

Partner Violence: Gender, Risk, and the Role of Dyadic Process

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What is Partner Violence?

- Many forms
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Sexual
 - Stalking
- Different levels of severity
- Affects all types of intimate relationships
- Victims and perpetrators of both genders

What is Partner Violence?

- Lots of heterogeneity

What is Partner Violence?

- Common definitions include
 - Act-based
 - Intention-based
 - Impact based

How common is IPV?

- US surveys suggest Black, Basile, Breiding, Smith, Walters, et al., 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 200))
 - Victims of injurious IPV
 - 1 in 4 women
 - 1 in 7 men
 - Victims of contact sexual or physical IPV that caused injury, fear, or required services
 - 1 in 4 women
 - 1 in 9 men

Developmental Course

- IPV appears as soon as youth begin intimate relationships
- Most people who experience victimization experience it first before 18 years of age
- Related to
 - Conduct problems
 - Child maltreatment victimization
 - Exposure to violence in childhood

Challenge for Prevention

- Our models of IPV have improved over the last 20 years, but are nowhere close to identifying the complex etiology of IPV
 - Focus has often been more on proving a specific viewpoint rather than mapping and explaining the phenomenon
 - Limited research on
 - Interconnections among types of IPV
 - Developmental pathways and naturally occurring change
 - Individual and dyadic mechanisms

Steps Toward Improved Prevention

- Improve definitions of IPV moving toward consensus
- Improve measurement of IPV
- Understand risk
- Place in a developmental and dyadic context

Step 1: Improve Definitions

- Criteria for Clinically-Significant IPV
 - Research program begun in 2002
 - Developed operationalized criteria for
 - Acts
 - Impacts
 - Exclusions
 - Tested in a series of field trials to ensure clinical utility
 - Developed interview and questionnaire measures

Defining IPV

- Used a diagnostic approach
- Conceptualization of maltreatment
 - Act + impact approach
 - Threshold = 2 steps beyond “societally acceptable”

Defining IPV

- Act – Non-accidental
- Impacts
 - Injury
 - Fear Reaction
 - Potential for significant injury
 - Psychological distress
 - Somatic symptoms
 - Curtailing major activities
- Exclusions
 - Protection of self
 - Protection of partner

Reliable in Field Trials (Heyman & Slep, 2006)

Type of Maltreatment	With Monthly Feedback			Without Monthly Feedback			Total		
	% Agr.	κ	n	%Agr.	κ	n	%Agr.	κ	N
Spouse Maltreatment									
Physical	90%	0.80	156	94%	0.86	77	91%	0.82	233
Emotional	86%	0.71	51	93%	0.85	28	89%	0.76	79
Sexual	75%	0.50	4	100%	1.00	4	88%	0.75	8
Child Maltreatment									
Physical	98%	0.95	45	94%	0.86	31	96%	0.92	76
Emotional	100%	1.00	37	80%	0.60	10	96%	0.89	47
Sexual	100%	1.00	6	100%	1.00	6	100%	1.00	12
Neglect	94%	0.85	64	86%	0.72	37	91%	0.80	101
Total	92%	0.84	363	92%	0.83	193	92%	0.84	556

Reliable in Dissemination Trial

Heyman & Slep, 2009

Type of Maltreatment	κ	Agreement		n	Sensitivity	Specificity
		% Agr.	+ -			
Partner Maltreatment (All types)	.85	92%	.97 .87	549	.89	.87
Physical	.84	92%	.98 .84	435	.89	.97
Emotional	.83	93%	.89 .95	109	.89	.95
Sexual	.62	80%	1.00 .67	5	.67	1.00
Child Maltreatment (All types)	.75	88%	.89 .88	342	.80	.88
Physical	.82	91%	.96 .88	115	.85	.97
Emotional	.73	90%	.71 .98	60	.92	.89
Sexual	.89	95%	1.00 .91	19	.89	1.00
Neglect	.66	84%	.87 .83	148	.70	.93
Total	.82	91%	.95 .87	891	.86	.95

