

Psychological Aggression, Attitudes About Violence, Violent Socialization, and Dominance in Dating Relationships

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Abstract

Psychological aggression is a widespread form of abuse in dating relationships, especially in collectivist societies with ties to patriarchal beliefs. Despite the prevalence of psychological aggression, it has seldom been studied in connection with known antecedents of interpersonal violence, including dominance, attitudes supportive of violence, and violence socialization processes during childhood. The present study sought to test relationships among these variables in young men and women. A total of 500 Mexican undergraduate students in northern Mexico reported on their experiences with psychological aggression, the dominance of a dating partner, and violent socialization during childhood, as well as on their approval of violence within and outside the family. The results indicate that the dominance of a dating partner is directly linked to male and female intimate partner violence (IPV)

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perpetration. Violent socialization and proviolent attitudes appear to be related to female dominance. Female and male psychological aggression victimization was predicted by the participant's own perpetration. In general, a dyadic approach appears to be useful for explaining psychological aggression perpetration and victimization in a collectivist society, in light of recent changes in normative beliefs held by young educated Mexicans. Implications for future research and public policy are discussed.

Keywords

psychological aggression, attitudes about violence, dominance, dating relationships

Intimate partner violence (IPV) research conducted with university students, also termed dating violence, has explored a wide range of risk factors, including mental health indicators, individual characteristics, family and other relationship influences, and outcomes (Capaldi, Knoble, Shortt, & Kim, 2012; Começanha, Basto-Pereira, & Maia, 2017; Esquivel-Santoveña, Lambert, & Hamel, 2013; Spencer, Cafferky, & Stith, 2016). The historical view of IPV in more consolidated relationships (also known as domestic violence) has deemed such a phenomenon to stem from power and control differentials; therefore, it is widely treated as a gender issue, that is, a problem affecting women and perpetrated primarily by men (García-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2005). Conversely, there is also research that has shown that rates of (Straus & Gelles, 1990) and motivations for (Hamberger, Lohr, Bonge & Tolin, 1997; Langhinrichsen-Rohlin, McCullars, & Misra, 2012) IPV have similarities and differences between the sexes. For example, research reveals control, dominance, and coercion as similar motives for IPV perpetration by men and women (Hamberger et al., 1997; Langhinrichsen-Rohlin et al., 2012).

The debate on the etiology of IPV being considered a phenomenon affecting primarily female victims versus a human problem affecting both sexes has continued over 40 years based on shortcomings in the assessment of IPV. Such criticism, in part, includes not taking into account motivations and repercussions, that is, the context in which IPV occurs (Cascardi & Vivian, 1995). Similarly, there is research that has documented the assessment of IPV as an area of concern, particularly, with regard to the overinflation of gender-symmetric estimates (Grych & Hamby, 2014). Throughout the years, typological research has shed light on such debate by identifying different types of IPV perpetrators and victims and violent dynamics (unidirectional, bidirectional; Allen, 2011; Johnson, 2008; Straus & Michel-Smith, 2014).

IPV Socialization Processes and Attitudes About Violence and Dominance

A widely supported consensus of symmetry in IPV experiences in dating relationships or higher female perpetration/or male victimization (Casique, 2018; Castro & Casique, 2010; Desmarais, Reeves, Nicholls, Telford, & Fiebert, 2012a, 2012b; Straus, 2004) has been criticized for often ignoring socialization processes and widely held attitudes that shape behaviors within intimate relationships with clear differences in perpetration and victimization patterns (Lichter & McCloskey, 2004; Ulloa, Jaycox, Skinner, & Orsburn, 2008). The impact that traditional socialization processes have on proviolent attitudes, behaviors, and the dominance of an intimate partner has motivated academics to gain a better understanding of dynamics in dating relationships. For example, research has linked IPV experiences by men and women in dating relationships to proviolent attitudes (Courtain & Glowacz, 2018; Temple et al., 2016). Although internationally aggregated reports have linked IPV perpetration in dating relationships to dominance by male and female partners (Straus, 2008), more detailed analyses comprising data from less developed, non-English-speaking nations have found female dominance (but not male dominance) to be related to IPV perpetration in university students (Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013).

