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FINAL REPORT

Project title: Pathways from intimate partner violence to intimate partner femicide: A pilot study

Project members: Dr Li Eriksson, Professor Paul Mazerolle, Dr Samara McPhedran

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Attention: Research and Evaluation Group, Queensland Corrective Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although there is growing research into male-perpetrated intimate partner violence (IPV), notable gaps remain in knowledge about pathways from IPV to intimate partner femicide (IPF). Importantly, identifying who among those many women who experience IPV is most likely to be at high risk of IPF remains a significant challenge within policy and practice. An 'escalation' framework posits that IPF is the result of an already existing pattern of non-lethal IPV that turns lethal. Such a framework highlights the circumstances associated with an escalation of violence, for example during period of relationship breakdown. On the other hand, a 'typology' framework suggests that IPF is the result of specific offender characteristics, such as controlling behaviour and extreme jealousy, that are distinctly different from the characteristics of IPV offenders.

This study aimed to build upon current knowledge in this area by comparing men who have committed non-lethal IPV with men who have committed IPF to examine whether these groups can be differentiated only by the actual extent to which their violence harmed an intimate partner (that is, the groups look generally similar in their characteristics, and vary only in terms of how much their violence against a partner has escalated), or whether individual characteristics differ between these two groups and can therefore be used to gauge risk of IPF.

The self-report data came from two sub-samples, both of which were collected through face-to-face interviews at custodial and community corrections facilities in Australia. Data from men who had perpetrated IPF was collected between 2013 and 2018 across Australia and forms part of the Australian Homicide Project, which was funded through an Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant. Data from men who had committed IPV was collected in 2020 in Queensland through a Queensland Corrective Services grant. Offenders were compared across four areas (socio-demographics, substance problems, offending history, and relationship factors) using Fisher's Exact Tests and Independent Samples t-tests.

The following key findings were observed:

(1) the IPF sample, relative to the IPV sample, reported higher violence-supportive attitudes, were less likely to report being on welfare or have alcohol problems, and were more likely to report being employed

(2) in the year leading up to the incident, the IPF sample was less likely to admit to or recall having a domestic violence order, to have been imprisoned, and to have been violent to their partner

Due caution needs to be exercised when interpreting these findings. Importantly, the findings need to be replicated using a larger sample. Furthermore, given that the data were self-reported, it is possible offenders used impression management techniques to portray themselves in a positive light, or that they were not able to accurately recall the prevalence of, for example, domestic violence orders.

With these caveats in mind, the findings appear to support a typology framework, in that men who perpetrate IPF hold certain characteristics that are distinguishable from men who perpetrate IPV. In other words, lethal violence (in the current study) appears to be a result of specific perpetrator characteristics, as opposed to an escalation of violence per se. If replicated using a larger sample size and triangulated with official data, findings such as these could have implications for criminal justice and correctional agency responses to intimate partner violence. Importantly, such results may call into question the assumption that IPV perpetrators escalate toward IPF. If this is the case, the potential policy implications would be substantial in that the efficiency and efficacy of current policy responses are impacted to the extent that they may not reflect the actual risks and behaviours that are occurring. Given finite resources and the importance of correct classifications, assessment of risk needs to accurately predict and distinguish between offenders in 'high' versus 'low' risk categories. If the results of this study are replicated in future research, policy refinements may need needed to be considered to better establish the criminogenic risks for re-offending across varying forms of partner violence, both lethal and non-lethal.

Given that the results of this study are tentatively supportive of a typology approach, it may further be important not to implement a 'blanket IPV treatment approach' to the rehabilitation of offenders who have committed violence in intimate relationships. Based on the results of the current study, such 'one-size-fits-all' approaches may not capture the nuances between IPV and IPF offenders, though more research is required to grow the evidence base, especially given the limitations with the current study. Identification of the key criminogenic needs of IPV and IPF perpetrators have significant implications for program completion, effectiveness and ultimately recidivism reduction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Violence against women is a critical public health problem, with wide-ranging physical, social and economic consequences for affected women, their families and the broader community (Stöckl et al., 2013; World Health Organization, 2013). The global lifetime prevalence rate of intimate partner violence (IPV) for women is 30% (World Health Organization, 2013). In terms of intimate partner femicide (IPF), it is estimated that 82 women are killed by an intimate partner globally every day (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). Given that past physical violence is commonly viewed as an important predictor of IPF (e.g., Campbell, Webster, & Glass, 2009; Laing, 2004), a considerable number of women may be 'at risk' of future IPF. However, identifying who among those many women who experience IPV is most likely to be at high risk of IPF remains a significant challenge within policy and practice. A risk framework requires knowledge of the characteristics, if any, that differentiate IPV from IPF.

1.2 Review of literature

Characteristics associated with IPV perpetration are well documented. Such characteristics include social disadvantage, economic stress, acceptance of traditional gender norms, compromised emotional functioning, negative/dysfunctional attachment style, substance misuse, abuse and/or neglect during childhood, exposure to domestic and family violence during childhood, mental illness, and relationship conflict/estrangement (Capaldi, Knoble, Shortt, & Kim, 2012; Heise & Kotsadam, 2015; Powers & Kaukinen, 2012; Reingle, Jennings, Connell, Businelle, & Chartier, 2014; Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward, & Tritt, 2004).

