

## **VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY OF ORIGIN AND SOCIALIZATION IN MALE PERPETRATORS OF INTIMATE PARTNER ABUSE**

Esther Rivas-Rivero and Enrique Bonilla-Algovia  
*University of Alcalá (Spain)*

### **Abstract**

The objective of this research is to analyze the violence suffered in the family of origin and in other forms of polyvictimization and its relationship with distorted ideas about women and the use of violence, having verified the relevance of child violence in its intergenerational transmission. A sample of 120 men who used violence against their partner with a mean age of 43 years ( $SD= 11.88$ ) was analyzed. The results reveal differences between those subjects who witnessed violence against their mother, suffered psychological violence and/or physical violence during their childhood compared to other forms of poly-victimization, finding a high risk in these conditions. No relationship was observed between these conditions and distorted thoughts about violence against women. In addition, three different profiles of aggressors were found which could favor specific interventions. Further studies of violence are needed in order to eliminate it as a normalized form of social interaction in family dynamics.

**KEY WORDS:** *aggressors, violence against women, violence in the family of origin, distorted thoughts.*

### **Resumen**

El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar la violencia sufrida en la familia de origen y con otras formas de polivictimización y su relación con las ideas distorsionadas sobre las mujeres y el uso de la violencia, habiéndose constatado la relevancia de la violencia infantil en su transmisión intergeneracional. Se ha utilizado una muestra de 120 hombres que ejercieron violencia contra la pareja con una edad media de 43 años ( $DT= 11,88$ ). Los resultados refieren diferencias entre quienes fueron testigos de la violencia contra su madre, sufrieron violencia psicológica y/o violencia física en la infancia respecto a otras formas de polivictimización, encontrándose un riesgo alto entre estos sucesos. No se observó relación entre dichos sucesos y los pensamientos distorsionados sobre la violencia contra las mujeres. Además, se hallaron tres perfiles de agresores entre los cuales existen diferencias, lo que podría favorecer intervenciones específicas. Se hace necesario seguir profundizando en el estudio de la violencia con el fin de eliminarla como forma normalizada de interacción social en las dinámicas familiares.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *agresores, violencia contra las mujeres, violencia en la familia de origen, pensamientos distorsionados.*

## Introduction

Violence against women is a public health problem due to its high frequency (Mattos et al., 2017). Worldwide, it is estimated that 35% of women have suffered violence at the hands of their partner (OMS, 2016). Specifically in Spain, the Macro-survey on Violence against Women, carried out in 2015 by the Government Delegation for Gender Violence, based on a representative sample of 10,171 women, reports that around 25% have suffered psychological abuse and 12.5% have been victims of physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or ex-partner (Ministerio de Igualdad, 2020). These data show the magnitude of the problem, since this type of violence comes from the legitimization of violence in masculine socialization and social and cultural tolerance towards violence against women in multiple contexts (Pimentel, & Santelices, 2017), although the family is the most frequent context in which such violence takes place (Martínez-Bustos, Calvo-Mejía, & Sánchez Jiménez, 2019).

The family context is where human beings develop as people in a biological, mental and emotional way, so it is an environment that prepares its members for social life (Artazcoz et al., 2019; Rodríguez-Fernández, 2018). The family can be a space of security that guarantees the biopsychosocial and cultural growth of new generations, or it can be a space where one or more family members may be in danger (Martínez-Bustos et al., 2019). In fact, the interactions that occur within this area where mistreatment is based on gender and/or generation through denigrating treatment that undermines the identity of the individual, can present an inadequate basis and have negative repercussions on the rest of the family members (Martínez-Bustos et al., 2019; Morelato, 2011). When abuse occurs within the family unit, the implications are grave as the ties of trust and attachment are broken (Martínez-Bustos et al., 2019).

Violence in the family of origin is that which occurs in the family context, taking place before the age of 18, and which includes child violence or neglect, as well as the presence of violence against women by a parent or another partner of origin (Elmquist et al., 2016). It should be added that the essence of the family concept, as a natural and fundamental element of society (Aguilar et al., 2015), loses meaning if the violence is replicated in subsequent generations, imitating behaviour models from having witnessed or been a victim of violence in childhood (Artazcoz et al., 2019; Rivas et al., 2020; Rivas-Rivero, & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022). This behaviour is learned in an imitative way by children, since exposure to it favours its transfer to the next generation (Echeburúa et al., 2009; Rivas-Rivero, & Bonilla-Algovia, 2021).

Specifically, the study of the typologies of male abusers is relatively recent (Torres et al., 2013), although one of the most notable features in the profile of men who perpetrate violence against women in a relationship are adverse experiences and exposure to abuse throughout childhood in the family of origin (Ehrensaft et al., 2003). In this sense, the importance of the role played by the family in the development of criminal and violent behaviour has been widely reported, since coercive family patterns are acquired in childhood through social learning and are reproduced in adulthood (Rivas-Rivero, & Bonilla-Algovia, 2021; Safranoff, & Tiravassi, 2018). However, some authors have not found a statistically significant

association between witnessing violence in the family of origin and violence against their female partner in adulthood (Brown et al., 2015). There is also no evidence regarding the size of this association (Elmquist et al., 2016), having found some disparity in this relationship (Black et al., 2010; Murrell et al., 2007; Park et al., 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to continue the research regarding child abuse and its link to violence against women in the couple (Elmquist et al., 2016).