Dissemination Trial - Conclusions

- Family maltreatment $\kappa = .66 - .89$
- DSM diagnoses
 - $\kappa = .13 - .45$ field clinicians and master reviewers using structured interviews (Basco et al., 2000; Shear et al., 2000)
 - $\kappa = .20 - .30$, except for diagnoses for severe mental illness ($\kappa = .52 - .60$) (Kashner et al., 2003)
 - $\kappa = .13-.34$ public hospitals vs. researchers
 - $\kappa = .51 - .73$ academic and community hospitals vs. researchers (Fenning et al., 2003)

Step 2: Improve Measurement

- Incorporated into the ICD-11 draft
 - Field trials in progress
- Incorporated into the DSM V
- Clinical structured interview
- Computer-based questionnaire
- Screener
 - (Foran, Beach, Slep, Heyman, & Wamboldt, 2012)

Step 3: Understanding Risk

- By level of severity?
- By gender of perpetrator?

Risk Factors in Ecological Framework

(Slep et al., 2015)

- Ecological frameworks capture the contexts within IPV occurs
 - Individual
 - Relationship
 - Workplace
 - Community
- Anonymous survey of men and women in US Air Force and their spouses
 - 34,713 AF men, 8,031 AF women
 - 879 civilian men, 16,347 civilian women

Risk Factors in Ecological Framework

Individual level

- Alcohol problems
- Age
- Financial stress
- Depressive symptoms
- Personal coping
- Physical well-being
- Religious involvement

Family level

- Relationship satisfaction
- Number of children

■ Family income

- Marital length
- Family coping
- Parent child relations
- Child physical agg.

Workplace level

- Support from leadership
- Workgroup cohesion
- Work relations
- Hours worked

Community level

- Community unity
- Support from neighbors
- Support for youth
- Support from formal ag.
- Social support
- Community safety
- Community stress