However, observations about IPV do not necessarily translate to IPF, though some similarities exist (Matias, Gonçalves, Soeiro, & Matos, 2020). An important question within the literature is whether IPF is the result of an already existing pattern of non-lethal violence that escalates and turns lethal or whether IPV and IPF represent two distinct forms of violence (for discussions see Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, & Medina-Ariza, 2007; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; McPhedran & Baker, 2012; Wilson & Daly, 1993a). The 'escalation' framework holds that lethal violence represents a process of non-lethal violence escalation, that is, a shift from 'low' to 'high' violence over time, culminating in the most extreme form of violence, homicide. This view has also tended to emphasise factors that may be associated with the escalation of violence, such as pregnancy or separation (Cook & Bewley, 2008; Wilson & Daly, 1993b). On the other hand, the 'typology' framework suggests that men who perpetrate IPF hold certain characteristics that are distinguishable from men who perpetrate IPV. In other words, lethal violence is a result of specific perpetrator characteristics, as opposed to an escalation of violence per se. The perpetrator typology perspective typically focuses on identifying whether an individual who perpetrates non-lethal violence against female partners also demonstrates other behaviours that represent a high risk of lethal violence, such as extreme jealousy, sexual proprietariness, and highly controlling behaviours, stalking, and violence towards others as well as towards an intimate partner (e.g., Dobash et al., 2007).

The escalation and typology frameworks both offer potentially useful perspectives for understanding and testing the pathways from non-lethal to lethal violence against women. However, each framework has a separate set of implications for policy and practice. For example, the escalation theory suggests that in the presence of 'low' risk violence, the occurrence of an event such as relationship separation is likely to predict escalation to 'high' risk violence, whereas the typology theory implies that the likelihood of lethal violence following separation may be predicted more strongly by other behavioural characteristics previously displayed by the offender (such as violent behaviours outside intimate relationships, controlling behaviour), rather than by the separation event itself.

Each of these scenarios suggests a different type of policy response, along with different practical steps that may be taken to prevent IPF. This is particularly relevant in the context of risk assessment practices which aim to assist safety planning strategies for women who are experiencing IPV. Current risk assessment tools commonly incorporate elements that draw on either the escalation theory or the typology theory, or in some instances appear to combine elements of both theories to different degrees (e.g., Campbell, Glass, Sharps, Laughon, & Bloom, 2007).

It is important to understand which theory offers the most comprehensive framework for understanding IPF. Indeed, it is also necessary to discern whether empirical evidence suggests that elements of both theories should be combined into a more nuanced framework for understanding pathways from non-lethal to lethal violence. For example, it may be the case that a particular set of characteristics identify a perpetrator "typology" that is especially likely to display violence escalation. Effectively preventing IPF not only requires improved knowledge about pathways from non-lethal to lethal violence, but also about how a range of individual characteristics may feature in those pathways. It is therefore necessary to undertake detailed comparative studies of perpetrators of IPV and IPF, in order to identify specific factors that may differentiate the two different groups.

1.3 Study focus

To more effectively prevent IPF, it is necessary to better understand whether IPV escalates into IPF, or whether men who perpetrate IPV are distinctly different to men who perpetrate IPF across a range of individual characteristics. Of course, whilst some studies may support an 'either escalation or typology' argument, it is certainly possible that a combined approach might be valid. The current study adds to the small, but growing, body of literature that examines possible pathways from non-lethal to lethal violence (or 'escalation') against women and offender risk profiles (or 'typologies') through the use of self-report data with a subsample of men who have committed IPV and a subsample of men who have committed IPF. The study thus begins to uncover whether IPV and IPF offenders can be differentiated only by the actual extent to which their violence harmed an intimate partner (that is, the groups look generally similar in their characteristics, and vary only in terms of how much their violence against a partner has escalated), or whether individual characteristics differ between these two groups and can therefore be used to gauge risk of IPF.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research design and sampling

In general, there are two different methods for investigating differences across groups of individuals. The first, and the most optimal (see Goodman et al., 1988; Loeber & Le Blanc, 1990), is the use of longitudinal data, i.e., where subjects are studied over a long period of time (e.g., from birth) and then grouped based on an outcome variable of interest, which in the current scenario would be IPV and IPF. However, given the relative rarity of lethal violence and the time and cost associated with longitudinal studies, this type of research is scarce. The other method is the use of cross-sectional data whereby two groups of individuals who display the outcome variable of interest (IPV and IPF) are compared across a range of characteristics (Goodman et al., 1988). This is the method used in the current study.

The data for this study came from two separate samples: (1) men convicted of assaulting their current or former intimate partner (referred to herein as the IPV respondents); and (2) men convicted of murder or manslaughter of their current or former intimate partner (referred to herein as the IPF respondents). Data from men who had perpetrated IPF was collected between 2013 and 2018 across Australia and forms part of the Australian Homicide Project (see e.g., Mazerolle, Eriksson, Wortley, & Johnson, 2015), which was funded through an Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant. Data from men who had committed IPV was collected in 2020 in Queensland through a Queensland Corrective Services grant. Both projects were approved by the Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee.

Of course, one of the most important aspects of a comparison study is that the 'control' group (in this case IPV) is actually comparable to the 'experimental' group (in this case IPF). In other words, scholars need to be careful not to introduce selection bias, which occurs when samples are not representative of the target population about which conclusions are to be drawn. Within the IPF *victimisation* literature, this has previously been achieved through stratified random-digit dialling to locate women who have been exposed to domestic violence within the broader population of women (Campbell et al., 2003). Given that the target population in the current study are males who been convicted for violent offences against an intimate partner, random-digit dialling was not considered an appropriate method for sampling.

