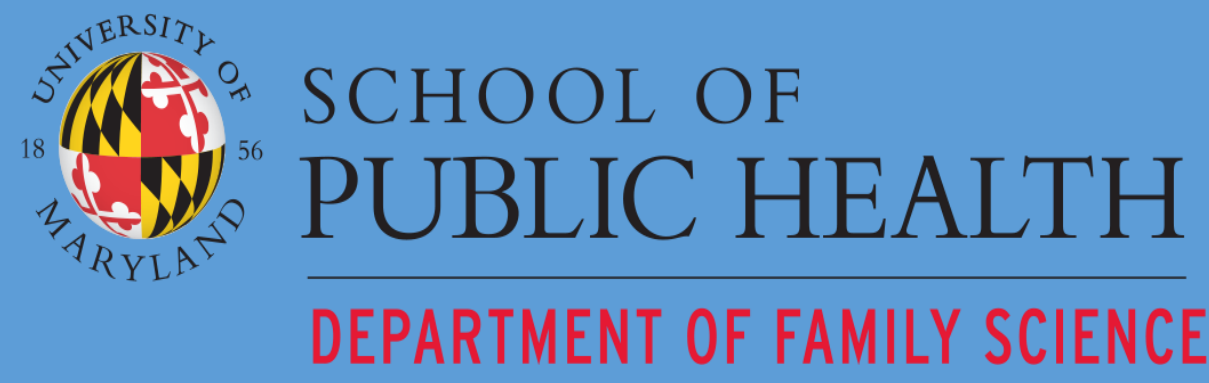


Relationship Dynamics and Perpetration of Intimate Partner Violence among Female Chinese College Students

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ABSTRACT

In China, most violence studies focus on male intimate partner violence (IPV) perpetration and female victimization, and studies on dating violence and female IPV perpetration are lacking. Although female IPV perpetration and gender symmetry in IPV in China has surfaced with very recent research, there have been no studies examining factors related to female perpetration in dating relationships in China. In the current research, we aim to examine how relationship factors, including anger management, communication problems, relationship conflict, and relationship distress are linked with female physical and psychological IPV perpetration.



INTRODUCTION and THEORIES

➤ IPV in China

IPV in China is a multi-faceted issue that is intertwined with traditional Chinese beliefs favoring gender inequality, family unity, and societal conditions that devalue women (Zhao & Yuhong, 2001). However, Chinese women's power and status in their intimate relationships is increasing with their increased access to education and economic resources.

➤ Gender Symmetry

Straus (2011) proposed the gender symmetry model, referring to a position that men and women are equally likely to perpetrate IPV. This model updates our traditional view on IPV and also encourages us to include women on IPV research in China.

➤ Situational couple violence

situational couple violence is the most prevalent type of relationship violence and is perpetrated by both men and women (Johnson, 1995, 2006; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). When talking about situational couple violence, Johnson suggested communication skill deficiencies is one of the core problems (Johnson, 2006) and a significant portion of situational IPV originates from relationship conflict (Stith, McCollum, & Rosen, 2011).

Methods

➤ Data and Chinese Sample

This study used data from the International Dating Violence Study. The Chinese data set is combined from four subsamples from Beijing (10 universities), Shanghai (4 universities), Hong Kong (1 university) and Taiwan (1 university). There are 964 participants including in this study.

➤ Measures

- Physical and psychological IPV perpetration
- Anger Management
- Communication Problems
- Relationship Conflict
- Relationship Distress

➤ Data Analysis

The study used MPlus 7 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2011) to conduct a path analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Our findings suggest Chinese college women's anger management abilities, communication problems and relationship conflict plays an important role in their perpetrating IPV in their dating relationships.
- Our findings also suggest that when relationship conflict and distress is present in the dating relationship, Chinese college women who have better anger management abilities are significantly less likely to perpetrate IPV.
- Our findings support Johnson's argument that communication skill deficiencies and relationship conflict contribute to the escalation of couple violence (Johnson, 2006) and Stith's proposal of viewing situational IPV in the context of relationship (Stith, McCollum, & Rosen, 2011).
- Under Chinese cultural context, Chinese men and women tend to define women's aggression as normal, playful and Renxing (being willful) (Wang & Petula, 2007). Future research and practice should take this cultural perspective into account and design culturally sensitive interventions.
- while Chinese young women are embracing their power and right, they might not know how to express them properly, leading to anger management problems, communication problems and relationship conflict with their partners. further research should have a more comprehensive examination about the factors associating female perpetration.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

• Table 1: Summary of path analysis for the association between relationship factors and physical, psychological IPV perpetration (N = 857)

Variable	Minor Physical Abuse			Severe Physical Abuse			Minor Psychological Abuse			Severe Psychological Abuse		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Anger Management	-.31***	0.05	-0.21	-.25***	0.05	-0.19	-.42***	0.06	-0.23	-.23***	0.06	-0.15
Commu_Problems	0.18**	0.06	0.12	0.15**	0.05	0.11	0.39***	0.06	0.22	0.19**	0.06	0.12
Relation_Conflict	0.19**	0.06	0.13	0.14**	0.05	0.11	0.14	0.07	0.08	0.25***	0.06	0.15
Relation_Distress	-0.19**	0.06	-0.13	-.22***	0.05	-0.17	-0.12	0.07	-0.07	0.10	0.06	0.06
Anger x Conflict	-0.09	0.06	-0.07	-.11*	0.05	-0.09	-.16*	0.07	-0.10	-.24***	0.06	-0.17
Anger x Distress	0.10*	0.05	0.08	0.09*	0.05	0.08	0.02	0.06	0.01	0.07	0.05	0.05
Anger x Commu	-0.05	0.05	-0.03	-0.06	0.05	-0.05	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.05	0.02
Hong Kong	0.18	0.10	0.06	0.16	0.10	0.06	0.62***	0.12	0.17	0.70***	0.11	0.21
Taiwan	-0.12	0.15	-0.03	0.21	0.14	0.06	0.25	0.17	0.05	0.32*	0.16	0.07