Generally, studies with samples of aggressors who have perpetrated violence against women have taken a predominantly clinical approach (Andrés-Pueyo et al., 2008; Cantos et al., 2015; Echeburúa, & Fernández-Montalvo, 2007). The objective of these works has been to try to group their characteristics, generating an aggressor profile (Boira, 2010), and they have provided an important theoretical corpus in their identification. From broader perspectives, other research has dealt with the analysis of violence exercised by men as a consequence of the reproduction of hegemonic patterns of masculine socialization (Di Napoli et al., 2019). According to López-Núñez (2013), the socialization of men is based on beliefs such as self-sufficiency, which legitimizes the right to set rules and limits to exercise control; heroic bellicosity, which implies the use of violence to resolve conflicts; superiority, which is exercised over women or dependent persons and, finally, hierarchy, from which a belief in authority and protectionism are derived with respect to those who are seen as inferior.

In this sense, men who exercise violence against women are usually affected by cognitive biases linked to traditional gender roles and the inferiority of women, as well as by ideas that legitimize violence as a way of resolving conflicts (Echeburúa et al., 2016; Fernández-Montalvo, & Echeburúa, 1997). The analysis of these distorted ideas has favoured therapeutic intervention with male perpetrators of violence against women and their study is of great importance from both a clinical and empirical perspective (Boira, 2010; Echeburúa et al., 2016, Loinaz, Echeburúa, & Torrubia, 2010).

However, it is essential to continue the study of men who exercise violence against women, as well as analyzing concomitant factors that make it possible to identify the risk factors associated with this violence. The present work aims to analyze the relationship between experiencing direct and indirect violence in the family of origin and other negative events experienced before and after the age of 18, as well as to analyze the risk in the relationship between the different types of violence experienced and their influence on the acceptance of violence against women. We also want to create a classification based on stressful life events experienced before the age of 18 linked to childhood abuse, distorted thoughts against women and the use of violence and other sociodemographic characteristics to establish a profile of men who have exercised violence against women within the couple. Taking into account the theoretical corpus around this group, the following hypotheses have been proposed: 1) Stressful life events related to violence in the family of origin are related to each other, giving rise to different forms of polyvictimization; 2) Previous exposure to violence in childhood is related to distorted thoughts about women and the use of violence; and 3) a diversity of profiles is found, stressful life events being an important trait.

## Method

### Participants

The sample is made up of 120 men who have perpetrated violence against their partner or ex-partner (Table 1). The participants had been given suspended sentences and attended the Navalcarnero Penitentiary Centre in the Community of Madrid (Spain) to participate in a reintegration programme. The sociodemographic characteristics of the sample appear in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample

Variables	<i>n</i>	%
Mean Age (SD) (years)	42.6 years (11.88)	
Number of children (SD)	1.1 (1.14)	
Nationality		
Spanish	84	68.9%
Other nationalities	37	31.1%
Marital status		
Single	49	40.2%
Married	16	13.1%
de facto union	11	9.0%
Separate	12	9.8%
Divorced	29	23.8%
Widower	5	4.1%
Education level		
No studies	10	8.2%
Basic education	34	27.9%
Middle education	46	37.7%
Higher education	29	23.8%
without homologation	3	2.5%
Employment situation		
Inactive	10	8.3%
Full time with contract	74	61.7%
Full time without contract	9	7.5%
Part time with contract	7	5.8%
Part time without contract	1	0.8%
Unemployed	19	15.8%
Income level		
Less than €538/month	28	23.3%
Up to €1,076/month	48	40.0%
Up to €1,614/month	26	21.7%
Up to €2,152/month	13	10.8%

Regarding the initiation of violence against the partner, the first episode of abuse took place during courtship in 22.3% of the cases, with the birth of the first

child in 17.4% and throughout the first year of cohabitation in 12.4%. More than a year had passed since the last episode of violence in 57.9%. Finally, a complaint had been filed by the partner in 69.4% of the sample, followed by an intervention by the police in 11.6% of the cases.

### *Instruments*

- a) *Ad hoc questionnaire on sociodemographic characteristics*. Questions were created to find out the age, number of sons and daughters, educational level, employment status and income level of the people who were part of the sample.
- b) *List of Stressful Life Events (L-SLE)* (“Listado de sucesos vitales estresantes”, L-SVE; Vázquez, & Panadero, 2016), *brief version for groups in social exclusion*. This listing was created from the revision of the instrument by Brugha and Cragg (1990) and previous studies in groups in social exclusion and in contexts of poverty (Panadero et al., 2017; Rivas et al., 2020; Roca et al., 2019; Vázquez et al., 2015). It consists of 26 items (10 items on events before the age of 18 and 16 on events since that age). For the present study, events that were related to violence experienced before the age of 18 (physical abuse, sexual abuse, abuse in school and exposure to violence suffered by the mother of the interviewee, as well as other negative circumstances experienced by the interviewee in the family environment) were selected. The instrument also includes events experienced at 18 years of age or older (economic and/or unemployment problems, as well as serious health problems in the participants themselves). The age at which these negative experiences were produced for the first time is also considered. The different items had a dichotomous response regarding the occurrence or non-occurrence of such events. In the present work, the Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha = .78$ ) indicates an acceptable level of internal consistency.
- c) *Inventory of Distorted Thoughts about Women and the Use of Violence-Revised* (“Inventario de pensamientos distorsionados sobre la mujer y el uso de la violencia- revisado”, IPDMUV-R; Echeburúa et al., 2016). This consists of a single factor and a total of 21 items that evaluate irrational beliefs about women and the use of violence. The response to each of the items is dichotomous (Yes/No) and the score ranges between 0 and 21 points, so that the higher the score, the greater the acceptance of distorted beliefs. In the validation of the scale, a Cronbach's Alpha of .74 was obtained. In the present study, the Cronbach's Alpha is slightly higher ( $\alpha = .77$ ).