Another alternative is the use of a case-control methodology, whereby cases from one group (e.g., IPV) are matched on key variables to cases from another group (e.g., IPF). Initially, the project was conceived as using a case-control study – that is, the sample of IPV offenders would be matched with the sample of (already collected data) on IPF offenders, on basic demographic characteristics such as age at the time of the incident, education level, and ethnicity. Following data collection for the IPV sample, initial analyses were performed to ascertain whether there were any differences between the IPV and IPF groups on those basic background measures. Those analyses revealed relatively few demographic differences between the groups. On that basis, the decision was taken to maximise the available sample (and therefore the statistical power available) by using the full sample of IPF offenders, rather

than further limiting the sample size by undertaking additional matching. This decision also had the benefit of retaining the 'representative' nature of the IPF sample, which was important given the study's focus on assessing whether and how IPF offenders and IPV offenders *differ* (that is, matching may have artificially disguised actual, and important, differences between the two groups). On that basis, it was deemed necessary to retain as many IPF offenders in the sample as possible.

In the current study, the 'control' sample (i.e., IPV respondents) was drawn using similar selection criteria as the 'experimental' sample (i.e., IPF respondents) (see e.g., Cunha & Gonçalves, 2019, for an example of a study using similar methodology). These criteria included: (1) male; (2) aged 18 or above; (3) convicted of assault (IPV) or murder/manslaughter (IPF) of a current or former intimate partner; (4) currently serving a correctional order for this conviction.

2.2 Data collection procedures

The data collection procedures were similar for all respondents, irrespective of whether they had committed assault (IPV) or homicide (IPF). Correctional officers provided eligible individuals with introduction packages, which contained information sheets stating the structure and aim of the research, as well as expression of interest (EOI) forms. Interviewers were required to undergo a training workshop prior to commencing data collection. The workshop provided interviewers with detailed information about the data collection process, including safety procedures at correctional centres and managing potential participant distress.

All IPV interviews, and the majority of the IPF interviews, were conducted through face-to-face interviews at custodial corrections facilities in Australia. Some of the IPF interviews were conducted in community corrections centres, with similar procedures to those established in the custodial centres. Only those individuals who had expressed an interest in the project via the EOI process (described above) were invited to participate in the interviews. The vast majority of interviews were conducted in designated interview rooms within the facilities. Some of the interviews at the custodial locations were conducted within visitation areas. In these instances, the interviewer and respondent were physically distanced from other individuals to ensure the interviews were not overheard. Prior to commencement of the interview, participants were provided with an information sheet detailing the study's purpose and procedure. Interviewers were instructed to read the information sheet to any participants who displayed difficulties with reading. Participants were encouraged to ask questions about the interview and the nature of the study. Importantly, the interviewers made it clear to participants that some questions might be distressing, that their participation was voluntary, and that they had a right to withdraw their participation at any time without explanation. Those who wanted to proceed were provided with a consent form to sign.

Structured interviews were used. Researchers visited each participant in person and administered standardised questionnaires (described in detail below). The interview schedule included a range of self-report measures to examine individual (e.g., socio-demographics) and developmental (e.g., childhood experiences) factors. The variables relevant to the current study are described further below. The interviews lasted approximately 1.5-2 hours. Given the

sensitive topic, a few of the respondents showed minor distress, most commonly due to feelings of remorse. Actions taken by interviewers included skipping sections of the interview and, on limited occasions, notifying the prison psychologist (without revealing the trigger of the distress). Some interviews were interrupted due to roll call/headcount procedures and resumed shortly thereafter. Other reasons for interruptions included lunch breaks, toilet visits, and cigarette breaks. No interviews were commenced but not completed. A modest amount of remuneration (AUD$10) was provided to respondents who participated in the Australian Homicide Project.

2.3 The sample

A total of 17 interviews were conducted with men convicted of assaulting their current or former intimate partner (IPV respondents) and 68 men convicted of murder or manslaughter of their current or former intimate partner (IPF respondents). Participants were excluded from the current analyses if they had missing values on more than 33% of the variables examined in the current study (n=7 IPF). Participants were also excluded if they argued innocence (n=6 IPF). The final sample size consisted of 17 IPV respondents and 55 IPF respondents.

Given that acts of lethal violence generally results in longer correctional sentences compared with non-lethal violence, the groups differed in terms of time that had passed between the perpetration of violence and the interviews conducted. An independent samples t-test revealed statistically significant differences between the groups, with a longer gap (measured in years) between incident and interview for the IPF group (M = 12.0, SD = 8.8) than the IPV group (M = 4.6, SD = 2.1), $t(68.20) = -5.87$, $p < .001$.

2.4 Measures

2.4.1 Sociodemographics factors

Age was measured as the respondents' age at the time of committing the incident. Respondents were asked about their highest level of education, which was categorised into 'completed high school' (defined as year 12) and 'not completed high school'. Respondents were also asked about their employment status at the time of committing the incident, categorised into 'unemployed' and 'not unemployed' (the latter of which included, for example, pensioners and those on parental leave). Respondents were also asked whether they were on welfare payments in the year prior to the incident, and whether they were under financial stress ("were you unable to pay your bills") in that year.

2.4.2 Substance problems

Respondents' alcohol problems in the year prior to the homicide were measured through the Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT; Babor, Higgins-Biddle, Saunders, & Monteiro, 2001). Scores on this test range from zero to 40. The scores were categorised as per AUDIT guidelines (0-15=no/low/medium problems; and 16-40=high problems). Respondents' drug problems in the year prior to the homicide were measured using the Drug Abuse Screening Test, Short Form (DAST-10; Skinner, 1982). Scores on this test range from zero to 10. The

scores were categorised as per DAST-10 guidelines (0-5=no/low/moderate problems; and 6-10=substantial/severe problems). See appendix for the AUDIT and DAST-10 scales.