Such startling findings (compared with the traditional patriarchal view of IPV, male dominance, and violent male socialization) in the literature merit closer examination. Therefore, this study seeks to explore how violent socialization, proviolent attitudes, and the dominance of an intimate partner relates to psychological IPV perpetration and victimization rates in dating relationships.

One of the more widespread forms of IPV in dating relationships is psychological aggression (Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013; Mohr-Carney & Barner, 2012). Psychological IPV in the form of verbal aggression and emotionally charged negative behaviors (such as destroying a partner's belongings and threats) has been closely linked and considered to overlap with controlling behavior (e.g., emotional and financial control, intimidation, coercive control; Stets, 1991) and has been deemed a precursor of or an accompaniment to physical violence in intimate relationships (O'Leary, 1999).

Because of the prevalence of psychological aggression (over and above physical violence) in young adults (Desmarais et al., 2012a, 2012b; Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013; Mohr-Carney & Barner, 2012), the present study has focused on psychological aggression in analyses of IPV perpetration and victimization in young men and women in relation to attitudes toward violence, violent socialization, and dominance in intimate relationships.

IPV, Societal Collectivism, and Emerging Normative Beliefs in Mexico

Researchers exploring IPV have considered wider cultural variables (such as individualism–collectivism) to contextualize aggressive and violent behavior (Archer, 2006). Individualism–collectivism is a cultural dimension involving personal versus group goals and achievements. In other words, individualism and collectivism are considered “cultural syndromes” that differentiate cultures in terms of beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles, values, and behaviors (Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1995). A meta-analysis of empirical studies conducted in 16 nations showed a trend of more female IPV victimization (compared with male victimization) in countries with less gender empowerment and higher societal collectivism than in nations with more gender empowerment and higher societal individualism (Archer, 2006).

Less developed collectivist societies, such as the Mexican society (Cárdenas et al., 2013; Castro & Casique, 2010; Celis-Sauce & Rojas-Solís, 2015; Cortés-Ayala et al., 2015; Esquivel-Santoveña, Gurrola-Peña, & Balcázar-Nava, 2016; Zárate, Rivera-Vargas, González-Flores, & Yedra, 2018), mirror IPV in dating relationships prevalence trends commonly found in developed and individualistic societies such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada (Desmarais et al., 2012a, 2012b; Straus, 2004). The traditional view of IPV prevention campaigns for young adults in Mexico is that through normative beliefs and traditions, men are socialized to conform to a stereotypical view that reinforces aggressive and violent behavior as an acceptable means of asserting masculinity and characteristics linked to this image (bravery, strength, control). Conversely, women are socialized to adhere to traditional gender roles characterized by submissive behavior, obedience, and deference to men (Fernández-Chagoya & Ayllón-González, 2014; Secretaría de Seguridad Pública, 2012).

Although Mexico has been identified as a collectivist society in empirical studies (Díaz-Guerrero, 1994), recent ethnopsychological studies in Mexico indicate the coexistence of traditional historic sociocultural premises (HSCP) with more progressive or liberal beliefs about men and women (Díaz-Loving et al., 2015) and values depicting adopted individualistic traits (Díaz-Loving, Cruz-Torres, Armenta-Huarte, & Reyes-Ruíz, 2018). Furthermore, recent studies confirm the use of similar levels of positive and negative relationship power styles by each sex in younger generations (Jasso-Medrano, López-Rosales, Moral de la Rubia, & Rivera-Aragón, 2014). Such research suggests that although younger men and women possess traditional beliefs reflected in HSCP, they do not necessarily abide by all those norms (Díaz-Loving et al., 2015). These societal collectivist trends in countries such as Mexico warrant

the examination of how IPV, and particularly, psychologically aggressive behaviors, relates to attitudes (normative beliefs) supportive of violence among men and women within an intimate relationship.