### *Procedure*

The work was carried out in collaboration with the “With One Foot Outside” (CUPIF) association, an organization that intervenes in Social Integration Centres attended by people who have exercised violence against women in the Community of Madrid. First, the director of the association was informed of the objective of the investigation. Then an application was made to the Ministry of the Interior of the Government of Spain to obtain permits from Penitentiary Institutions and to be able

to access participants in penitentiary centres. The research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Alcalá (CEI/HU/2019/21).

Once both permits were obtained, the sample was accessed. The sample inclusion criteria were to have exercised some form of abuse against women in the couple, being at the beginning of the intervention programme carried out by the CUPIF association and having sufficient knowledge of the Spanish language to understand the items in the instrument. Those who were already following and not at the beginning of the programme, those who did not have sufficient knowledge of Spanish to complete the structured questionnaire, as well as people who, in the consideration of the professionals in charge of the intervention, could show a negative or disruptive attitude when completing the questionnaire, were excluded from the investigation. None of the participants reported having a criminal record.

Informed consent was sought from the participants and the instrument was applied with structured questions among those who consented to be part of the study. The questionnaire was distributed by the professionals working at the Social Insertion Centre and not by people outside of the organization in order not to influence the answers.

### *Data analysis*

The case-control method was used, with a quantitative approach with an ex post facto design, in which the independent variables were compared with respect to violence suffered before 18 years of age. The database was developed and processed with SPSS, v.25.0 for Windows. Chi square and Student's *t* test were used with the probability of committing a type I error of  $p < .05$ . Odds ratio (OR) analyses with 95% confidence intervals were applied. Finally, a two-stage cluster classification analysis was performed with the aim of describing subgroups of subjects within a heterogeneous sample (Vilà-Baños, Rubio-Hurtado, Berlanga-Silvente, & Torrado-Fonseca, 2014).

## **Results**

Table 2 shows the stressful life events experienced by the men in the sample before and after the age of 18. Nearly one in four participants experienced physical and psychological abuse in childhood at a very young age. It should be noted that 10.7% suffered abuse at school. One in five was exposed to abuse against their mother by their father or another partner. Regarding stressful life events that occurred after the age of 18, 58% had had significant economic problems and 41% had faced unemployment. Finally, around 18% had serious health problems. The men who abused their partners suffered an average of 1.62 stressful life events ( $SD = 2.037$ ), of which 43.8% ( $n = 53$ ) did not suffer any stressful life event, 15.7% suffered one ( $n = 19$ ), 13.2% experienced two of these types of events ( $n = 16$ ), 9.1% suffered three of these events ( $n = 11$ ), one in twenty experienced four ( $n = 6$ ) and 11.5% suffered five or more stressful life events before 18 years of age ( $n = 14$ ). Regarding the acceptance of distorted thoughts about women and the use of

violence (IPDMUV-R), the mean score was 6.47, with the upper range being 21 points.

**Table 2**  
Stressful life events experienced by the interviewees

Variables	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )
Before the age of 18	30	24.8	9.00 (3.551)
Physical abuse	29	24.0	11.57 (5.827)
Psychological abuse	5	4.1	10.00 (0.000)
Sexual abuse	13	10.7	12.28 (3.592)
Abuse in school	21	17.4	15.22 (3.734)
Had to leave home due to family conflicts	34	28.1	14.45 (10.240)
Parents separated or divorced	23	19.0	12.85 (6.280)
Mother was abused by father or another partner			
After 18 years	70	57.9	29.25 (10.204)
Has had major financial problems	57	47.1	29.44 (9.352)
Has had significant unemployment problems	22	18.2	27.00 (13.784)
Has had a serious health problem	30	24.8	9.00 (3.551)
Cognitive distortions (IPDMUV-R)			6.47 (4,238)

Note: IPDMUV-R= Inventory of Distorted Thoughts about Women and the Use of Violence-Revised.

Table 3 reports the differences between those who witnessed abuse against their mothers based on stressful life events experienced before and after 18 years of age. Statistically significant differences were found among those who were exposed to violence against their mother, finding higher percentages with respect to suffering other negative events such as suffering physical or psychological abuse in childhood. There does not seem to be a relationship between exposure to violence against the mother and other stressful life events experienced later. The Odds Ratio analyses indicate that the relationship between having been exposed to violence in the family of origin with other experiences of violence (psychological abuse, abuse at school, family conflicts) is high, although they had to leave their home due to family conflicts. This is the event with the highest risk.

On the other hand, the results also reflect differences between those who were psychologically abused in childhood and those who were not in relation to stressful life events experienced both in childhood and in adulthood (see Table 4). For starters, three out of four of the participants who experienced psychological abuse were also victims of physical abuse. In addition, the psychological abuse suffered seems to be related to other forms and types of violence. Experiencing psychological abuse seems to be related to stressful life events in adulthood linked to economic and job insecurity and health problems. The Odds Ratio analyses reflect a high relationship between having suffered psychological abuse and other stressful life events associated with violence, such as physical abuse, abuse at school and family conflicts that forced them to leave home.