Results

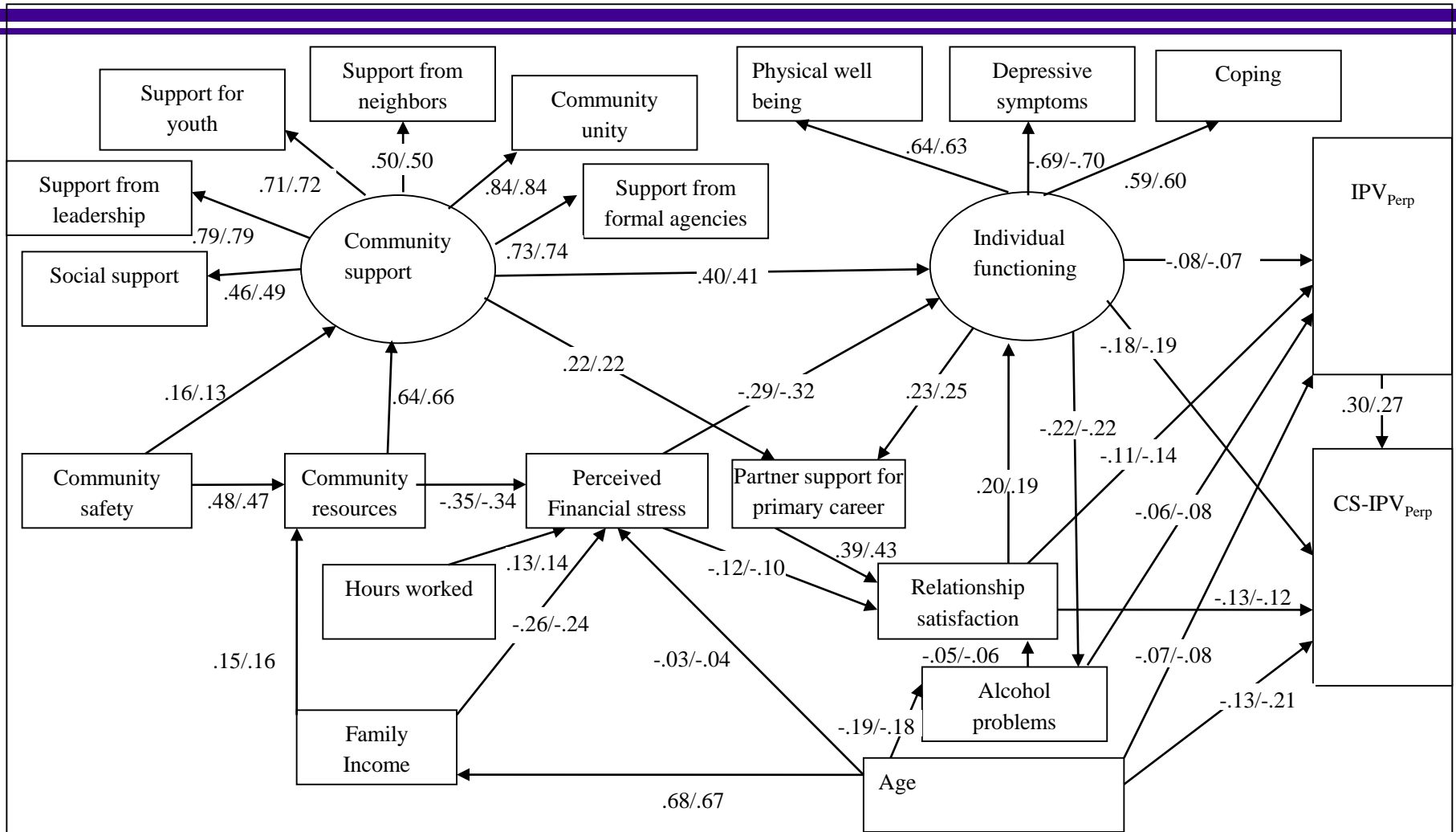
- With one exception, all variables
 - Related to any IPV and CS-IPV
 - For both men and women
 - Hours worked was unrelated to IPV
- Related to men's and women's IPV, but not CS-IPV
 - Religious involvement, number of children, and community stress
- Related to men's and women's CS-IPV, but not IPV
 - Support from agencies
- Models did not differ by region or urbanicity

