



Exploring the relationship between child physical abuse and adult dating violence using a causal inference approach in an emerging adult population in South Korea

Wesley G. Jennings^{a,*}, MiRang Park^b, Tara N. Richards^c, Elizabeth Tomsich^d, Angela Gover^e, Ráchael A. Powers^a

^a Department of Criminology, University of South Florida, USA

^b Department of Police Administration, Hannam University, Republic of Korea

^c School of Criminal Justice, University of Baltimore, USA

^d Department of Public Affairs and Social Research, Texas A&M International University, USA

^e School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado Denver, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 5 April 2014

Received in revised form 13 August 2014

Accepted 21 August 2014

Available online 15 September 2014

Keywords:

Child maltreatment

Child abuse

Intimate partner violence

Dating violence

Propensity scores

ABSTRACT

Child maltreatment is one of the most commonly examined risk factors for violence in dating relationships. Often referred to as the intergenerational transmission of violence or cycle of violence, a fair amount of research suggests that experiencing abuse during childhood significantly increases the likelihood of involvement in violent relationships later, but these conclusions are primarily based on correlational research designs. Furthermore, the majority of research linking childhood maltreatment and dating violence has focused on samples of young people from the United States. Considering these limitations, the current study uses a rigorous, propensity score matching approach to estimate the causal effect of experiencing child physical abuse on adult dating violence among a large sample of South Korean emerging adults. Results indicate that the link between child physical abuse and adult dating violence is spurious rather than causal. Study limitations and implications are discussed.

© 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

Research on intimate partner violence (IPV) persistently documents controlling and abusive relationship behaviors in samples of young people across the globe (Hines & Straus, 2007). For instance, surveys on 38 Asian, North American, South American, European, Middle Eastern, and Australian/New Zealand university sites provided evidence that one quarter of college students reported perpetrating physical IPV in the prior year (Hines & Straus, 2007). Explanations on the origins of physical relationship violence commonly focus on early learning processes, linking childhood maltreatment, or physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or witnessing violence in childhood with adolescent and adult involvement in violent relationships (Jennings, Park, Tomsich, Gover, & Akers, 2011). The relationship between these constructs is commonly referred to as the cycle of violence. However, broader examination of the literature reveals the multi-determined or ecological nature of violence across the life course, where children exposed to violence concomitantly experience a multitude of overlapping risk factors for violent intimate relationships (Hong, Kim, Yoshihama, & Byoun, 2010; Hong, Lee, Park, & Faller, 2011). Few cycle

* Corresponding author.

of violence studies employ analyses capable of addressing selection bias, and the reliance on correlational designs in extant research may overstate the relationship between physical child abuse and IPV perpetration and victimization (Jennings, Richards, Tomsich, Gover, & Powers, 2013). Although dating violence research has increasingly included samples outside of Western settings, cycle of violence applications in countries such as South Korea remain rare (Kim, Kim, Choi, & Emery, 2014; Yick & Oomen-Early, 2008), hindering an understanding of the cross-cultural applicability of the cycle of violence.

Cross-national research on experiencing physical force as punishment during childhood and dating violence situates incidence rates in South Korea above the median (Chan, Straus, Brownridge, & Leung, 2008; Straus, 2010). Chan et al. (2008) reported that nearly one third of South Korean college students reported physical dating violence perpetration (34%) and/or victimization (28%) in the prior year. In Straus's (2010) review of research on corporal punishment, South Korea ranked 8 out of 32 countries, just below the United States. Specifically, 60% of South Korean respondents did not strongly disagree that they were spanked or hit frequently prior to the age of 12 (Straus, 2010). Attitudes in South Korea regarding physical punishment of children appear favorable, with over 90% of college students in Straus's (2010) sample reporting that a "hard spanking" is sometimes necessary to discipline a child.