**Table 3**  
Relationship between having witnessed violence against their mother and the stressful life events suffered

Variables	Witnessed the mistreatment of his mother		$\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
	Yes (n= 23)	No (n= 97)				
Before the age of 18						
Physical abuse	47.8% (11)	18.6% (18)	8.691	.003	4.023	1.533 - 10.561
Psychological abuse	52.2% (12)	16.5% (16)	13.230	.000	5.523	2.076 - 14.689
Sexual abuse	8.7% (2)	3.1% (3)	1.462	.227	2.984	.469 - 18.991
Abuse in school	30.4% (7)	6.2% (6)	11.317	.001	6.635	1.973 - 22.318
Had to leave home due to family conflicts	47.8% (11)	10.3% (10)	18.125	.000	7.975	2.797 - 22.737
Parents separated or divorced	59.1% (13)	20.6% (20)	13.318	.001	5.228	1.967 - 13.896
After 18 years						
Has had major financial problems	60.9% (14)	44.3% (43)	2.039	.153	1.953	.772 - 4.943
Has had significant unemployment problems	21.7% (5)	18.8% (18)	4.213	.122	1.204	.395 - 3.673
Has had a serious health problem	47.8% (11)	18.6% (18)	8.691	.003	4.023	1.533 - 10.561

**Table 4**  
Relationship between having experienced psychological abuse and other stressful life events

Variables	Experienced psychological abuse		$\chi^2$	p	OR	95% CI
	Yes (n= 29)	No (n= 92)				
Before the age of 18						
Mother was abused by father or another partner	42.9% (12)	12.0% (11)	13.230	.000	5.523	2.076 - 14.689
Physical abuse	75.9% (22)	8.7% (8)	53.347	.000	33.000	10.792 - 100.910
Sexual abuse	14.3% (4)	1.1% (1)	9.365	.002	15.167	1.619 - 142.037
Abuse in school	32.1% (9)	4.3% (4)	17.769	.000	10.421	2.904 - 37.402
Had to leave home due to family conflicts	53.6% (15)	6.5% (6)	32.914	.000	16.538	5.440 - 50.283
Parents separated or divorced	53.6% (15)	19.8% (18)	12.328	.002	4.372	1.781 - 10.737
After 18 years						
Has had major financial problems	78.6% (22)	52.2% (48)	6.154	.013	3.361	1.248 - 9.055
Has had significant unemployment problems	71.4% (20)	40.2 (37)	8.386	.004	3.716	1.481 - 9.323
Has had a serious health problem	42.9% (12)	12.1 (11)	14.330	.001	5.455	2.050 - 14.512

Finally, the results report differences between those who suffered physical abuse and those who did not, since a higher percentage of the participants who were physically abused in childhood suffered other stressful life events (see Table 5). To begin with, there seems to be a relationship between physical abuse and other



types of violence, in addition to a greater number of conflicts in the family environment, although no relationship was found between having suffered physical violence in childhood and problems in their own health in adulthood. As with exposure to violence against their mothers and psychological abuse suffered before the age of 18, for physical abuse, the highest Odds Ratio is found in relation to other manifestations of violence that took place in that period of their lives.

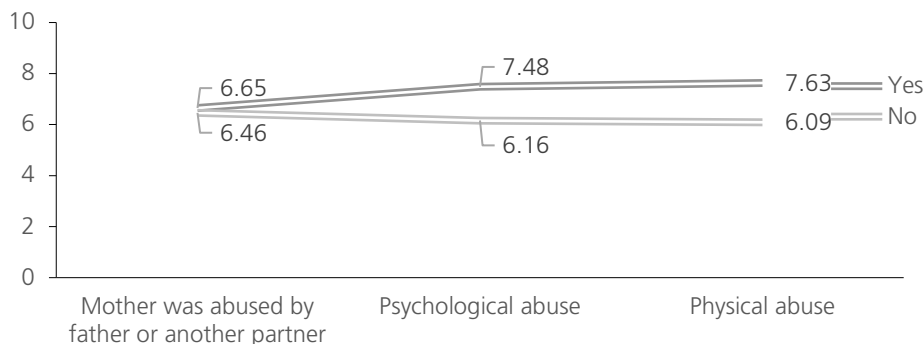
**Table 5**  
Relationship between physical abuse and stressful life events experienced

Variables	Experienced physical abuse		$\chi^2$	<i>p</i>	OR	95% CI
	Yes (n= 30)	No (n= 91)				
Before the age of 18						
Either of your parents had problems with substance use	40% (12)	15.4% (14)	8.103	.004	3.667	1.452 - 9.258
Mother was abused by father or another partner	37.9% (11)	13.2% (12)	8.691	.003	4.023	1.533 - 10.561
Psychological abuse	73.3% (22)	7.7% (7)	53.347	.000	33.000	10.792 - 100.910
Sexual abuse	13.8% (4)	1.1% (1)	8.875	.003	14.400	1.540 - 134.678
Abuse in school	27.6% (8)	5.5% (5)	11.111	.001	6.552	1.944 - 22.082
Had to leave home due to family conflicts	37.9% (11)	11.0% (10)	11.057	.001	4.950	1.826 - 13.417
Parents separated or divorced	39.3% (11)	24.2% (22)	2.659	.265	1.913	.783 - 4.676
After 18 years						
Has had major financial problems	75.9% (22)	52.7% (48)	4.834	.028	2.815	1.094 - 7.243
Has had significant unemployment problems	69.0% (20)	40.7% (37)	7.066	.008	3.243	1.331 - 7.906
Has had a serious health problem	27.5% (8)	16.7% (15)	4.090	.129	1.905	.711 - 5.101