2.4.3 Offending history

Respondents were asked about lifetime engagement in theft, assault, and robbery (measured dichotomously). Respondents were also asked whether they had ever been arrested and/or imprisoned in the year preceding the incident.

2.4.4 Relationship factors

We used a composite variable to measure prior violence to victim by combining two separate measures and then dichotomising the composite variable. These measures were: 1) Physical Assault lifetime ('ever') prevalence sub-scale of the copyrighted Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, Hamby, & Warren, 2003), and (2) IPV perpetration against current/former partners in the year preceding the homicide. We also measured ever violent (past or current partner) by combining the IPV against victim dichotomous measure with questions about IPV perpetration against former partners. This composite measure was then dichotomised. In addition, respondents were asked if, in the year preceding the homicide, there had been a domestic violence order preventing them from approaching their partner (i.e., the victim of the incident).

The 28-item Relational Entitlement and Proprietariness Scale (REPS; Hannawa, Spitzberg, Wiering, & Teranishi, 2006) was used to measure relational entitlement. Example statements include: "If I can't have my partner, no one can", "I insist on knowing where my partner is at all times", and "I look through my partner's drawers, handbag, or pockets". Items were scored on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Higher scores indicate higher relational entitlement. Past literature has found the average scores for university students samples to be between 1.46 and 2.59 (depending on the sub-scale used; Hannawa, Spitzberg, Wiering, & Teranishi, 2006). Cronbach's alpha indicated good reliability (.96). The scale was not normally distributed, and it was therefore dichotomised by summing up the number of items the respondent 'agreed' with. Respondents with scores of 3 and above were categorised as having 'high levels of relational entitlement'. See appendix for the REPS scale.

To measure sexual jealousy, we used an adapted version of the 8-item Jealousy-provoking Situation Scale (Salovey & Rodin, 1988) to measure sexual jealousy, which we had modified to assess how upset a range of situations (e.g., "Someone is flirting with your partner", "Your partner talks about an old lover") would make the respondent feel. Responses were scored on a Likert scale ranging from not at all (1) to very (4). Higher scores indicate higher levels of jealousy. Cronbach's alpha indicated good reliability (.81). See appendix for the amended scale.

Respondents' attitudes towards using violence within intimate relationships were assessed using the 14-item Revised Attitudes towards Wife Abuse scale (RAWA; Yoshioka, DiNoia, & Ullah, 2001). Example statements include "A husband should have the right to discipline his wife", "A wife should move out of the home if her husband hits her" (reverse coded), and "A husband has the right to hit his wife if she nags him too much"). Responses are scored on a Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). Higher scores indicate

higher violence-supportive attitudes. The total scores were divided by the number of items on the scale to create average scores. Past literature has found the average scores for community samples to be between 2.05 and 3.23 (depending on the sub-scale used; Robertson & Murachver, 2007). Cronbach's alpha indicated good reliability (.87). See appendix for the RAWA scale.

2.4.5 Social desirability

The 13-item Marlow-Crowne social desirability scale (short form C; Reynolds, 1982) was used to assess the degree to which participants answered questions in a way that presented themselves favourably to others. An example statement includes "I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way", to which participants responded with either true or false. After recoding the reverse items, higher scores represent higher levels of social desirability. Cronbach's alpha indicated good reliability (.70).

2.5 Analytical strategy

Fisher's Exact Test (2-sided) was used to assess whether there were associations between any of the categorical variables (e.g., 'not completed high school' and 'unemployed') and type of violence (IPV and IPF). This test was used as an alternative to chi-square tests for independence due to the relatively small sample size. Independent samples t-test were used to assess differences in scores on continuous variables (e.g., 'age at time of incident' and 'sexual jealousy') for the two types of violence (IPV and IPF). As a parametric test, *t*-tests require that the data adhere to a number of assumptions, including independence of observations and normal distributions. The current data adhered to these assumptions. Levene's test for equality of variances was performed to test for homogeneity of variance in conjunction with the *t*-tests. Because of the small sample size, caution must be exercised in interpreting the data, especially since there may be insufficient power to detect differences across the groups (Type 2 error). Importantly, the small sample size meant that only bivariate analyses could be run. A limitation with not running multivariate analyses is, of course, that one cannot assess the predictive ability of any given variable while at the same time controlling for the effects of other variables included in the model. These limitations must be considered when interpreting the results.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Sociodemographic factors

As seen in Table 1, of the sociodemographic variables, self-reported unemployment and welfare benefits were statistically associated with type of violence (i.e., IPV and IPF). Respondents in the IPV group were statistically more likely to have been unemployed at the time of the incident compared with IPF respondents (52.9% and 14.5%, respectively). Similarly, IPV respondents were statistically more likely to have been on welfare benefits at some time in the year leading up to the incident compared with IPF respondents (70.6% and 29.6%, respectively). No statistically significant differences were observed for age at the time of homicide. IPV respondents were on average 10.9 years younger than the IPF respondents at the time of interview, which means that, on average, longer time had passed between the violent incident and the interview for IPF respondents (also see section 2.3). Further, highest level of education and financial stress were not statistically associated with type of violence.