IPV and Attitudes Toward an Intimate Partner

Descriptive normative beliefs are related to the perception of what most others do (the perception about typical behavior of most people in a group), whereas injunctive normative beliefs refer to the perception of what ought to be done (what constitutes morally approved/disapproved behavior; Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). Some research in countries such as the United States has examined descriptive and injunctive normative beliefs. They found that injunctive (but not descriptive) normative beliefs moderate the relationship between traditional gender role attitudes and dating violence perpetration (McNaughton-Reyes, Foshee, Holditch-Niolon, Reidy, & Hall, 2016). That is, beliefs about morally approved or sanctioned behavior explain such an attitudinal-behavioral link. In other words, traditional normative beliefs are linked to dating violence perpetration/victimization only if the individual's appraisal of such beliefs involves social disapproval/sanctioning toward him or her regardless of the general view in his or her community.

An empirical study in Mexico with university students (Esquivel-Santoveña, Rodríguez-Hernández, Castillo-Viveros, López-Orozco, & Oudhof van Barneveld, 2017) showed that although men endorse attitudes that overstep general social norms more strongly than women do, there is no significant linear association between attitudes toward overstepping social limits and IPV perpetration/victimization. There is, however, a lack of empirical research linking attitudes supportive of violence within a dating relationship context and experiences of IPV in a collectivist society, with historical links to patriarchal norms. This is another reason why this study focuses on empirically testing for attitudes supportive of violence within a dating relationship and IPV.

Although recent IPV studies with Mexican high school and university students have found symmetry in rates of IPV between the sexes or higher female perpetration/male victimization (Casique, 2018; Castro & Casique, 2010; Cortés-Ayala et al., 2015; Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013), there are claims in the literature that portray men as holding more proviolent views and attitudes and as exerting more violence and dominance in general and within their intimate relationships (Fulu et al., 2013; Heiskanen & Lietonen, 2016; Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, 2016). Indeed, empirical research has linked dominance to dating violence by means of entitlement beliefs (e.g., privileging oneself over an intimate partner; Warrener & Tasso, 2017). Moreover, recent research shows that more egalitarian views about

sex roles are not predictive of female dating violence victimization but rather contextual factors (e.g., victim's younger/perpetrator's older age, number of children, duration of a dating relationship, urban versus rural settings) play a more significant role in female dating violence victimization experiences (Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013; Capaldi et al., 2012; Casique, 2014, 2018).

Due to the lack of consensus in the literature, this study has set out to investigate violent socialization experiences during childhood, attitudes supportive of violence, dominance of an intimate partner, and psychological IPV perpetration and victimization by women and men in dating relationships.

Psychological Aggression Within Dyadic Concordance Types

The present study is part of the International Parenting Study (IPS) led by the Family Research Laboratory at the University of New Hampshire. This project seeks to investigate the correlates of aspects related to parenting and later dating violence experiences. As established in the literature, behaviors or characteristics regarding intimate relationships should be analyzed in consideration of the dyadic nature of interaction within couples (Straus, 2014, 2015). Therefore, this study also explores the contribution of psychological aggression in IPV experiences by conducting a (dyadic) concordance analysis (CA) of IPV perpetration patterns or comparisons of dyadic concordance types (DCTs) in young adults/university students. As documented in the literature (Rodriguez & Straus, 2016; Straus, 2014), some of the benefits of CA are that it allows for the examination of an aspect of close relationships, be it prosocial or antisocial, that are over and above the individual-level characteristics of both members of a dyad.

Therefore, a DCT classification for an IPV study could include four categories: male-only perpetrated, female-only perpetrated, both perpetrated, and a reference category (nonaggressive). Due to the widespread nature of psychological IPV in studies with young adults (Casique, 2018; Celis-Sauce & Rojas-Solis, 2015; Começanha et al., 2017; Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2017) with a number of adverse consequences (Shorey et al., 2012), psychological aggression is used here as the reference category to classify DCTs in a sample of university students.