Recent cultural and political shifts in South Korea reflect changing norms regarding dating and family. Women comprise an increasing proportion of the workforce (Rogers, Ballantyne, & Draper, 2007) and rising numbers of South Koreans are choosing not to marry or delaying marriage (Jones, 2005; Kreider & Simmons, 2003). Nonetheless, some contend policy regarding dating and family violence lags behind these shifts. Despite the successful passage of two major anti-domestic violence bills in 1997 [These pieces of legislation are the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Victim Protection Act and the Special Act for Punishment of the Crime of Domestic Violence.], the legislation prioritized family preservation, leading criminal justice actors and state-funded counseling centers to encourage survivors to "forgive and forget" (Heo & Rakowski, 2014; Postmus & Hahn, 2007). Modifications to the Acts' language in the 2000s supporting police intervention and victims' rights are viewed by some as largely symbolic (Heo & Rakowski, 2014). Similarly, critics of South Korean child abuse policy point out that although South Korean law requires mandatory reporting of child abuse by physicians and teachers, a lack of consequences for failure to fulfill such responsibilities results in minimal reporting by these professionals (Kim & Jeong, 2002).

With the launch of the new South Korean government in 2013, independent of the violent crimes classified by criminal justice agencies, new categories of crimes that are serious and need to be rooted out have been introduced, or the so called "four social evils", which include sexual violence, school violence, unsafe food, and domestic violence. In this vein and relevant to domestic violence, the Republic of Korea's Prosecution Service announced a three strikes measure compelling the detention of repeat offenders of domestic violence for investigation if the same perpetrator commits physical perpetration three times within three years. These distinctions in policy between the United States and South Korea, alongside the similarities in the rates of experiencing physical force in childhood and IPV as an adult, provide a compelling setting for applying the cycle of violence theory, and therefore contributes to the small but growing literature on dating violence in South Korea (Kim et al., 2014). In addition, the current study overcomes methodological limitations of previous research by applying a quasi-experimental analysis to control for the ecological nature of exposure to violence and determine the causal relationship between experiencing physical child abuse and physical IPV victimization and perpetration among a large sample of South Korean college students.

Literature Review

The origins of violent behavior are commonly framed within a social learning or intergenerational transmission of violence perspective (Akers & Sellers, 2009; Bandura, 1979). Social learning theory proposes that individuals learn violent behaviors in childhood through observing parents or caretakers instrumentally using violence to manipulate and control others (Akers & Jennings, 2009; Akers & Sellers, 2009; Bandura, 1978). Whether a child solely witnesses violence or also experiences abuse, social learning theory anticipates a greater likelihood of violent perpetration and victimization in adolescence and adulthood relative to children not exposed to violence (Bernard & Bernard, 1983; Mihalic & Elliott, 1997).

A multitude of studies identify physical child abuse as a risk factor for involvement in a violent relationship in adolescence or adulthood (Gómez, 2011; Hamby, Finkelhor, & Turner, 2012; Kendra, Bell, & Guimond, 2012; Laporte, Jiang, Pepler, & Chamberland, 2011; Riggs & Kaminski, 2010). For instance, using the U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health data, Gómez (2011) reported that respondents with a history of physical or sexual child abuse had 90% greater odds of IPV perpetration compared with those who did not experience physical or sexual child abuse. Similar cycle of violence effects for dating violence victimization and perpetration emerge among adolescents. Hamby et al. (2012) concluded that the odds of physical dating violence victimization among an American sample of teens increased by 174% with experiences of childhood physical abuse, 97% with experiences of childhood psychological abuse, and 331% with experiences of a parent interfering with a child's access to their other parent. Witnessing domestic violence additionally acted as a risk factor, increasing the odds of adolescent physical dating violence victimization by 120% in comparison to respondents not exposed to assaults in their family (Hamby et al., 2012).

Similarly, Laporte et al. (2011) assessed risk factors for IPV among 12 to 19-year-olds sampled from a Canadian youth protection agency. Both male and female teens who experienced childhood victimization, defined as emotional or physical child abuse or corporal punishment in childhood, were at a greater risk for IPV perpetration (Laporte et al., 2011). However, males displayed the strongest relationship between childhood victimization and IPV perpetration, particularly those

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10310669>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10310669>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)