To analyze the influence of episodes of violence in the family of origin on distorted thoughts about women and the use of violence, the mean scores on the IPDMUV-R were compared (see Figure 1). No statistically significant differences were found between those who witnessed abuse towards their mother in terms of distorted thoughts about women and the use of violence (IPDMUV-R), the score being somewhat higher among those who had been exposed to such abuse ( $M= 6.65$ ;  $SD= 5.014$ ) compared to those who were not exposed ( $M= 6.46$ ;  $SD= 4.077$ ) ( $t= -.190$ ;  $p= .849$ ). Neither does psychological abuse suffered in childhood seem to have influenced a greater acceptance of violence against women, since no statistically significant differences were found between those who did suffer it ( $M= 7.48$ ;  $SD= 3.860$ ) and those who did not suffer psychological violence ( $M= 6.16$ ;  $SD= 4.322$ ) ( $t= -1.469$ ;  $p= .144$ ). Finally, there were no statistically significant differences in the IPDMUV-R scores in terms of physical abuse suffered before the age of 18 (men who did experience physical abuse=  $7.63$ ;  $SD= 3.846$  vs. men who did not experience physical abuse=  $6.09$ ;  $SD= 4.312$ ) ( $t= -1.734$ ;  $p= .086$ ).

**Figure 1**

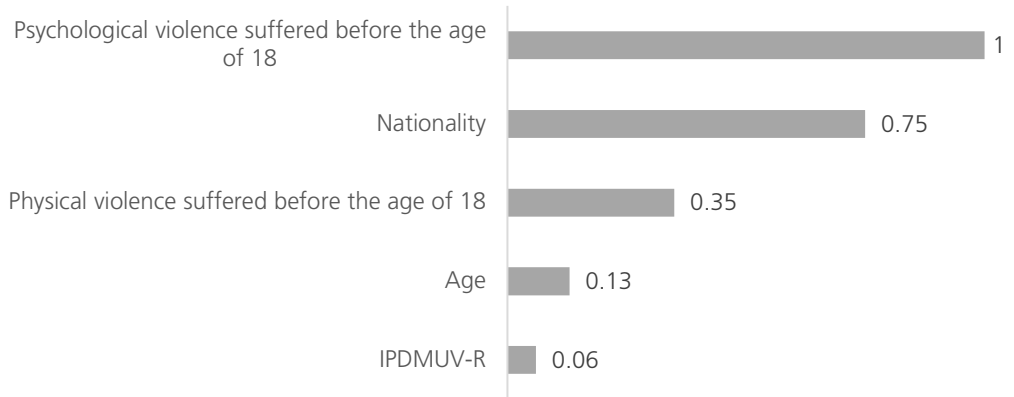
Acceptance of distorted thoughts based on the violence experienced in the family of origin



Finally, a two-stage cluster was carried out in order to obtain the most representative variables in the classification of the sample of participants. The Log-likelihood method was used by incorporating continuous and categorical variables. Of the total variables included in the study, only those that have generated an acceptable model  $\geq .5$  have been considered. In the sample of 120 men who perpetrated violence against their partners, 3 clusters or conglomerates were identified (see Figure 2). Cluster 1 (23.3%) grouped 10 participants (8.3% of the total sample), cluster 2 (23.3%) included 10 participants (8.3% of the total sample) and cluster 3 (53.5%) was made up of 23 participants (19.2% of the total). In the formation of the conglomerates, the most important predictor was having suffered physical violence before the age of 18, with a value of 1; compared to .83 for nationality (Spaniards vs. foreigners); .35 for having suffered psychological violence; .13 for age; and .06 for the IPDMUV-R. These values are presented in Figure 1, where the variables that form the main predictors of the 3 clusters that describe the classification are shown.

Cluster 1 describes those who did not suffer physical (100%) or psychological (100%) abuse in childhood, were not of Spanish nationality (100%), had an average age of 40.00 years and an average of 8.40 points in the IPDMUV-R. Cluster 2 describes those who suffered physical (100%) and psychological (60%) abuse before the age of 18, of Spanish nationality (60%), with an average age of 36.50 years and an average score of 7.20 points in the IPDMUV -R. Finally, cluster 3 is made up of participants who did not suffer physical violence (100%), 8.7% suffered psychological violence in childhood, of Spanish nationality (100%), with an average of 46.57 years and 5.61 points in the IPDMUV- R.

**Figure 2**  
Main predictors of the clusters



Note: IPDMUV-R= Inventory of Distorted Thoughts about Women and the Use of Violence-Revised.

## Discussion

The present study has attempted to conduct an empirical analysis of the relationship between violence in the family of origin with other stressful life events related to childhood abuse, the role of these experiences in the development of distorted ideas about women and the use of violence and to determine a profile of aggressors based on these experiences and other sociodemographic characteristics.

To begin with, the prevalence rate regarding physical and psychological violence experienced before the age of 18 in the family of origin is around 24%, below the rate found in previous studies of aggressors which found rates of 36% (Fernández-Montalvo, & Echeburúa, 1997), however, more than half (56.2%) reported having suffered some event in childhood related to violence in the family environment before the age of 18. These data reveal that the men who exercised violence against their female partner could have imitated role models by being witnesses or victims of violence by the previous generation, so that criminal behaviour against the partner could have been transferred (Artazcoz et al., 2019, Echeburúa et al., 2009; Ehrensaft et al., 2003; Morelato, 2011; Martínez-Bustos et al., 2019; Rivas-Rivero, & Bonilla-Algovia, 2021; Safranoff, & Tiravassi, 2018).

