Male perpetrators of intimate partner violence against women: A Spanish typology

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September 25, 2020

Abstract

Typological approaches in research of intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW) have been discussed on the basis of their validity and applicability in professional practice; yet, most of the published studies on offender typologies have informed as limitations the use of relatively small, non-representative samples. The current study explored typologies of IPVAW perpetrators in a large-scale representative Spanish sample (N = 9,731 cases extracted from the Comprehensive Monitoring System of Gender-Based Violence Cases; VioGén System), according to classic batterer typologies proposed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994). To this end, the risk factors measured by the most extended Spanish police recidivism risk assessment tool (Valoración Policial del Riesgo; VPR) were used as clustering variables. Multiple correspondence analyses revealed the appropriateness of a bi-dimensional model to conceptualize IPVAW offender typologies. Our four-group solution (i.e., LiLa, HiLa, HiHa, and LiHa) may be described based on the levels of instability and antisociality of IPVAW offenders, as objectively measured by VPR⁵.⁰ risk indicators. Statistically significant differences between IPVAW suggested typologies were found in all indicators, except for the presence of perpetrators younger than 24 years old and the presence of bidirectional intimate partner violence, which were equally distributed across the four groups. HiLa and HiHa individuals shared most risk indicators related to the aggressor’s psychological instability. On the other hand, HiHa and LiHa endorsed more antisociality indicators than statistically expected. Although the four subtypes identified in our study resembled classic typologies, we propose a new subtype, with high levels of instability and antisociality (i.e., HiHa), as a more representative IPVAW offender subtype than the classic LLa subgroup. This work contributes to existing knowledge of the heterogeneity of these men, by providing useful typologies that can help inform prevention and treatment.

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