Next Step: Integrate

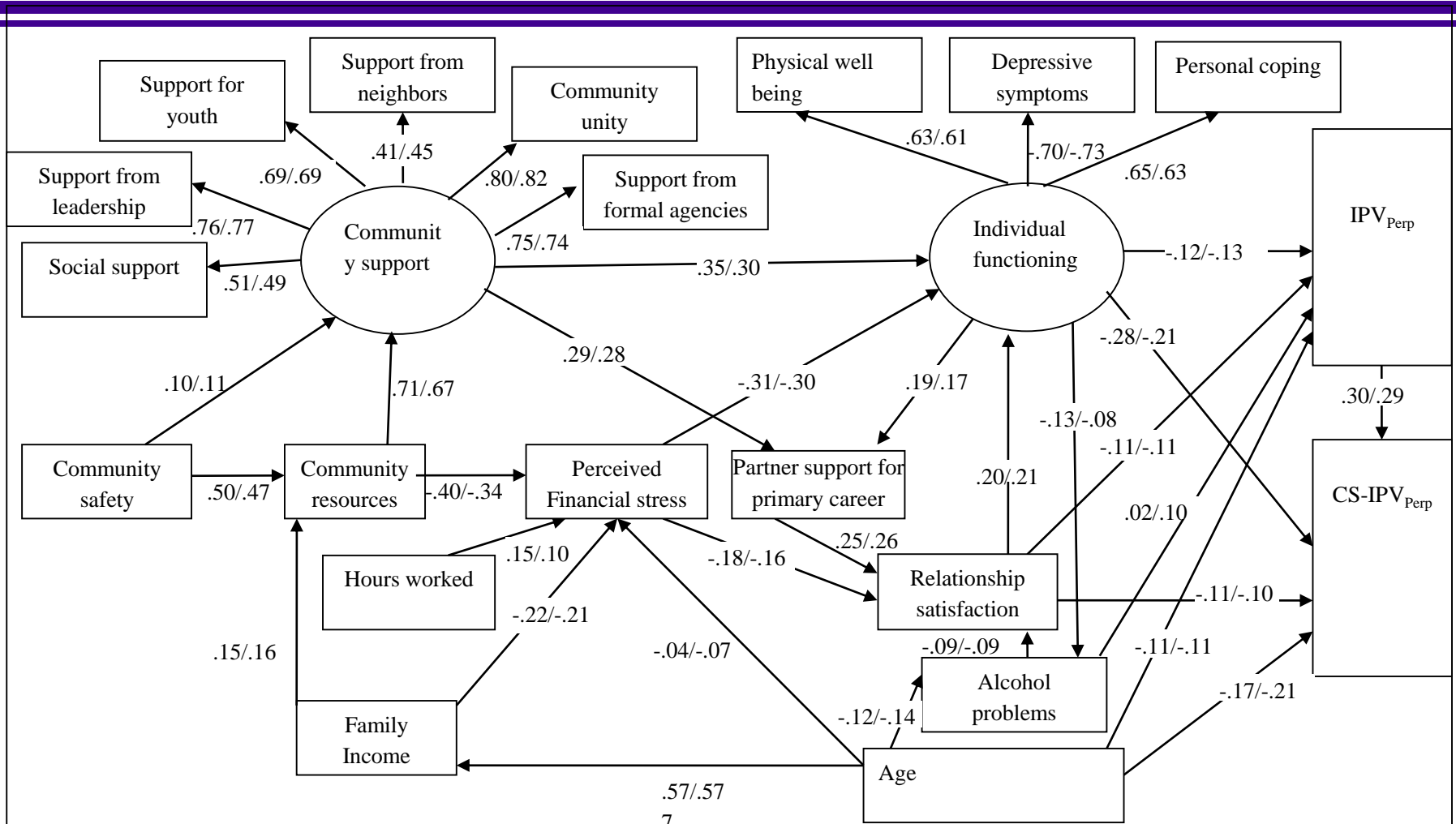
- Tested an integrated ecological model to predict both general and CS-IPV

Final Model for Men's IPV

(Slep et al., 2014)



Final Model for Women's IPV



Conclusions

- Results support the importance of context in IPV, but also the primacy of the relationship
- Suggest more similarity than difference in aggression and CS-IPV
- Suggests forms of IPV are connected
- Consistent with earlier work (e.g., O'Leary et al., 2007)

Step 4: Development and Dyad

- Increasing emphasis on dyadic and developmental approaches
 - Developmental contextual model (Capaldi et al., 2004)
 - Ehrensaft, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, and others echo the need for this emphasis
- Consistent with most IPV being bi-directional
 - Both partners' at similar severity
 - Most likely to result in injury

Dyadic Context

- In teens, partner behavior longitudinal predicts own aggression (O'Leary & Slep, 2003)