On the other hand, statistically significant differences were found between those who experienced physical and psychological violence with respect to higher rates of abuse against their mother, who had to leave home due to family conflicts, as well as other forms of victimization in the school environment, and those who did not. Therefore, the relationship found between these events represents a high risk, as indicated by the Odds Ratio analyses towards other forms of poly-victimization, a higher association than that found in previous studies (Black et al., 2010; Elquist et al., 2016). In addition, a relationship was found between these events experienced in childhood with other stressful events experienced in adulthood, both in serious health problems and in economic and job insecurity. The

results seem to indicate the relevance of the abuse experienced in the family of origin for the subsequent life trajectory (Brown et al., 2015), as well as its possible reproduction (Elmquist et al., 2016). However, witnessing violence against the mother by the father or another partner is not related to stressful life events in adulthood. In this sense, the normalization of violence from mistreatment against their mothers, although it is related to other violent events suffered in childhood, does not seem to have the same implication, which shows the magnitude of the problem based on masculine socialization and the legitimation of violence against women (Echeburúa et al., 2009; López-Núñez, 2013; Pimentel, & Santelices, 2017), since this could have led to the men not developing a real perception of the seriousness of this problem (Di Napoli et al., 2019; Fernández-Montalvo, & Echeburúa, 1997).

The behaviour of denial of abuse among male abusers has been widely reported. Aggressors use coping strategies to reduce their responsibility (Guerrero-Molina et al., 2020), limit the violence to the strictly family sphere, make external attributions and point to female victims as responsible for the aggression, and employ biased cognitive factors related to traditional gender roles and the legitimation of violence in various contexts (Boira et al., 2013; Echeburúa et al., 2016; Fernández-Montalvo, & Echeburúa, 1997; Loinaz et al., 2010; López-Núñez, 2013). However, the men in the sample scored a mean of 6.47 for distorted ideas about women and the use of violence, below the cut-off point in the detection of the profile of aggressors established at 8 points (Echeburúa et al., 2016). In addition, no statistically significant differences were found based on having witnessed abuse against their mother or having suffered psychological and physical violence in childhood, although the score was higher among those who were affected by such circumstances. Given these results, one might think that other circumstances may be mediating the violent experiences that took place at an early age, and that other behavioural changes, as well as their psychological profile, may play a mediating role in the development of the abusive behaviours against women in the couple (Brown et al., 2015) and in the degree of acceptance of distorted ideas about the use of violence.

Based on sociodemographic characteristics, stressful life events and distorted thoughts, an attempt has been made to extract profiles within the sample. From the two-stage cluster analysis, three profiles were found. First, there are the aggressors against the partner who did not suffer abuse in childhood, of other nationalities, with an average age of 40 years and who scored higher than 8 points in the instrument on cognitive distortions about women and the accepted use of violence. Second, aggressors against the partner who suffered abuse in the family of origin, of Spanish nationality, with a lower average age than the first group (36.5 years) and who scored lower in cognitive distortions (7.20). Finally, the third group is made up of those who did not suffer physical violence in childhood, with a low rate of psychological violence, of Spanish nationality, older on average, and who obtained lower scores than the two previous groups in the instrument on distorted thoughts about women and the use of sexual violence (5.61). According to Echeburúa et al. (2009), men who exercise violence against women in their partnership constitute a heterogeneous group, although analyzing the variables of the study allows us to

continue incorporating information on the complexity of this problem in which child violence and partner violence converge. (Elmquist et al., 2016). In addition, it is of great importance to continue delving into the typology of aggressors in the face of intervention programmes for them, the analysis of the possible variables associated with the behaviour of perpetrating violence against the partner (Rivas-Rivero, & Bonilla-Algovia, 2021) and the deconstruction of the traditional ideology regarding women and the use of violence (Echeburúa et al., 2016). It should be noted that differences are found with respect to previous studies in which the typology of perpetrators includes samples of aggressors in prison for committing serious violence against their partner (Loinaz et al., 2010), and not in suspended sentences.

This study has some limitations: the size of the sample, which is not representative, and not having included instruments from a clinical perspective to delve into the personality of the participants. In addition, the information that is analyzed, mainly regarding the IPDMUV-R, may have been affected by social desirability, so these cognitive biases could lead to an underestimation of the actual cognition and acceptance of violence, especially when it has occurred. There was violence in the family of origin and a statistically significant relationship between the different forms of victimization in childhood, as reflected in the univariate analyses. In future research, it would be necessary to expand the sample size and incorporate new measurement tools that incorporate mental health, social desirability, and even resilience, taking into account the events suffered in the family of origin in studies with aggressors (Echeburúa et al., 2009; Fernández-Montalvo, & Echeburúa, 1997). Knowing the problem is fundamental in the design of intervention plans, although it is in prevention where all efforts must be directed to eliminate violence as a normalized form of social interaction.