Table 3.1. Sociodemographic, substance problems, offending history, and relationship variables for IPV (n=17) and IPF (n=55) perpetrators

	IPV		IPF		
	valid %	Mean (SD)	valid %	Mean (SD)	*p*
Sociodemographics					
Age at time of incident		35.5 (9.1)		38.7 (11.5)	.299
Age at time of interview		39.7 (9.1)		50.6 (11.8)	.001
Not completed high school	52.9		60.4		.778
Unemployed at time of incident	52.9		14.5		.003
On welfare payments (year prior)	70.6		29.6		.004
Financial stress (year prior)	12.5		27.8		.323
Substance problems (year prior)					
High level alcohol problems	52.9		22.0		.029
Substantial level drug problems	41.2		20.8		.116
Offending history					
Theft (ever)	82.4		56.4		.084
Assault (ever)	76.5		69.1		.762
Robbery (ever)	29.4		9.3		.052
Arrested (year prior)	25.0		11.3		.225
In prison (year prior)	37.5		3.7		.001
Relationship factors					
Prior violence to victim (year prior)	76.5		44.0		.026
Ever violent (past or current partner)	82.4		57.7		.085
Domestic violence order (year prior)	56.3		20.4		.010
High relational entitlement	17.6		32.6		.350
Sexual jealousy		2.5 (0.4)		2.3 (0.7)	.161
Attitudes towards wife abuse		1.6 (0.4)		1.9 (0.5)	.037
Social desirability		5.9 (2.9)		6.9 (3.0)	.265

3.2 Substance problems

In terms of substance problems in the year prior to the incident, IPV respondents were more likely than the IPF respondents to report a high level of alcohol problems (52.9% and 22.0%, respectively). There was no statistically significant association between self-reported drug problems and type of violence.

3.3 Offending history

For the offending history variables, IPV respondents were more likely to report being imprisoned in the previous year than IPF respondents (37.5% and 3.7%, respectively). No statistically significant associations were observed for self-reported theft, assault, robbery, illicit drug selling, and being arrested within the previous year.

3.4 Relationship factors

Of the relationship factors, the IPV respondents were more likely to report being violent to their partner in the previous year than the IPF respondents (76.5% and 44.0%, respectively). Additionally, individuals in the IPV group were more likely to report having a domestic violence order than those in the IPF group (56.3% and 20.4%, respectively). Significant differences were observed for scores on the attitudes towards wife abuse scale, where IPV respondents scored lower, on average, than the IPF respondents with a mean difference of 0.3. No significant differences were identified for relational entitlement[1] and sexual jealousy. Further, no statistically significant associations were observed between ever being violent (including toward past partners) as reported by the participant and type of violence (IPV versus IPF).

3.5 Social desirability

Analyses of respondents' scores on the Marlow-Crowne social desirability scale where higher scores represent higher levels of social desirability, revealed no statistically significant differences between the IPV group and the IPF group.

[1] Given concerns with non-normal distribution, the relational entitlement scores were dichotomised whereby participants with scores of 3 and higher were classified as having "high levels of relational entitlement" (see section 2.4.4). For transparency purposes, we also wish to provide readers with the actual mean scores. No statistical differences were observed in terms of mean scores between the IPV group (M = 1.9, SD = 0.6) and the IPF group (M = 2.1, SD = 1.0), t(66) = -.64, p = .524.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Study aim and background

The current study adds to the body of literature that examines risk factors for IPF, and specifically whether IPF is the result of an escalation of violence or a different type of perpetrator (for discussions see Dobash et al., 2007; Kelly & Johnson, 2008; McPhedran & Baker, 2012; Wilson & Daly, 1993a). The 'escalation' framework holds that lethal violence represents a process of non-lethal violence escalation, that is, a shift from 'low' to 'high' violence over time, culminating in the most extreme form of violence, homicide. On the other hand, the 'typology' framework suggests that men who perpetrate IPF hold certain characteristics that are distinguishable from men who perpetrate IPV. In other words, lethal violence is a result of specific perpetrator characteristics, as opposed to an escalation of violence per se.

4.2 Key findings

It is important to highlight that the findings are tentative, as they are based on a small sample size collected as part of a pilot study. Future research is required to replicate this study using a larger sample. Furthermore, an important consideration when interpreting the results is that both the IPV and IPF groups may have been using 'impression management' techniques when giving their responses. 'Impression management' is the processes by which people control how they are perceived by others by providing socially desirable responses and involves the use of tactics such as justification, excuse, minimisation and denial. Research indicates that both IPV and IPF offenders can be highly skilled at using impression management to control how others perceive them (Dobash & Dobash, 2011; Henning, Jones & Holdford, 2005). The scores reported by the two groups in the current study are higher than those reported by community samples (M = 5.37; Andrews & Meyer, 2003), but lower compared with forensic populations (M = 7.61; Andrews & Meyer, 2003).

While the two groups did not differ in terms of their overtly measured social desirability scores this may simply suggest that the "right" responses to that tool were equally discerned by both groups. The presence of impression management may, however, shed some light on why the two groups differed on their attitudes to wife abuse but not their scores on sexual jealousy or relational entitlement. Potentially, the IPV group may have been well enough informed about domestic and family violence to know how to give the "right" (most desirable) attitudes about physical violence, and may have been more likely to give those answers than the IPF group. Taking into account that IPV offenders receive much shorter sentences than IPF offenders, IPV offenders may have been more likely to be manipulating their responses with the goal of giving the impression that they had been 'rehabilitated' and no longer held violence supportive attitudes (that is, they would not cause further harm when released back into the community). These are, of course, speculations that would need to be examined further by future research.