Dyadic Context is Critical

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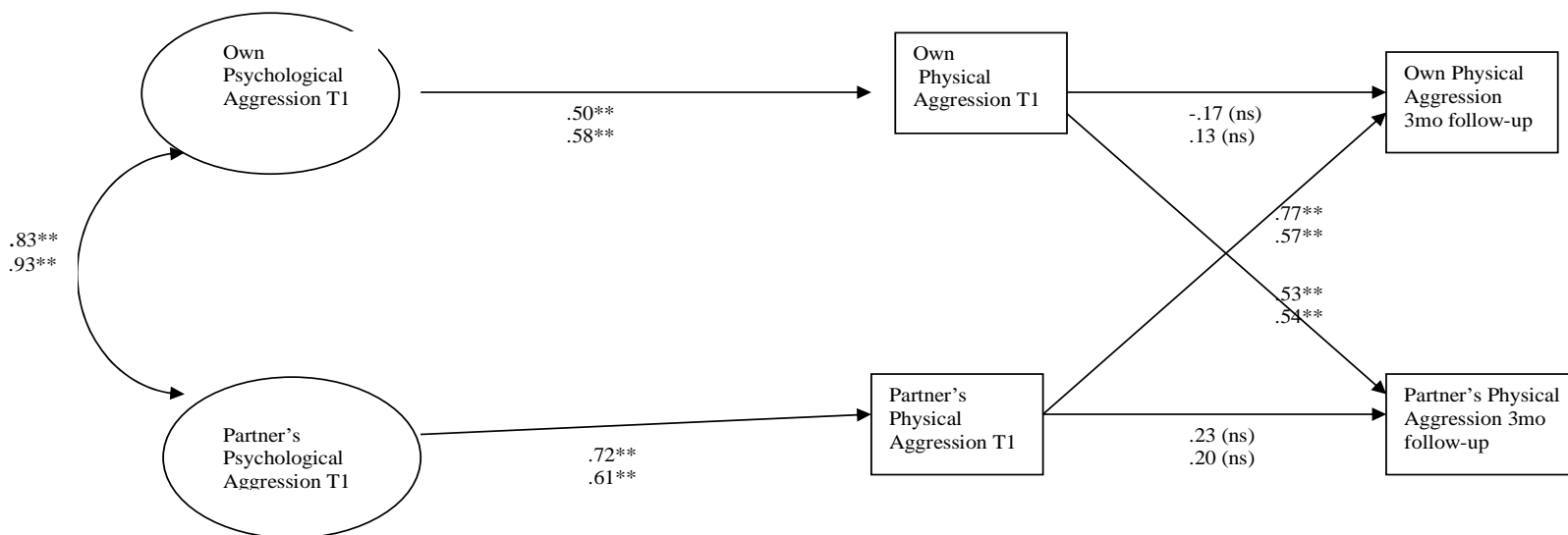


Figure 2. Supported model. Results for males appear first, results for females appear below. As described in the text, residuals of like variables across perpetrators were also free to vary, but were not included in this diagram for clarity.