## References

- Aguiar, F., Fernández, C., & Pereira, C. (2015). La familia y la intervención preventiva socioeducativa: Hacia la identificación del maltrato infantil [The family and the socio-educational preventive intervention: Towards the identification of the child maltreatment]. *Revista Educativa Hekademos*, 17, 31-41.
- Andrés-Pueyo, A., López, S., & Álvarez, E. (2008). Valoración del riesgo de violencia contra la pareja por medio de la SARA [Assessment of the risk of violence against the partner through the SARA]. *Papeles del Psicólogo*, 29(1), 107-122.
- Artazcoz, L., Garrido, A., Juárez, O., Otero, I., Pasarín, M., Pérez, K., & Salvador, M. (2019). Violencia machista en el ámbito de la pareja desde una perspectiva de salud pública: Marco conceptual [Sexist violence in the sphere of the couple from a public health perspective: Conceptual framework]. *Revista Barcelona Societat*, 21, 1-17.
- Black, D. S., Sussman, S., & Unger, J. B. (2010). A further look at the intergenerational transmission of violence: Witnessing interparental violence in emerging adulthood. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(6), 1022-1042. doi: 10.1177/0886260509340539
- Boira, S. (2010). *Hombres maltratadores. Historias de violencia masculina* [Abusive men. Stories of male violence]. Zaragoza: Pressas Universitarias de Zaragoza.
- Brown, M. J., Perera, R. A., Masho, S. W., Mezuk, B., & Cohen, S. A. (2015). Adverse childhood experiences and intimate partner aggression in the US: Sex differences and similarities in psychosocial mediation. *Social Science & Medicine*, 131, 48-57. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.02.044

- Brugha, T. S., & Cragg, D. (1990). The List of Threatening Experiences: The reliability and validity of a brief life events questionnaire. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, *82*, 77-81.
- Cantos, A. L., Goldstein, D. A., Brenner, L., O'Leary, K. D., & Verborg, R. (2015). Correlates and program completion of family only and generally violent perpetrators of intimate partner violence. *Behavioral Psychology/Psicología Conductual*, *23*(3), 549-569.
- Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género (2020). *Mujeres víctimas mortales por violencia de género en España a manos de sus parejas o exparejas: Datos provisionales* [Female victims of gender-based violence in Spain at the hands of their partners or ex-partners: Provisional data]. Madrid: Ministerio de Igualdad.
- Di Napoli, I., Procentese, F., Carnevale, S., Esposito, C., & Arcidiano, C. (2019). Ending intimate partner violence (IPV) and locating men at stake: An ecological approach. *International Journal of Environmental Research & Public Health*, *16*(9), 1652. doi: 10.3390/ijerph16091652
- Echeburúa, E., Amor, P. J., & Corral, P. (2009). Hombres violentos contra la pareja: Trastornos mentales y perfiles tipológicos [Violent men against the partner: Mental disorders and typological profiles]. *Pensamiento Psicológico*, *6*(13), 27-36.
- Echeburúa, E., Amor, P. J., Sarasua, B., Zubizarreta, I., & Holgado-Tello, F. P. (2016). Inventario de pensamientos distorsionados sobre la mujer y el uso de la violencia- revisado (IPDMUV-R): Propiedades psicométricas [Inventory of Distorted Thinking about Women and the Use of Violence-Revised (IPDMUV-R): Psychometric Properties]. *Anales de Psicología*, *32*(3), 837-846. doi: 10.6018/analeps.32.3.231901
- Echeburúa, E., & Fernández-Montalvo, J. (2007). Male batterers with and without psychopathy: An exploratory study in Spanish prisons. *International Journal of Offender therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *51*, 254-263. doi: 10.1177/0306624X06291460
- Ehrensaft, M., Cohen, P., Brown, J., Smailes, E., Chen, H., & Johnson, J. G. (2003). Intergenerational transmission of partner violence: A 20-year prospective study. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *71*(4), 741-753. doi: 10.1037/0022-006x.71.4.741
- Elmquist, J., Shorey, R. C., Labrecque, L., Ninnemann, A., Zapor, H., Febres, J., Wolford-Clevenger, C., Plasencia, M., Temple, J. R., & Stuart, G.L. (2016). The relationship between family-of-origin violence, hostility, and intimate partner violence in men arrested for domestic violence: Testing a mediational model. *Violence Against Women*, *22*(10), 1243-1258. doi: 10.1177/1077801215621177
- Fernández-Montalvo, J., & Echeburúa, E. (1997). Variables psicopatológicas y distorsiones cognitivas de los maltratadores en el hogar: Un análisis descriptivo [Psychopathological variables and cognitive distortions of domestic abusers: A descriptive analysis]. *Análisis y Modificación de Conducta*, *23*, 151-180.
- Guerrero-Molina, M., Moreno-Manso, J.M., Guerrero-Barona, E., García-Baamonde, M. E. y Godoy-Merino, M.J. (2020). Agresores condenados por violencia de género reincidentes y no reincidentes: dimensiones cognitivas y sociales [Perpetrators and non-repeat offenders convicted of gender-based violence: cognitive and social dimensions]. *Behavioral Psychology/Psicología Conductual*, *28*(2), 327-341.
- Kaufman, L., & Rousseeuw, P. J. (1990). Finding groups in data. An introduction to cluster analysis. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Loinaz, I., Echeburúa, E., & Torrubia, R. (2010). Tipología de agresores contra la pareja en prisión [Typology of aggressors against the partner in prison]. *Psicothema*, *22*(1), 106-111.
- López-Núñez, M. I. (2013). La construcción de la masculinidad y su relación con la violencia de género [The construction of masculinity and its relationship with gender violence]. *Revista Internacional de Trabajo Social y Ciencias Sociales*, *5*, 61-84.
- Martínez-Bustos, N. M., Calvo-Mejía, G. I., & Sánchez-Jiménez, M. H. (2019). *Familia, Abuso*

