

# CAREGIVER INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND DELINQUENCY IN YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

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## Abstract

The long-lasting effects of intimate partner violence on children who are exposed to this type of violence can have internalized and externalized impacts. The data used in this study was collected as secondary data from the Welfare, Children, and Families. The results of this study serve to address an area that has previously had little research: delinquency in young adolescents. In addition, the study collected data from underprivileged and underserved communities which shines its own light on the areas that can be addressed by the mental health community. The information presented in this study is the beginning of moving towards prevention of delinquency opposed to the punitive response that is currently in place.



## Introduction

### Significance of Research

- Consequences of IPV can cause; posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, unhealthy drinking habits, smoking, and risky sexual behaviors (CDC, 2019, Horne et al., 2020).
- In 2020, 101,404 total assault offenses committed by a family member or by a family member and other individual (*Bureau of Justice* 2020)
- The 2011 it was reported that 1 in 15 children is exposed to IPV (Weir, 2019)
- Adolescents exposed to family violence are more likely to engage in delinquency and have issues with depression, substance use, and impulsivity (Steketee et al., 2019).

### IPV Exposure and Outcomes of Children

- Witnessing IPV had the negative health outcomes of increasing the chances of youth developing trauma symptoms and addictive behaviors (Hutchison, 2017; Li et al., 2020).
- Previous studies often focused on delinquent behaviors and negative externalized behaviors such as physical aggression, verbal bullying, defiance, theft, and vandalism to name a few.

### Purpose of Study

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between female caregivers' experience of intimate partner violence and delinquency levels in their young adolescents. The hypothesis is that increased exposure to IPV will increase young adolescents' involvement in delinquency.

## Methods

### Research Design

- The current study is a secondary analysis of the data from the Welfare, Children, and Families: A Three-City Study.
- The original study's primary purpose was to examine, in a longitudinal study, both children and their female caregivers living in low-income neighborhoods in Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio in 1999.
- In the original study there were two major types of questioning, the adult portion, and the child portion. The child portion of this survey was focused on behavioral, cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical development
- The first survey is a 100-minute-long interview of the caregiver of the focal child.
- The second is a standardized assessment of the child and 30-minute interview conducted only if the child was 10-14 years of age.

### Sample

- Table 1 describes the demographic data of the participants of the study.
- Probability sampling was used in each place to gather a sample of which families might be eligible and selected.
- Because groups occurred unequally conditional selection probabilities were employed to gain suitable yields for analysis.
- The sample size of the original study was 2,402 families
- The current study only included 1,160 families with mothers and their children aged 10 to 14 years of age.

### Measures

- IPV: This independent variable was measured through various questions regarding violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. Variables included were:
  - IPV total mean endorsements and IPV mean frequency
- Delinquency: This dependent variable was measured through questions posed to female caregivers about their child's behaviors. Variables included were:
  - School, drug, and serious delinquency

## Results

- Table 2 illustrates the results that were found in this study
- Intimate partner violence mean endorsements were positively associated with serious delinquency in young adolescents.
- Intimate partner violence mean frequency was positively associated with serious delinquency.
- Lastly, intimate partner violence mean frequency and school delinquency were positively associated with each other.
- Graph 1 shows the increase in serious delinquency when the increase of IPV total mean endorsements
- Graph 2 shows the increase in school delinquency when the increase of IPV total mean frequency