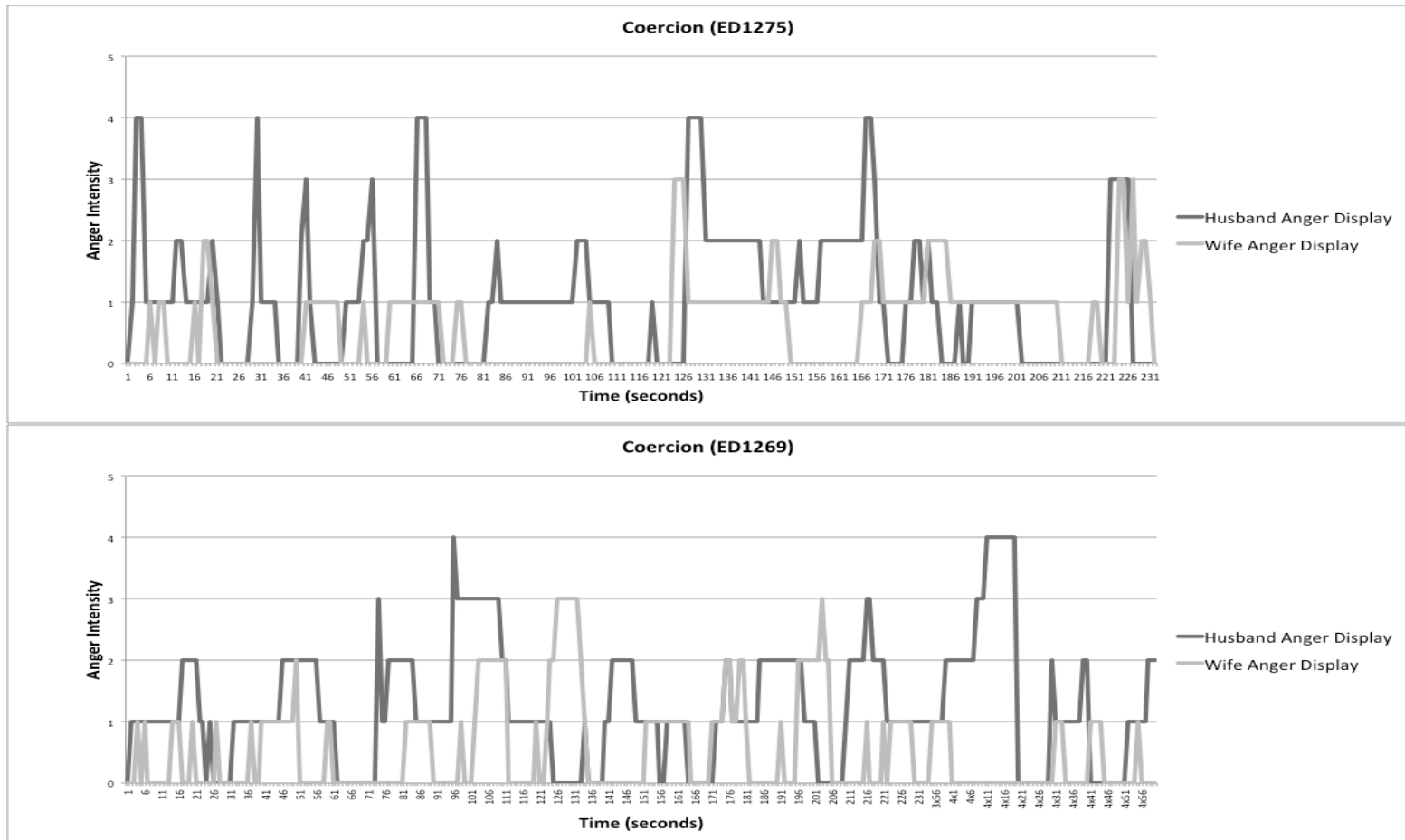
Coercion and Step Down

- **Coercion Theory** (Patterson, 1982)
 - Each partner is reinforced or rewarded for escalating and giving in to escalation
 - Linked with aggression and conduct problems
- **Step Down** (Slep et al., 2016)
 - A complementary process where partners can be reinforced for de-escalating