- Sexual Infantil y Proceso de Afrontamiento Psicosocial*. [Family, Child Sexual Abuse and Psychosocial Coping Process] *Revista Latinoamericana de Estudios de Familia*, 11(1), 11-29. doi: 10.17151/rlef.2019.11.1.2
- Mattos, J. M., Carvalho, M., & Ludermir, A. B. (2017). Intimate partner violence and maternal educational practice. *Revista de Saúde Pública*, 51, 34 doi: 10.1590/S1518-8787.2017051006848
- Morelato, G. (2011). Maltrato infantil y desarrollo: Hacia una revisión de los factores de resiliencia [Child maltreatment and development: Towards a review of resilience factors]. *Pensamiento Psicológico*, 9(17), 83-96.
- Murrell, A. R., Christoff, K. A., & Henning, K. R. (2007). Characteristics of domestic violence offenders: Associations with childhood exposure to violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 22(7), 523-532.
- Organización Mundial de la Salud. (2016). *Violencia contra la mujer, violencia de pareja y violencia sexual contra la mujer* [Violence against women, intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women]. Geneva, Suiza: Author.
- Panadero, S., Vázquez, J. J., & Martín, R. M. (2017). Alcohol, poverty and social exclusion: Alcohol consumption among the homeless and those at risk of social exclusion in Madrid. *Addictions*, 29(1), 33-36. doi: 10.20882/adicciones.830
- Park, A., Smith, C., & Ireland, T. (2012). Equivalent harm? The relative roles of maltreatment and partner violence in antisocial outcome for young adults. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34, 962-972. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.01.029
- Pimentel, V., & Santelices, M. P. (2017). Apego adulto y mentalización en hombres que han ejercido violencia hacia su pareja [Adult attachment and mentalization in men who have used violence against their partner]. *Psykhé*, 26(2), 1-16. doi: 10.7764/psykhe.26.2.915
- Rivas, E., Bonilla, E., & Vázquez, J. J. (2020). Consequences of the exposure to abuse in the family of origin among victims of intimate partner violence in Nicaragua. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 90(1), 1-8. doi: 10.1037/ort0000374
- Rivas-Rivero, E., & Bonilla-Algovia, E. (2021). Adverse childhood events and substance misuse in men who perpetrated intimate partner violence. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 1-20. doi: 10.1177/0306624X211013519
- Rivas-Rivero, E., & Bonilla-Algovia, E. (2022). Stressful life events: Typology of aggression and mistreatment in male perpetrators of gender-based violence. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 1-10. doi: 10.1111/sjop.12853
- Roca, P., Panadero, S., Rodríguez-Moreno, S., Martín, R., & Vázquez, J. J. (2019). "Puerta giratoria" a la situación sin hogar. Influencia de la salud, consumo de alcohol y padecimiento de sucesos vitales estresantes en el número de episodios en situación sin hogar ["Revolving door" to homelessness. Influence of health, alcohol consumption and stressful life events in the number of homeless episodes]. *Anales de Psicología*, 35(2), 175-180. doi: 10.6018/analesps.35.2.297741
- Rodríguez Fernández, A. G. (2018). Violencia intrafamiliar y colectivos especialmente vulnerables: Menores y ancianos. Apuntes desde un enfoque interdisciplinar [Domestic violence and especially vulnerable groups: Minors and the elderly. Notes from an interdisciplinary approach]. *Revista Internacional de Doctrina y Jurisprudencia*, 19, 1-25.
- Safranoff, A., & Tiravassi, A. (2018). *La transmisión intergeneracional de la violencia* [The intergenerational transmission of violence]. Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. [https://www.academia.edu/37210128/The\\_Intergenerational\\_Transmission\\_of\\_Violence\\_Testimonials\\_from\\_Prison\\_La\\_transmisi%C3%B3n\\_intergeneracional\\_de\\_la\\_violencia\\_Testimonios\\_desde\\_la\\_c%C3%A1rcel](https://www.academia.edu/37210128/The_Intergenerational_Transmission_of_Violence_Testimonials_from_Prison_La_transmisi%C3%B3n_intergeneracional_de_la_violencia_Testimonios_desde_la_c%C3%A1rcel)
- Torres, A., Lemos-Giráldez, S., & Herrero, J. (2013). Violencia hacia la mujer: Características psicológicas y de personalidad de los hombres que maltratan a su pareja [Violence

- against women: Psychological and personality characteristics of men who mistreat their partner]. *Anales de Psicología*, *29*(1), 9-18. doi: 10.6018/analesps.29.1.130621
- Vázquez, J. J., & Panadero, S. (2016). Chronicity and pseudo inheritance of social exclusion: Differences according to the poverty of the family of origin among trash pickers in León (Nicaragua). *Human Rights Quarterly*, *38*, 379-390. doi: 10.1353/hrq.2016.0037.
- Vázquez, J. J., Panadero, S., & Rivas, E. (2015). Happiness among poor women victims of intimate partner violence in Nicaragua. *Social Work in Public Health*, *30*(1), 18-29. Doi: doi: 10.1080/19371918.2014.938389.
- Vilà Baños, R., Rubio Hurtado, M. J., Berlanga Silvente, V., & Torrado Fonseca, M. (2014). Cómo aplicar un clúster jerárquico en SPSS [How to apply hierarchical clustering in SPSS]. *Revista d'Innovació i Recerca en Educació*, *7*(1), 113-127. doi: 10.1344/reire2014.7.1717

RECEIVED: NOVEMBER 8, 2020

ACCEPTED: JULY 25, 2021