

Attitudes Towards Intimate Partner Violence and Alcohol Consumption

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Introduction

- Nearly 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have experienced physical IPV
 - 50% of people experience psychological IPV (Center for Disease Control, 2011)
- Alcohol related to IPV (Thompson & Kingree, 2006)
- Forgiveness may perpetuate psychological and physical aggression (McNulty, 2011)

Current Study

- Research questions

1. Does perpetrator gender, violence level, and amount of alcohol consumed affect attitudes about violence in an intimate relationship?
2. Does perpetrator gender, violence level, and amount of alcohol consumed affect attitudes about whether victims of IPV should forgive perpetrators?

Methods

- Sample: 532 persons (mostly college students)
 - The majority of participants were female (67%), heterosexual (94%), White (65%), and Non-Latino (96%).
- Multiple Segment Factorial Vignette (MSFV)
 - Participants asked what character in vignette should do rather than what the *participants themselves* would do

Attitudes towards IPV

- Of 532 respondents, 512 reported the perpetrator should NOT have done that
- Reasons given:
 - Violence should never be used
 - There is no justification for using violence
 - Violence does not solve problems
 - Relationships should be free from violence

Attitudes towards Alcohol and IPV

- Participants:
 - Less likely to say alcohol influenced male than female perpetrator's behavior
 - More likely to respond that perpetrator's behavior was influenced by drinking three or six beers compared to one.

Attitudes towards Alcohol and IPV

- Themes within responses
 - Alcohol enhances emotions and/or clouds judgment
 - Perpetrators should still be in control regardless of alcohol intake
 - Alcohol is not a good excuse for violence
 - It depends on how much the alcohol affected Charlie (the perpetrator)
 - People who have been drinking show their true selves

Attitudes Towards Forgiveness after Alcohol Consumption and IPV

- Participants less likely to say victim should forgive
 - A male compared to a female perpetrator
 - When perpetrator threatens to use a weapon compared to slapping or punching

Attitudes Towards Forgiveness after Alcohol Consumption and IPV

- Themes within responses
 - The violence will (probably) happen again
 - Forgive only if this has not happened before
 - The perpetrator's behavior was dangerous
 - Violence should not be tolerated
 - Forgiveness is good

Discussion

- Individuals view alcohol influencing IPV when perpetrators are female rather than male
 - Female-perpetrated violence is often minimized (Rhatigan, Stewart, & Moore, 2011)
- Individuals were less forgiving of threatening to use a weapon
 - This aligns with prior research indicating individuals are less likely to forgive severe transgressions (Kachadourian, Fincham, & Davila, 2005)

Implications and Limitations

- Need workshops that address alcohol and IPV.
- Respondents' personal alcohol use was not assessed
- Participant attitudes towards the use of violence in intimate relationships reflect beliefs that
 - relationships should not be violent
 - alcohol is not an excuse for violent behavior
 - forgiveness is a complex personal decision

References

- Available on request