The objectives of this study are addressed via the following research hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Men shall display higher approval of proviolent attitudes and violent socialization patterns than women.

Hypothesis 2: Men and women will display dominance of an intimate partner at approximate rates.

Hypothesis 3: Increased rates of attitudes supportive of violence, violent socialization patterns, older perpetrator age, and dominance of an intimate partner will be linked to higher levels of male (but not female) psychological aggression perpetration.

Hypothesis 4: Increased rates of attitudes supportive of violence and violent socialization patterns, younger victim age and higher psychological aggression perpetration will be associated with higher rates of female (but not male) psychological aggression victimization.

Hypothesis 5: More participants reporting bidirectional psychological aggression perpetration will be found in mutually aggressive relationships than in the unidirectional (male-only and female-only) and nonaggressive categories.

Hypothesis 6: Participants in mutually aggressive relationships will display higher levels of psychological aggression perpetration and victimization than will participants in unidirectionally aggressive relationships (male-only/female-only).

Method

Sample

A total of 500 students (38.4% males; 61.6% females) from social science, finance, engineering, and humanities undergraduate courses at the Universidad Autónoma de Ciudad Juárez (UACJ) in Mexico were invited to voluntarily take part in the study in their classrooms between January and April 2017. The project was presented to participants as part of the IPS survey that intended to explore different aspects of parenting, discipline, and relationship and individual characteristics related to dating relationships. Participants provided their consent through completing and returning the questionnaire. No compensation was offered for study participation, although the importance of this type of study was stressed to participants. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics and Bioethics Committee at the UACJ prior to the beginning of data collection.

Measures

Psychological aggression: The Conflict Tactics Scales–Short Form (CTS2). The CTS2 (Straus & Douglas, 2004) is a widely known tool to measure violent and nonviolent tactics used by intimate partners to solve or address conflict and disagreements. The scales have been documented to possess adequate validity and reliability in numerous studies (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy,

& Sugarman, 1996; Straus, 2007). For purposes of the IPS, only the psychological aggression, physical violence, and physical injury scales were used. The reliability coefficients of the psychological aggression perpetration and victimization scales in this study were $\alpha = .75$ and $\alpha = .73$, respectively.

Dominance. The Personal and Relationships Profile (PRP) used in the IPS (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 2007) devoted one item of the Dominance Scale by Hamby (1996) to identify direct dominance of an intimate partner over disagreements. Participants were asked how much they agreed with the statement “I generally have the final say when my partner and I disagree” on a 4-point scale (0 = *totally disagree* to 3 = *totally agree*).

Violence approval. Attitudes supportive of violence within intimate partnerships and among strangers were assessed via six items that compose the Violence Approval subscale of the PRP (Straus, et al., 2007) on a 4-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*). Two statements inquired about family violence (e.g., It is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good, hard spanking; It is sometimes necessary for parents to slap a teen who talks back or is getting into trouble), two items about partner abuse or violence (e.g., I can think of a situation when I would approve of a husband slapping a wife’s face; I can think of a situation when I would approve of a wife slapping a husband’s face), and two items that investigated attitudes about violence within a general context (e.g., When a boy is growing up, it is important for him to have a few fist fights; A man should not walk away from a physical fight with another man). The approval ratings for the composite six-item scale ranged from 6 to 24. The reliability for the violence approval scale in the present study is $\alpha = .68$.

Values between .60 and .70 for internal consistency construct validity have been deemed adequate for exploratory purposes (Garson, 2016), particularly brief screening scales affected by a low number of items (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994).

Violent socialization. Patterns indicative of the violent socialization of men and women by parents were assessed in retrospective self-reports of university students using the Violent Socialization scale of the PRP (Straus et al., 2007). Respondents completed the following two items, which were on a 4-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*):

1. “My father told me to hit back if someone hit me or insulted me.”
2. “My mother told me to hit back if someone hit me or insulted me.”

