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Early Childhood Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence

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Research about intergenerational transmission of spouse abuse produced diverse results assigning different degrees of importance to parental abuse or to child witnessing of interparental violence as risk factors for future intimate partner violence. The present study analyses early experiences of abuse through childhood recollections of physical and emotional abuse and neglect and of witnessing interparental violence. Data were collected using a semi-structured interview specially conceived for this study. Some of the main issues explored were parental behaviour regulation, guidance, affection, attending child emotional needs and congruency between demands and expectancies and child development and interparental relationship and violence. Our participants are adults inmates arrested for violence or homicide against partner: twenty men and eight women arrested for murdering the partner and six men arrested for violence against the partner. A content analysis procedure was used to categorize the interviews transcripts. We did not find any regularity neither between mother or father's physical abuse or witnessing interparental violence and the perpetration of intimate partner violence as adult. On the contrary, emotional neglect is constantly present in the childhood experiences of the individuals. We discuss the importance of emotional neglect and emotional abuse for emotional regulation and attachment in romantic adult relationship accordingly to attachment theory and for the construction of beliefs about the self and others accordingly to schema-focused approach.

Predictors of Intimate Partner Abuse Severity in a Sample of Adult Male Perpetrators

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Intimate partner abuse and intimate partner homicide has been identified as major violent problems and violations of women's human rights. In this sense, it is important to determine the predictors of such violent behaviour, partly because predicting the risk of intimate partner violence facilitates searching for better solutions and better answers. This prospective study identifies the variables that best predict the severity of marital abuse in a sample of fifty male perpetrators of severe violence and 137 male perpetrators of less severe violence. To collect the data, a semi-structured interview was used joined with information extracted from the participant's institutional files. Based on these data we coded the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) whose items and other demographic variables were afterwards used as risk factors. A logistic regression analysis was performed to determine the predictors of severe violence. Results revealed that suicidal and/or homicidal ideation/intent and use of weapons or credible threats of death increased considerably the likelihood for severe violence. Inversely, assault of family members, violation of conditional release and medium socioeconomic level decreased the likelihood for severe violence. In general, findings provided support for the influence of prior violence and prior severe threats as major risk factors for intimate partner