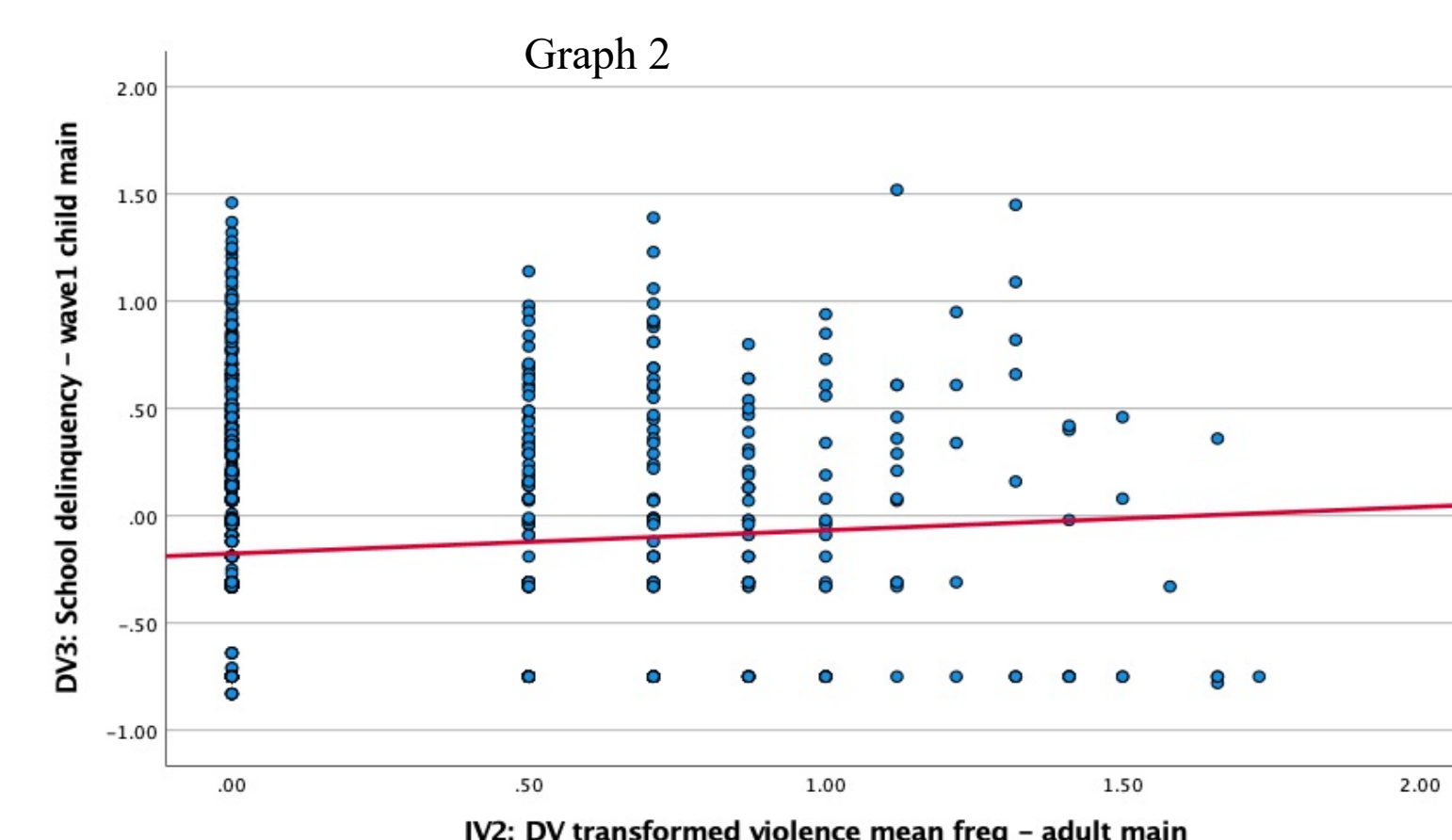
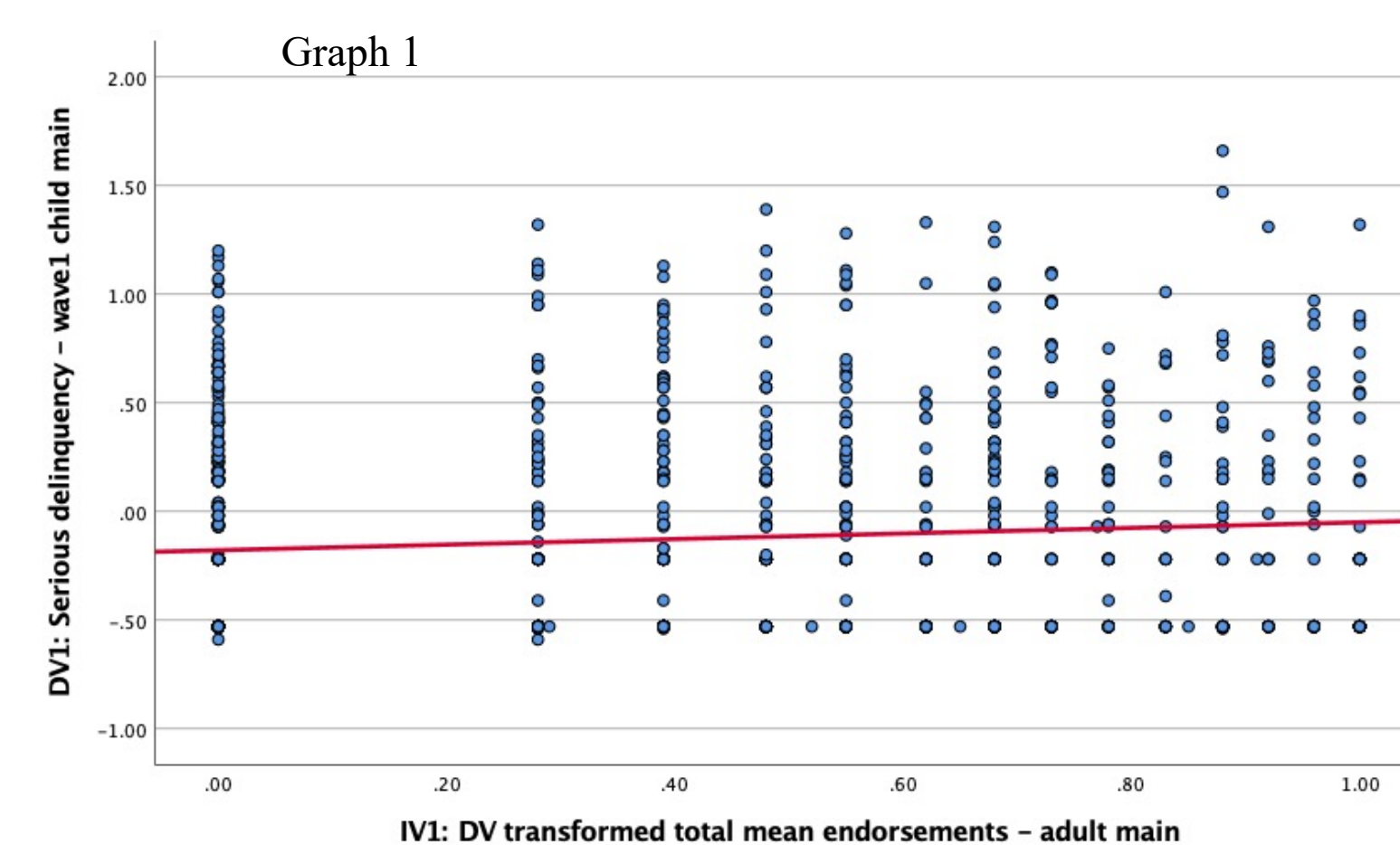


Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Characteristic	n	%
Age in years	M=38.33	SD=8.5
Mother's Race		
Non-Hispanic White	129	11.1
Non-Hispanic Black	473	40.9
Non-Hispanic American Indian	5	0.4
Other	14	1.2
Hispanic, any race	536	46.3
Child's race/ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic White	99	8.5
Non-Hispanic Black	491	42.4
Non-Hispanic American Indian	4	0.3
Other	13	1.1
Hispanic, any race	552	47.6
Natural father's race		
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	0.3
Black/African American	463	47.3
White	292	29.9
American Indian/Alaskan Native	8	0.8
Other	212	21.7
Currently married		
Married	173	17.3
Not married	825	82.7



Table 2

Female Caregiver's IPV and Their Child's Delinquency

Independent and Dependent Variables	r <sub>s</sub>	df	p
IPV total mean endorsements - Adult main and serious delinquency - wave 1 child main	.08	1129	< .01
IPV total mean endorsements - Adult main and drug delinquency - wave 1 child main	.04	1128	.19
IPV total mean endorsements - Adult main and school delinquency - wave 1 child main	.05	1129	.13
IPV mean frequency - Adult main and serious delinquency - wave 1 child main	.10	1130	< .01
IPV mean frequency - Adult main and drug delinquency - wave 1 child main	.02	1129	.58
IPV mean frequency - Adult main and school delinquency - wave 1 child main	.08	1130	< .01

Note. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## Interpretation

- Growing up around violence and having it normalized in the family system can increase the possibility for adolescents to engage in delinquency.
- IPV can have a direct effect on school behavior and attendance if their female caregiver needs to seek safety in a shelter.
- Being exposed to violence increases the chances that a younger adolescent will then perpetrate violence against others.

## Limitations and Strengths

### Limitations

- The data used in this study uses secondary data
- Cross-sectional design
- Self-Report

### Strengths

- This study focused on young adolescents ages 10 to 14
  - This is a group that has not been studied extensively
  - This study fills a gap in the literature for young adolescents
- The families from whom data was collected came from underserved backgrounds in the cities of Boston, Chicago, and San Antonio.



## Conclusion

Delinquency among younger adolescents was shown to be impacted by IPV experienced by their female caregiver proving the hypothesis proposed in this study.

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