Table 1. Approval of Family Violence, Violent Socialization by Parent, and Dominance of an Intimate Partner Over Arguments by Men and Women.

Attitudes About Violence	Women M (SD)	Men M (SD)	t (df)
Total violence approval	10 (2.82)	12 (3.33)	6.875* (464)
Violent socialization			
Total violent socialization by parents	4.04 (0.808)	4.70 (0.835)	3.838* (485)
Dominance of an intimate partner			
Total dominance of an intimate partner over arguments	2.06 (0.809)	2.02 (0.703)	-0.692 (489)

* $p = .001$.

Possible ratings for the 4-item composite Violent Socialization scale ranged from 2 to 8. Reliability for the 2-item composite Violence Socialization scale resulted in an alpha reliability coefficient of .67.

Procedure

In the present study, the Mexican version of the CTS2 by Straus and Ramirez (2007) was used as a guide to adapt the items that composed the short form by Straus and Douglas (2004). Items from the PRP belonging to the dominance, violent approval, and violent socialization sections were adapted by a translation of the original versions into Spanish by the principal investigator of this study and a revision by a panel of experts at the UACJ. The revised versions were piloted with university students from the UACJ, and the resulting amendments were incorporated into the scales.

Results

Regarding the first research hypothesis, the first two new cut-off points were calculated to reduce the risk of Type I error due to multiple comparisons for attitudes about violence approval (six) and violent socialization (four) using the Bonferroni adjustment, resulting in new p values of .008 and .0125, respectively. This hypothesis was supported as men scored significantly higher on approval of violence and violent socialization experiences led by parents (see Table 1).

Regarding the dominance of a dating partner over arguments (Hypothesis 2), women and men showed similar levels when they were asked who had the final say or decision in general when both disagreed (see Table 1).

Table 2. Models for Psychological Aggression Perpetration for Men and Women.

Variables in the Model	Men		Women			
	β	95% CI Lower Bound	95% CI Upper Bound	β	95% CI Lower Bound	95% CI Upper Bound
Participant's age	.153	-.068	.122	.095	-.025	.211
Violent socialization experiences	.092	-.012	.248	.023	-.130	.188
Approval of violence	-.062	-.125	.018	-.006	-.115	.105
Dominance of an intimate partner	.256*	-.037	.371	.216*	.168	.676

Note. CI = confidence interval.

* $p = .001$.

To test the third research hypothesis (more dominance of a partner, higher approval of violence, and more exposure to situations socializing violence in childhood being linked to more frequent male [but not female] psychological aggression perpetration), data were inspected to meet multicollinearity, normality, linearity homoscedasticity assumptions before multiple regression analyses were conducted. Separate perpetration regression models for women and men were conducted. Psychological aggression perpetration by men, $R^2 = .098$, $F(4, 137) = 3.714$, $p = .007$, and women, $R^2 = .051$, $F(4, 252) = 3.841$, $p = .005$, was predicted only by higher levels of dominance over their dating partners. Upon inspection of the correlation matrix (not shown), more violent socialization experiences ($p = .009$) and more approval of violence ($p = .001$) were related to higher levels of dominance of intimate partners by women (see Table 2).

Likewise, separate psychological aggression victimization regression models for women and men were conducted. For women, victimization experiences were predicted by the participants' older age and their own psychological perpetration, $R^2 = .734$, $F(4, 250) = 172.888$, $p = .001$ (see Table 3). Male participants' psychological aggression victimization experiences, $R^2 = .628$, $F(4, 136) = 65.946$, $p = .001$, were predicted only by their psychological aggression perpetration experiences (see Table 3).