- We found Chinese college women's anger management skills and communication problems were both significantly associated with physical and psychological abuse on both minor and severe levels;
- We found relationship conflict was significantly associated with minor and severe physical, and severe psychological abuse;
- Chinese college women' levels of relationship distress was significantly negatively associated with their self-reported levels of minor and severe physical IPV perpetration,
- We also found anger management skills moderated the negative effects of relationship conflict and relationship distress on female IPV perpetration.

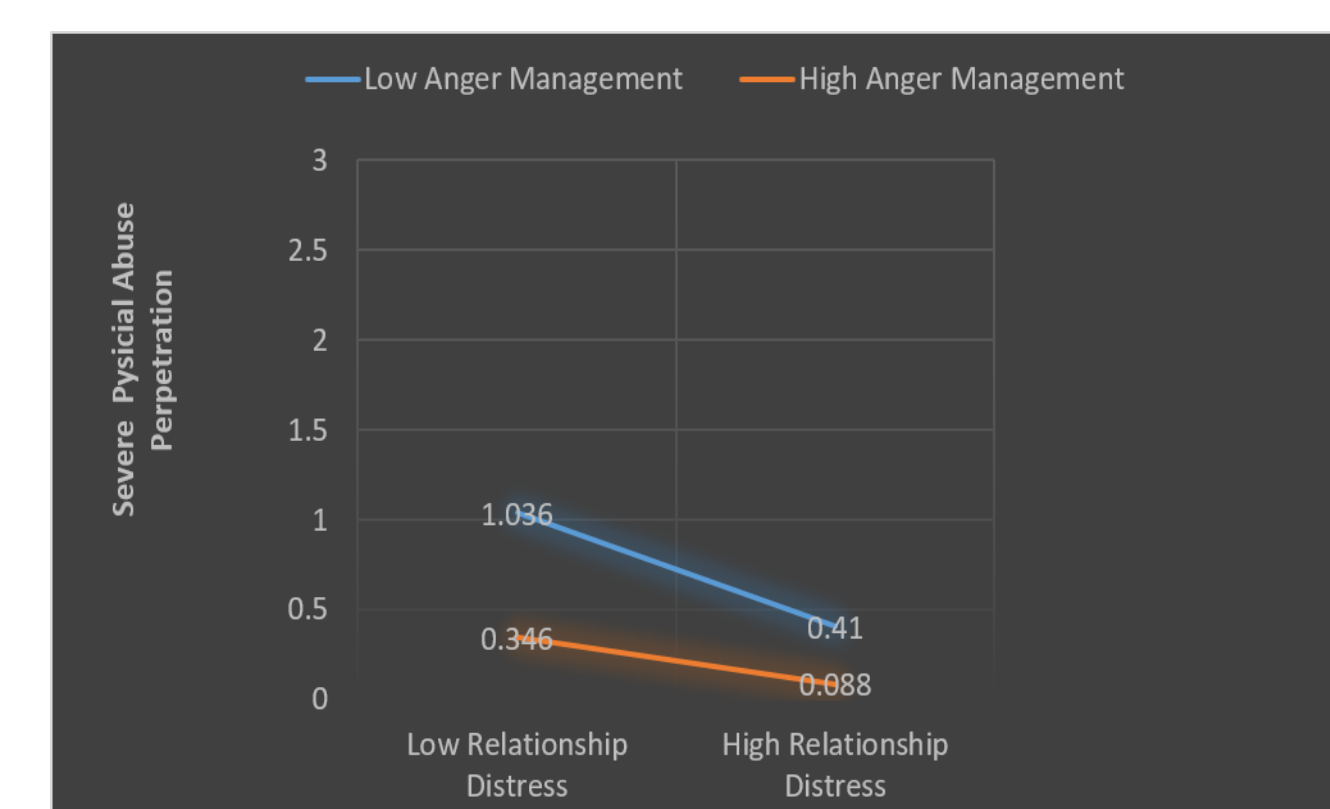


Figure 1: Interaction effects of anger management and relationship conflict on reported levels of severe psychological abuse perpetration

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Develop female-based interventions addressing problems with anger management, communication problems and relationship conflict for Chinese young women.
- Introduce and adapt domestic violence-focused couples therapy (DVFACT) (Stith, McCollum & Rosen, 2011) into Chinese context.
- Develop educational relationship classes to teach young couples how to develop and maintain healthy and safe relationships.
- Intentionally explore the cultural meaning of violence that young Chinese couples make in their romantic relationships. Use narrative therapy (White, 2007) to deconstruct the potentially harmful gender narratives and help the couples to form healthy expectations of gender expression.

QUESTIONS?

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