The extent to which offenders are able to accurately recall events must also be considered. In the current study, memory recall was potentially more of a concern for the IPF respondents. Given that lethal violence generally results in longer correctional sentences compared with non-lethal violence, it was not surprising that the IPF group was interviewed on average 12 years after the incident, compared with 4.4 years for the IPV group. Whilst it would be ideal to ensure similarities between the groups in this regard, difficulties arise with either conducting interviews *closer* to the date of IPF incidents (due to funding and access issues) or *further* from the date of IPV incidents (due to difficulties with tracing individuals within the community after the completion of their sentence).

Further, given this difference in length of time between violent incident and interview across the two groups, it is important to consider changes in legislation across time. For example, we have seen a steady upward trend in terms of the number of applications lodged for civil domestic violence protection orders (DVO) since they were first introduced in the Australian context around the 1980s. Thus, the lower proportion of IPF men compared to IPV men who reported that their partner had taken out a DVO against them in the year prior to the violence incident may be due to legislative changes and/or police practice over time. Similarly, increased societal awareness of violence within families may result in attitudinal changes, such as feelings of romantic entitlement and attitudes toward wife abuse (both of which were measured in the current study).

With these limitations in mind, the results tentatively appear to provide the strongest support for the typology framework. Certain key individual characteristics differentiated between men who had perpetrated IPV and men who had perpetrated IPF. The IPF men were less likely to report being unemployed at the time of the incident, and to have been on welfare support during the year leading up to the incident. Furthermore, within this sample, they were less likely to report high levels of alcohol problems and to report being imprisoned in the year leading up to the incident. These findings suggest that men who perpetrate IPF may be more 'conventional' than men who perpetrate IPV, and supports past research (Dobash et al., 2007), though more research is warranted.

Nevertheless, the data also revealed examples of IPF males as less 'conventional' than the IPV males, for example in terms of self-reported past intimate partner violence towards the victim. Approximately three-quarters of the IPV respondents reported using violence towards the victim previously, compared with less than half of the IPF respondents. Similarly, the presence of a domestic violence order was much more commonly admitted to or recalled by men who had committed IPV compared to those who had committed IPF. Thus, in the current study, and if the data are taken at face value (see section 4.4 'Limitations and future research' below), a significant proportion of men who killed their partner defied the 'stereotype' of IPF men as someone who has used previous violence against the victim (for a discussion, see Johnson, Eriksson, Mazerolle, & Wortley, 2019). Based on these findings, it is important for practitioners and policy-makers to consider that a significant proportion of men who perpetrate IPF may not have previously been physically violent to the victim (Dobash et al., 2007). This information is particularly relevant to consider for the development of risk assessments specifically designed for assessing risk of IPF.

Another example of lower conventionality among the IPF respondents was in relation to their self-reported attitudes toward wife abuse. The IPF males reported higher violence-supportive attitudes compared with the IPV males, as measured by the Revised Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse Scale. Thus, while they were less likely to have admitted to or recalled perpetrating violence toward the victim, they reported being more tolerant and supportive of such violence. These types of attitudes may be indicative of a coercive and controlling relationship, which has also been linked to IPF (e.g., Campbell, 1992; Dobash & Dobash, 2015; Websdale, 1999). However, it is important to note that neither sexual jealousy nor relational entitlement, as reported by the men, distinguished between IPV and IPF males in the current dataset.

Nevertheless, despite the data indicating the strongest support for a typology framework, there is a case to be made for the escalation framework. Importantly, whilst the IPF males were less likely to admit to or recall perpetrating violence against the victim in the past compared with the IPV males, 44% had still reported doing so. This is a much higher rate than within community and clinical samples (Desmarais, Reeves, Nicholls, Telford, & Fiebert, 2012) and suggests that, for some men who perpetrate IPF, lethal violence might represent a process of non-lethal violence escalation, that is, a shift from 'low' to 'high' violence over time.

It must, however, be highlighted that these findings are based on a small number of interviews where offenders are asked to self-report their attitudes and their behaviour, in which the veracity of their accounts cannot be assumed. The findings must therefore be caveated appropriately prior to drawing conclusions (see section 4.4 below for further discussion).

4.3 Implications for policy and practice

Given the small sample size, some caution needs to be exercised in relation to implications for policy and practice. With that caveat in mind, the results of the current study may have some relevance for policy and preventative responses for intimate partner violence generally, as well as specific implications for correctional agency practices, particularly in terms of assessing risk levels (e.g., when providing recommendations on parole applications) and developing specific programs addressing criminogenic needs (e.g., when making decisions around the content of rehabilitation programs) in line with a Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) approach (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990).

In broad terms, current policy responses to intimate partner violence are predicated on the escalation assumption, in other words, that current perpetrators of intimate partner violence are likely to escalate to more severe forms of violence and possibly intimate partner femicide. Interventions are commonly aimed at preventing and/or controlling such escalation (or repeat events) but have generally met with mixed success. This may be partially based on problematic assumptions for addressing the "domestically violent" offender as well as the failed recognition of more versatile offenders who participate in diverse forms of offending including intimate partner violence.

Historically, "batterer" treatment program responses (often based on Gondolf's work, e.g., 1985) as represented in many court-based domestic violence treatment programs have not been as successful as hoped (see various evaluations by Feder, such as Feder & Wilson, 2005). This may be due in part, because of implementation failures or because of

heterogeneity amongst the individuals captured by the courts and referred to such treatment programs. Correctly aligning the program focus to the needs of offenders are challenged on two levels. First, there is diversity amongst the "batterers" group as well diversity in relation to their specific criminogenic needs (see for example Holtzworth-Munroe's work on batterer typologies, e.g., Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). Second, the assumption of offending specialisation (i.e., committing exclusively IPV and no other types of offences) might be flawed, as most offenders being processed through the criminal justice system are versatile and highly active (Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2003). The net effect is the possible positive treatment effects for some program participants might well be cancelled out by the negative or null effects for others who have differing criminogenic needs.