Female participants reported higher unidirectional psychological aggression perpetration, $M = 2.02$, $SD = 4.64$, than did males, $M = 0.66$, $SD = 2.12$; $t(425) = -4.227$, $p = .001$; however, victimization experiences did not yield significant differences between men, $M = 1.07$, $SD = 3.78$, and women, $M = 1.40$, $SD = 3.42$; $t(442) = -.935$, $p = .350$.

From the total sample, a majority of male and female participants turned out to be (or had been) in nonaggressive relationships (see Table 4). The fifth

Table 3. Models for Psychological Aggression Victimization for Men and Women.

Variables in the Model	Men			Women		
	β	95% CI Lower Bound	95% CI Upper Bound	β	95% CI Lower Bound	95% CI Upper Bound
Participant's age	.058	-0.052	0.194	.068*	0.003	0.111
Violent socialization experiences	.001	-0.159	0.158	.065	-0.002	0.146
Approval of violence	.083	-0.019	0.152	-.042	-0.079	0.018
Participant's psychological aggression perpetration	.796*	1.524	1.965	.845*	0.688	0.803

Note. CI = confidence interval.
* $p < .05$.

Table 4. Mexican Participants Classified by Type of Dyadic Relationship in Terms of Psychological Aggression Behaviors.

Dyadic Concordance Types	%
Noncontrolling	57.8
Male-only	3.6
Female-only	6.2
Mutually aggressive	21

Note. Percentages do not account to 100% because of missing cases.

research hypothesis was confirmed as participants in mutually aggressive relationships accounted for 68.2% of all psychologically aggressive individuals, whereas participants in male-only psychologically aggressive relationships accounted for 11.7% of aggressive participants and 20.1% of participants reported being in a female-only psychologically aggressive relationship.

To test the final research hypothesis, separate one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to test for levels of psychological aggression perpetration, $F(3, 438) = 77.868, p = .001$, and victimization, $F(3, 438) = 60.890, p = .001$, among participants involved in different dyadic types. The post hoc Tukey tests confirmed the final research hypothesis, specifically, participants involved in mutually aggressive relationships experienced more psychological aggression perpetration and victimization than did individuals involved in unidirectional (male-only or female-only) aggressive relationships. In addition, comparisons between participants in male-only and female-only aggressive relationships did not yield significant differences (see Table 5).

Table 5. Levels of Psychological Aggression Experiences by Dyadic Concordance Type.

Dyadic Concordance Types	Perpetration M (SD)	Victimization M (SD)
Male-only	2.27 (4.08)	2.11 (3.84)
Female-only	1.32 (2.86)	1.51 (4.85)
Mutually aggressive	5.59 (6.19)	4.61 (5.38)

Discussion

The analyses in the present study reveal that men are socialized more violently in childhood than women; however, this sex difference became emphasized when such socialization processes stemmed from parents rather than from nonfamily members (children and/or adults). Similarly, men appear to hold higher support for attitudes related to violence, be they within a family context or one outside the family. It is important to stress that with regard to approval of female-to-male couple violence, approval levels were similar between the sexes. General assertions about sex differences in attitudes about violence and violent socialization processes promoted by dating prevention campaigns and, in general, public policy were supported. When it came to dominance of an intimate partner, this study found that men and women control their partners/relationships at similar rates. Altogether, these findings partly support the view that males are socialized more violently than are women and hold more approval/attitudes supportive of violence. Such violent experiences and attitudes can be understood to be linked to higher levels of dominance of intimate partners by either sex.

Regression models further clarify that it is indeed the need to exert dominance over an intimate partner that accounts for male and female psychological aggression perpetration. That is, violent socialization experiences during childhood and increasing levels of violence approval appear to indirectly contribute to higher levels of psychological aggression perpetration through dominance of an intimate partner, by either men or women (particularly, for female perpetration). Such findings may be better understood by explanations of psychological aggression (and controlling behavior) stemming from the conflict resolution deficits of men and women in less-consolidated dating relationships.

