

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE - JENNINGS ET AL. 2012

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We now turn toward the examination of intimate partner violence with an Hispanic sample, relying on results provided in the article entitled Substance Use as a Risk Factor for Intimate Partner Violence Overlap: Generational Differences Among Hispanic Young Adults, which was published by Jennings et al. in 2012.

Research on intimate partner violence has generated some consistent findings worthy of mentioning. First, a growing body of literature indicates an overlap between intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration. This bi-directional relationship is often referred to as the victim-offender overlap.

Additional findings include the association between substance use-- specifically alcohol and marijuana use-- and the victim-offender overlap, and a greater risk of intimate partner violence overlap among ethnic minorities, particularly blacks and Hispanics. Finally, mixed results have been found for the effect of generational status on intimate partner violence among Hispanics.

The current study sought to examine the overlap in intimate partner violence in a sample of Hispanic adolescents and young adults in the United States in an effort to provide answers to three specific research questions. First, what is the prevalence of the overlap between IPV perpetration and victimization among Hispanic young adults? Second, are there generational differences in intimate partner violence prevalence among Hispanic young adults? And, finally, what role does alcohol and marijuana use during adolescence play on intimate partner violence in early adulthood among Hispanics?

Similarly, the data for this analysis were obtained from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, or Add Health, and focused on Hispanic adolescents who participated in waves one through four. In-home interviews were conducted with both the adolescents and their parent at wave one, and with the adolescents only for waves two through four.

The final sample used in the study totaled 1,448 Hispanic adolescents. And intimate partner violence was the study's main dependent variable. And it was measured as both victimization and perpetration.

There were a host of independent variables included in the study. Specifically, the generational status variable was categorized into three groups-- either first generation immigrant, second generation US-born, and third generation US-born and beyond. Alcohol use and marijuana use in the past month were both assessed individually. In addition to these analyses, three group-based patterns of alcohol and marijuana use in respondents emerged-- specifically, the non-users, those who reported either alcohol or marijuana use only, and those who reported using both substances, alcohol and marijuana.

The covariates, or control variables, were selected based on literature on the association between intimate partner violence and substance abuse. Specific covariates were depression, parental involvement, peer marijuana and alcohol use, and parental alcohol use. When evaluating the prevalence of alcohol and marijuana use within the Hispanic sample, various groups of users were identified.

Specifically, five groups were present for alcohol users. Non-alcohol users accounted for 20.3% of the sample. Late-onset escalators accounted for 23.1% of the sample. 6.5% of the sample were decreasing users. 21.2% of the sample were identified as early onset escalators. And consistent alcohol users, which was the largest group, accounted for 28.8% of the sample.

For marijuana use, comparatively, three groups emerged-- non-marijuana users, which account for 67.5% of the sample. 20.9% of the sample were identified as low-level users. And high-level users were 11.6% of the sample. There were also significant generational differences observed in both the prevalence of alcohol use and marijuana use among the Hispanic adolescents.

Results for the prevalence of the victim-offender overlap show that 31.3% who reported intimate partner violence, 12.8% had been victims only. 5.3% were perpetrators only. And 13.3% reported both victimization and perpetration.

No significant differences in the prevalence of IPV by generational status were found. When looking at the effects of alcohol and marijuana on intimate partner violence, the results indicated that marijuana was a significant predictor of intimate partner violence. Additionally, high-level marijuana users were at an increased risk of being in the victim only, or victim and perpetrator, categories. Finally, there was a higher risk of being in the overlap group in adulthood for those reporting both alcohol and marijuana use during adolescence.

Overall, the findings from this research appear to be consistent with previous studies examining the prevalence of the victim-perpetrator overlap among the general population, and with regard to intimate partner violence specifically. Surprisingly, there were no generational status differences in the prevalence of intimate partner violence among Hispanic young adults. It is possible that the risk factors associated with intimate partner violence negatively affect all of Hispanic populations, regardless of generational status.

Ultimately, the analyses performed in this current study suggested that marijuana use is predictive of victimization and physical assault by partners. And, more importantly, it is also a predictor of the victim-offender overlap in intimate partner violence.

Some limitations and strengths of this study need to be noted. For example, starting with the limitations, it is unclear how event-specific substance use relates to intimate partner violence since the drug and alcohol use were not assessed at the time of the intimate partner violence occurrence. And the research was unable to account for baseline intimate partner violence, as the analysis did not also account for relationship characteristics either.

Finally, the authors were unable to incorporate measures of childhood maltreatment and exposure to intimate partner violence in the home during childhood among the parents. Nevertheless, there were some strong points to this study-- particularly its use of a prospective data across adolescence and early adulthood, its use of a nationally-representative sample of Hispanics that were grouped by nativity status to examine generational differences in intimate partner violence, and its evaluation of patterns of marijuana use and alcohol use over time. And, finally, that it provided implications for the development and implementation of intimate partner violence prevention programs.