Thus, the results of the current study call into question the assumption that IPV perpetrators escalate toward IPF. Of course, further research is required given the small sample size. Such research should ideally triangulate self-report accounts with official data, given the possibility of offenders using impression management techniques in interviews. Should such research replicate these findings, the potential policy implications would be profound in that the efficiency and efficacy of current policy responses would be impacted given that they may not reflect the actual risks and behaviours that are occurring. In that sense, policy refinements might be needed to better establish the criminogenic risks for re-offending across varying forms of partner violence, lethal and non-lethal.

In light of the complexity involved in differentiating forms of IPV offending (such as the heterogeneity of IPV perpetrators and/or patterns of violence escalation), as well as the possibility of substantive differences between IPV and IPF individuals, what are some possible next steps for the criminal justice system and for correctional service agencies?

Given finite resources and the importance of correct classifications, assessment of risk needs to accurately predict and distinguish between offenders in 'high' versus 'low' risk categories. Numerous risk assessment tools for intimate partner violence are available for use by criminal justice agencies, including separate tools designed for non-lethal and lethal violence (see e.g., Kebbell, 2019). However, the results from the current study, which show preliminary support for a typology approach, suggest that risk factors for IPV and IPF offenders may differ. Hypothetically speaking, this means that an offender who is likely to commit IPF may display low risk scores on a risk assessment specifically designed to measure IPV. It is therefore recommended that correctional agencies engage in empirically-driven critical reflections on the risk assessments currently being used to ensure maximum levels of validity. Moreover, it illuminates the importance of broad-based community educational programs regarding domestic violence and its prevention as well as more family-focused targeted interventions for families under extreme stress and at risk for triggering events for IPF.

Addressing domestic and family violence is a key concern for correctional agencies, and delivering effective rehabilitation programs is important for successful reintegration into the community post-sentence as well as for reducing risks of recidivism. Identification of the key criminogenic needs of perpetrators, as well as whether their needs are specific to an area of risk and offending (e.g. IPV) or more general (e.g. versatile offender) have significant implications for program completion, effectiveness and ultimately recidivism reduction.

Given that the results of this pilot study appear to be supportive of a typology approach, it may be important not to implement a 'blanket IPV treatment approach' to the rehabilitation of offenders who have committed violence in intimate relationships. Based on the results of the current study, it may be that such 'one-size-fits-all' approaches will fail to capture the nuances between IPV and IPF offenders, though more research is required to grow the evidence base. Moreover, the application of a more general cognitive behavioural treatment approach is likely more applicable to the needs of the majority of offenders in correctional environments and who are perpetrating IPV as well as several other forms of offending.

4.4 Limitations and future research

Of course, some challenges associated with the study and the data should be acknowledged. Importantly, our sample is small and, therefore, caution must be exercised in interpreting the results. Whilst the homicide data (i.e., interviews with IPF perpetrators) had already been collected as part of a larger study with funding from the Australian Research Council, the addition of a group of IPV perpetrators was part of a pilot study, with funding provided to conduct interviews with only a relatively small number of perpetrators. Given the importance of the topic, additional funding will be sought to extend the project to include a larger sample of men who have committed IPV. The findings herein are tentative and future research should replicate this study using a larger sample.

Another important consideration for this study is memory recall. The issues with using self-report data to ascertain details of a person's offending history, including memory retrieval problems and telescoping, are well documented (Junger-Tas & Marshall, 1999). To specifically address the subject of memory recall, the study included the use of the life event calendar methodology, which has been shown to enhance recall of life events and circumstances (Roberts & Horney, 2010). As discussed in section 4.2, memory recall was potentially more of a concern for the IPF respondents given the length of time that had passed between the homicide and the interview. This is a limitation with the current data that needs to be taking into consideration prior to drawing firm conclusions.

In addition, although there is certainly merit in using self-report data from perpetrators (for a discussion, see Lewis et al., 2003), the reliability of such accounts (e.g., a lack of willingness to disclose the nature of their offenses) can raise concerns. For example, research suggests a weak to moderate correlation between social desirability and the perpetration of IPV (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1997). This poses a challenge to the current research, as social desirability has the potential to affect perpetrator self-reports of past offending such as IPV.

5. CONCLUSION

Self-report data collected through interviews with 17 men who had perpetrated IPV and 55 men who had perpetrated IPF revealed that, while the two groups reported many characteristics in common, the former group appeared to be less 'conventional' than the latter in terms of their self-reported socioeconomic status, alcohol use, and contact with the criminal justice system. The IPV respondents were also more likely to admit to (or recall) having committed past violence against the victim and to have been subject to a domestic violence order in the year preceding the incident. These findings, coupled with IPF males reporting more violence-supporting attitudes, suggest that the data support a typology framework, in that men who perpetrate IPF hold certain characteristics that are distinguishable from men who perpetrate IPV. In other words, lethal violence (in the current study, at least) appears to be indicative of a specific perpetrator typology, as opposed to an escalation of violence per se.

In terms of the implications of these findings, caution must be exercised due to the small sample size and the nature of self-report data, which may be subject to issues with memory recall or impression management (i.e., where offenders portray themselves in a more positive light). The findings will therefore need to be replicated using a larger sample and a study design in which self-report data are triangulated with official data. If replicated, such findings may have implications for criminal justice and correctional agency responses to intimate partner violence. In the main, assessment approaches need to be applied to differentiate general offending risks and needs from more specific needs that align for risk for more serious forms of intimate partner violence. At the same time, many active offenders who perpetrate IPV are likely active in multiple forms of offending, and may benefit from cognitive behavioural change programs which have demonstrated effectiveness in previous evaluations. Responding to the specialised, IPV and IPF offending is more challenging. Assuming assessment protocols can identify these individuals, specialised treatment program responses may be effective. This assumes that there is homogeneity in the typologies of men who batter, which remains an ongoing challenge for effective policy and practice.