Overall, the findings here support the general belief that it is a pattern of dominance over a dating partner (rather than attitudes about violence) that better explains psychological aggression perpetration experiences for both men and women. These findings are consistent with research that has found

no direct link between psychological aggression and violent attitudes (e.g., Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2017).

IPV victimization for men and women that is predicted by their own perpetration experiences is consistent with the findings of research with dating samples reported elsewhere (Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2017; Haynie et al., 2013; Orpinas, Nahapetyan, Song, McNicholas, & Reeves, 2012). Implications for male victimization and a widespread use of psychological aggression suggest that young educated men may struggle with power loss experiences that stem from traditional socialization processes, in light of the emergence of new masculinities. These socialization patterns appear to interact with learnt violent behavior as a child, be it through direct aggression victimization from parents or indirectly witnessing interparental aggression. These learned patterns seem to predict psychological aggression perpetration and victimization within dating relationships, with possible ties to deficits in conflict resolution and/or emotional regulation skills. This aspect of emerging masculinities in collectivist societies in connection with IPV perpetration/victimization experiences warrants further attention in light of social changes and gender empowerment trends in those nations. Of interest in future research is the study of attitudes related to emerging prescriptive (injunctive) norms and psychological IPV in collectivist societies.

Female victimization was linked to violent socialization experiences by their own perpetration experiences, in addition to the participant's older age. This finding is in line with research linking female victimization to a normalized view of violence stemming from childhood maltreatment and/or witnessing interparental violence. That is, perpetration of IPV is one of the main victimization risk factors (for women and men), particularly in more empowered and more educated individuals, in a collectivist society that has been experiencing social changes in human and women's rights (Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2017; Haynie et al., 2013; Orpinas et al., 2012).

The overall findings here are congruent with those of ethnopsychological research in Mexico with university students that suggests changes in how young educated Mexican men and women perceive themselves and relate to others, despite a traditional repertoire of normative beliefs (HSCP) they still possess (Díaz-Loving et al., 2015; Díaz-Loving et al., 2018). This phenomenon is evident in rates and patterns of psychologically aggressive behavior/dominance scores these young men and women display in dating relationships. This finding has been confirmed in this study by higher rates of female psychological aggression perpetration and similar IPV victimization experiences by men and women, which mirror national (Casique, 2018; Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2016; Rojas-Solís, 2013) and international IPV prevalence trends in young adults (Desmarais et al., 2012b; Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013; Straus, 2004).

The trends in dyadic concordance types (based on psychological aggression) are also consistent with prevalence rates identified internationally (Rodríguez & Straus, 2016; Straus & Michel-Smith, 2014). The findings here regarding the level of unidirectional psychological aggression by dyadic type (male-only, female-only) do not differ from those found in a recent study in Mexico (Frías, 2017). Differences in these two studies, however, were found between unidirectional aggression (male-only or female-only) and participants in mutually aggressive relationships. This finding might be explained by the nature of the samples used in the Frías study, and the fact that her analysis was based on dyadic types taking physical violence experiences as the behavioral category of interest. One of the benefits of a dyadic conceptualization of psychological aggression in dating relationships is that it enables the inspection of these widespread behaviors (Esquivel-Santoveña et al., 2013; Mohr-Carney & Barner, 2012) within a dyadic nature rather than at an individual level. This is of particular interest for studies on IPV in young adults/dating samples as this type of behavior usually precedes and may accompany physical violence (Johnson, 2008).

The consequences of psychological IPV in young adults (Foshee, McNaughton-Reyes, Gottfredson, Ling-Yin, & Ennett, 2013; Muñoz-Rivas, Graña, O'Leary, & Gonzalez, 2007; Temple et al., 2016) are beyond the scope of this analysis. However, typological research has been shown to be useful in explaining aggressive dynamics within intimate relationships and associated outcomes (Allen, 2011). As such, future research in Mexico should further investigate IPV dynamics and repercussions within a typological/dyadic approach, such as the DCTs (Frías, 2017).