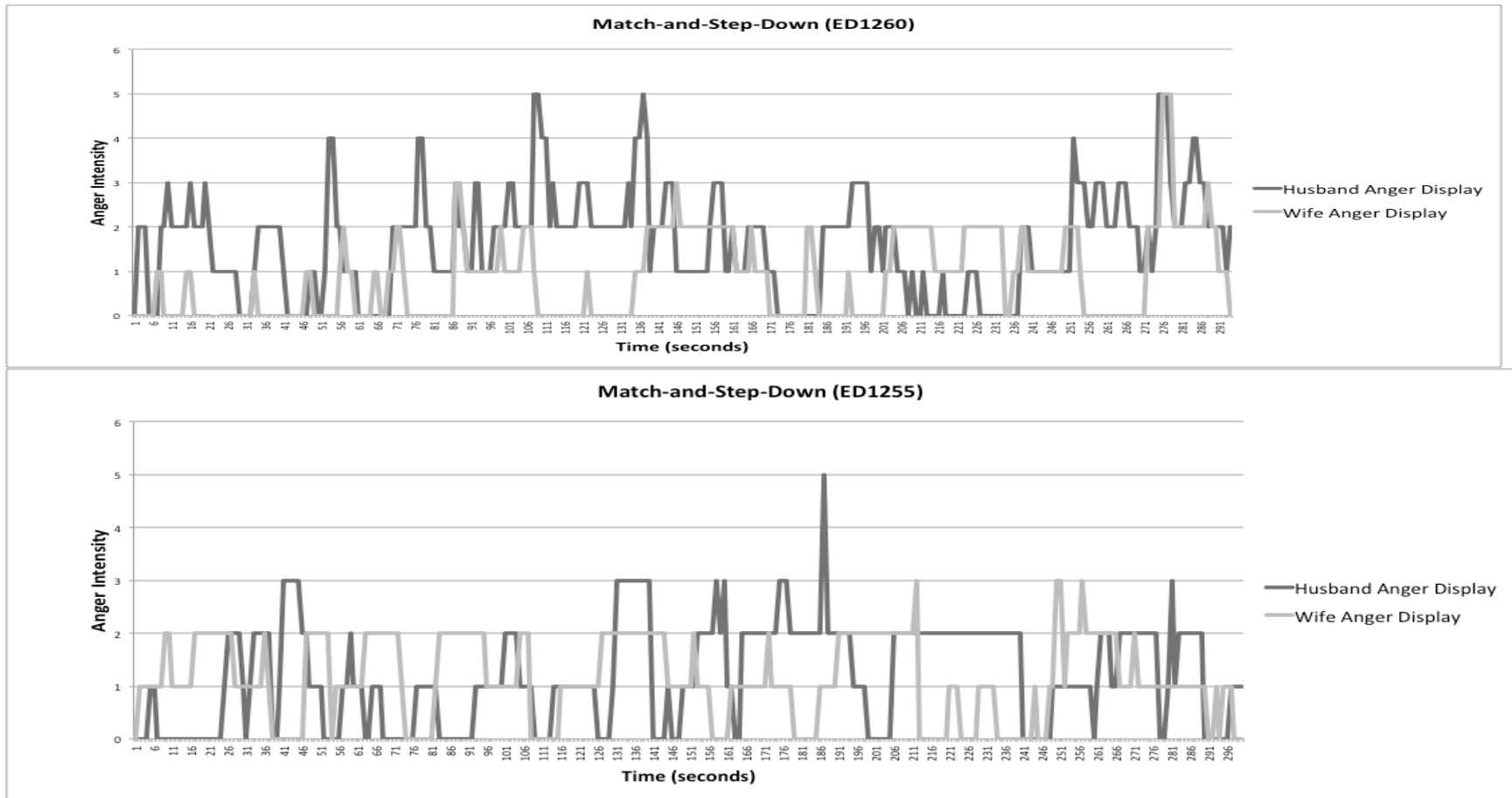
Methods

- Studied 200 couples
 - Violent and non-violent
 - Distressed and non-distressed
- Observed conflicts in the lab
- Coded for anger intensity
- Video-mediated recall of experienced anger dynamics

Dyadic Anger: Coercive Process



Dyadic Anger: Step Down



Results

- Coercive process characterizes couples' conflicts
- Step-down is also maintained through negative reinforcement
- Negative reinforcement shapes both partners' behaviors throughout conflict and at its end
- Anger escalations and de-escalations can be negatively reinforced by decreases in a person's experience of anger or via partner's acquiescence
- Couples with IPV exhibited less experientially-based negative reinforcement of their own displayed anger decreases
 - De-escalating behaviors did not “work” as well for women and men from violent couples by making them feel better | as they did for individuals from non-violent couples

Conclusions

- IPV is more common and more complex than many think
- Effective prevention and treatment **REQUIRES** better science
- Evidence suggests men's and women's violence are both critical to understand
 - Largely driven by the same risk factors
- Risk and outcomes differ by severity, but different forms and levels of severity relate strongly
- Must be placed in a developmental context
- Must be placed in a dyadic context