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7. CONTACT

Main contact:

Dr Li Eriksson
Senior Lecturer
School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Griffith University
l.eriksson@griffith.edu.au

8. APPENDIX

Table 8.1 Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT; Babor, Higgins-Biddle, Saunders, & Monteiro, 2001)

	Questions
1.	In the year before the incident how often did you have a drink containing alcohol?
2.	In the year before the incident, how many standard drinks containing alcohol did you have on a typical day when drinking?
	During the year before the incident….
3.	How often did you have six or more drinks on one occasion?
4.	How often did you find that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?
5.	How often did you fail to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?
6.	How often did you need a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?
7.	How often did you have a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?
8.	How often were you unable to remember what happened the night before, because you had been drinking?
	Ever happened in your life up until the incident:
9.	Had you or someone else ever been injured because of your drinking?
10.	Had a relative, friend, doctor, or another health care worker ever been concerned about your drinking or suggested that you cut down?

Table 8.2. Drug Abuse Screening Test, Short Form (DAST-10; Skinner, 1982)

	Questions
1.	In the year prior to the incident, were you using drugs other than those required for medical reasons?
	The following questions are about your use of drugs, excluding alcohol or tobacco, during the year before the incident.
2.	Did you abuse more than one drug at a time?
3.	Were you always able to stop using drugs when you wanted to?
4.	Did you have “blackouts” or “flashbacks” as a result of drug use?
5.	Did you ever feel bad or guilty about your drug use?
6.	Did your spouse or other family member ever complain about your involvement with drugs?
7.	Did you neglect your family because of drugs?
8.	Did you engage in illegal activities in order to obtain drugs?
9.	Did you ever experience withdrawal symptoms (felt sick) when you stopped taking drugs?
10.	Did you have medical problems as a result of your drug use (e.g. memory loss, hepatitis, convulsions, bleeding etc.)?

Table 8.3. Relational Entitlement and Proprietariness Scale (REPS; Hannawa, Spitzberg, Wiering, & Teranishi, 2006)

	Questions
	These questions are about how you experienced relationships in general at the time of the incident:
1.	I have the right to contact my partner's friends to see how he/she acts without me around
2.	I have a right to know where my partner is all the time
3.	I believe it is appropriate to demand sex if two people have been dating long enough, or if they are married
4.	I look through my partner's drawers, handbag, or pockets
5.	If my partner leaves me, I'll make sure he/she regrets it
6.	My partner does what I tell him/her to do
7.	If my partner threatened to leave the relationship, I would have the right to tell them that they can't
8.	I have a right to know who my partner is interacting with at all times
9.	A person has a right to control/discipline his or her partner
10.	Some people must hold on tightly to their partner because people cannot be trusted
11.	I have the right to check my partner's mobile phone and recent call list
12.	It is natural for one spouse to be in control of the other
13.	My partner can't leave without telling me where he or she is going
14.	Sometimes I have to remind my partner of who's boss
15.	If you don't show who's the boss in the beginning of a relationship, you will be taken advantage of later
16.	If I can't have my partner, no one can
17.	I'm entitled to treat my partner however I choose
18.	If my partner and I don't agree, I should have the final say
19.	I have a right to know everything my partner does
20.	I question my partner about his or her telephone calls
21.	My partner can't go until I tell him/her that he/she can go
22.	I have a right to know who my partner is interacting with when I am not with him or her
23.	It's important to keep partners in their place
24.	I have a right to be involved with anything my partner does
25.	I pay my partner a surprise visit just to see whom is with him or her
26.	Once people are in a committed relationship, it is not okay for a partner to talk to the opposite sex
27.	I insist on knowing where my partner is at all times
28.	I question my partner about his or her whereabouts

Table 8.4. Adapted version of the 8-item Jealousy-provoking Situation Scale (Salovey & Rodin, 1988)

	Questions
	How upset would the following situations make you feel?
1.	You phone your partner at home, and a voice you haven't heard before answers.
2.	Your partner has lunch with an attractive person of the opposite sex.
3.	Your partner dances too closely with a person of the opposite sex at a party or bar.
4.	Someone is flirting with your partner.
5.	Your partner wants to go out with other people.
6.	Your partner visits the person he or she used to go out with.
7.	You find out your partner is having an affair.
8.	Your partner talks about an old lover.

Table 8.5. Revised Attitudes towards Wife Abuse scale (RAWA; Yoshioka, DiNoia, & Ullah, 2001)

	Questions
	These are questions about your general thoughts and beliefs at the time of the incident:
1.	A husband should have the right to discipline his wife
2.	A man is the ruler of his home
3.	A husband is entitled to have sex with his wife whenever he asks
4.	Some wives seem to ask for beatings from their husbands
5.	A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her
6.	A husband is never justified in hitting his wife
7.	A husband should be arrested if he hits his wife
8.	Wife beating is grounds for divorce
	A husband/man has the right to hit his wife/girlfriend if she:
9.	… had sex with another man
10.	… refused to cook and keep the house clean
11.	… refused to have sex with him
12.	… made fun of him at a party
13.	… told friends he was sexually pathetic
14.	… nags him too much