

Perpetration in Adolescent Partner Violence: Childhood abuse, impulsivity, reactive and proactive aggression, attitudes. automatic or complex processes?

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To understand perpetration in Adolescent Partner Violence (APV), it is necessary to know how certain environmental factors affect socio-cognitive processes underlying perpetration in APV. However, models that consider socio-cognitive mediators and environmental factors have been poorly integrated into the study of APV, raising the question: How different traits, responses/actions and attitudes involved in socio-cognitive processes can explain the relationship between child abuse and perpetration in APV? The aim of the study was to gain insight into the socio-cognitive processes in the relationship between child abuse and perpetration in VPA by examining the degree of association between child abuse, impulsivity, reactive aggression, proactive aggression, attitudes toward VPA, and perpetration toward a partner. Data were collected from 655 adolescents, using self-report measures of child abuse, impulsivity, reactive and proactive aggression, attitudes toward VPA, and perpetration in VPA, analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The instrument was composed of subscales of the *Childhood Trauma Questionnaire-Short Form, CTQ-SF*, Spanish version in Chile (Bernstein et al., 2003; Domínguez, 2018), a subscale of the *Barratt Impulsiveness Scale, BIS-11*, validated in Chilean adolescents (Patton et al., 1995; Salvo & Castro, 2013), *The Reactive-Proactive Aggression Questionnaire, RPQ*, in its Spanish adaptation (Andreu, Peña, & Ramírez, 2009; Raine et al., 2006), *The Scale of Attitudes Towards Intimate Violence* in its adapted version applied in Chile (Valdivia-Peralta et al., 2018; Vizcarra Larrañaga & Póo Figueroa, 2011), subscales of the *Conflict in Adolescent Dating Relationships Inventory, CADRI*, in its Spanish version (Fernández-Fuertes, Fuertes & Pulido, 2006; Wolfe et al., 2001) and items on cyber violence from the Primer Sondeo de Violencia en las Relaciones de Pareja del Instituto Nacional de la Juventud (INJUV, 2018).

Suffering childhood abuse is predictive of higher levels of impulsivity ($\beta = .45$, $p = .000$), in turn impulsivity predicted higher levels of aggressive traits, both for reactive ($\beta = .56$, $p = .000$) and proactive ($\beta = .44$, $p = .000$) aggression. Proactive aggression was predictive of higher levels of VPA perpetration ($\beta = .53$, $p = .004$), reactive aggression was not ($\beta = -.23$, $p = .168$). While child abuse was not found to predict a higher level of attitudes toward VPA ($\beta = .02$, $p = .616$), nor were these found to predict a higher level of proactive aggression ($\beta = -.02$, $p = .566$) impacting VPA perpetration through these pathways, attitudes toward VPA were found to predict greater VPA perpetration ($\beta = .18$, $p = .000$). A significant specific indirect effect was found for the pathway: child abuse, impulsivity, proactive aggression, and VPA perpetration ($\beta = .10$, $p = .010$). Thus, the relationship between child abuse and VPA perpetration is mediated by impulsivity and proactive aggression. These results suggest that the socio-cognitive process underlying VPA involves processes of different levels of complexity originating in child abuse, linking environmental and individual factors.

Keywords: Intimate partner violence, perpetration, socio-cognitive processes, child abuse, adolescent.

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