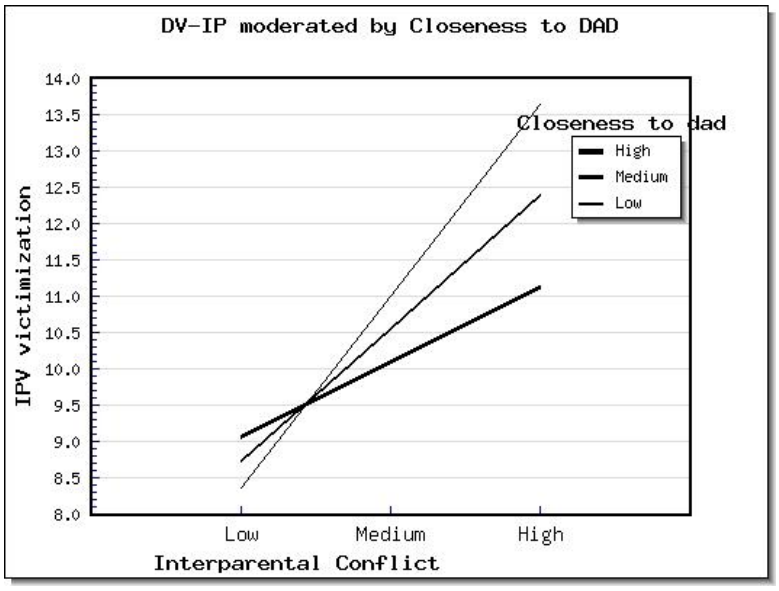

Figure 1: IPV victimization as a function of exposure to interparental conflict and support from a father. This figure shows that high closeness to one's father has a significant buffering effect but only when exposure to conflict between parents is high.

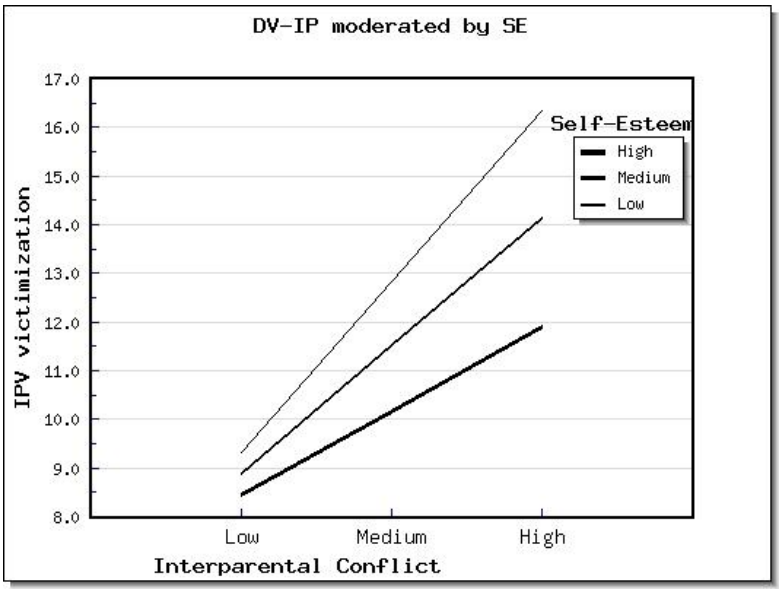

Figure 2. IPV victimization as a function of exposure to interparental conflict and self-esteem. The graph shows that high self-esteem significantly buffers the effect of witnessing violence between parents on becoming an IPV victim notably at high levels of exposure.