This study contributes to an understanding of psychological aggression in dating relationships by considering violent experiences, attitudes, and behaviors in light of recent ethnopsychological research on Mexican men, women, and families. Indeed, changes in normative beliefs (historic psychosociocultural premises) stemming from a collectivist society with ties to patriarchy (such as Mexican society) suggest emerging behavioral trends within dating relationships. Such attitudinal changes (e.g., probable changes in prescriptive rather than in descriptive normative beliefs) could affect behaviors such as dominance and psychological aggression among young adults in dating relationships; thus, these changes and behaviors warrant further attention within a family/dyadic approach.

The present study is not immune to limitations derived from the cross-sectional nature of the research project. The findings here may not be generalizable to more disadvantaged young Mexican men and women with different contextual, individual, and interpersonal characteristics (e.g., young adults from lower socioeconomic status [SES] backgrounds; those

who live in rural or indigenous communities; men and women from clinical samples screened for IPV, addictions, personality disorders, and deficits with respect to attachment and socialization skills). The use of screening scales to study attitudes, dominance, and socialization processes is yet another limitation in the present study; thus, more comprehensive scales to explore these variables are warranted. As such, the findings here should be considered exploratory in nature.

Further limitations of this study involve criticisms about the assessment of IPV via the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus et al., 1996). For example, an often-made criticism of findings regarding the prevalence of IPV in young adults/university student samples and in the general population using the CTS is that it tends to inflate perpetration and victimization symmetric rates (Allen, 2011). Other criticisms of IPV as measured by the CTS relate to the lack of context and consequences in which abuse occurs, such that women typically experience the abuse as more injurious and psychologically impactful than men do (Cascardi & Vivian, 1995). Further criticisms concern how this measure relates to power and control differentials in self-report measures of perpetration and victimization (Allen, 2011). Future studies assessing IPV from multiple sources within a dyadic approach will corroborate the perpetration and victimization patterns presented here.

The fact that psychological aggression overlaps with controlling behavior in intimate relationships is one of the reasons why the present study focused on this kind of IPV instead of on physical violence. Another limitation of this study and a pending area of inquiry, particularly in collectivist societies such as Mexican society, is the assessment of ubiquitous forms of IPV in dating relationships/university students (Shorey, Cornelius, & Strauss, 2015) vis-à-vis violent socialization experiences and attitudes about IPV.

Future studies should encompass dating violent dynamics and their relationship with more liberal/egalitarian normative beliefs among young adults to further clarify the role of a collectivist society in its links to changing traditional/liberal normative beliefs related to IPV perpetration/victimization experiences among men and women in dating relationships. Of particular interest is the further study of relationships with mutual/bidirectional aggression (due to their high levels of aggression in comparison to relationships with unidirectional IPV) from a dyadic perspective. The fact that most IPV intervention initiatives in Mexico and other Latin American nations are usually aimed at more traditional and consolidated relationships without considering recent social changes (Esquivel-Santoveña & da Silva, 2016) warrants bridging research and practice with regard to IPV in younger men and women in less-consolidated intimate relationships.

Furthermore, future analyses on attitudes supportive of violence, socialization processes, and dyadic IPV with young adults/university student samples in Mexico should explore any specific effects in sexual minority groups (lesbian women, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered individuals). For example, scarce research indicates that bisexuals are at greater risk of IPV perpetration, whereas IPV victimization research with transgendered individuals appears to be incipient (West, 2012).

Nevertheless, this study contributed to explorations of the link between violent socialization experiences, attitudes supportive of violence, and dominance patterns as determinants of psychological aggression by/toward young men and women in intimate relationships in a collectivist society. It also highlights the importance of studying psychological aggression within a dyadic approach. The study of unidirectional and bidirectional IPV in young adults can aid in clarifying the needs and challenges young adults face in their intimate relationships.

Authors' Note

In compliance with the recommendations of the journal, a file that includes the raw data collected in this study is available in .sav format upon request to the corresponding author.

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