Coercive Control and Its Relation to IPV in a National U.S. Self-Report Survey

N. Zoe Hilton & Dana L. Radatz
Coercive Control

Pattern of controlling behaviors over time
Entraps partner in an intimate relationship
Akin to hostage taking or POW tactics

Primarily nonphysical forms of abuse
Leads to feeling constrained in relationship

Associated with physical IPV
Especially intimate terrorism

Stark (2007)

Crossman & Hardesty (2018)

e.g., Graham-Kevan & Archer (2008)
Is coercive control...

A risk factor for physical IPV in both men and women?
- most studies of abused women (e.g., Crossman & Hardesty, 2018; Hardesty et al., 2015; Lehman et al., 2012; Nevala, 2017)
- related to IPV in men and women (Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2008; Conroy & Crowley, 2022)

An indicator of general aggression?
- coercive control in non-intimates (e.g., Dryburgh et al., 2022)
- relation to physical violence in non-intimates?

A predictor of subsequent physical IPV?
- possible risk of femicide (e.g., Myhill & Hohl, 2019)
- post-coercive control IPV?
Secondary analysis

Dataset from the Interpersonal Conflict and Resolution (iCOR) Study (Mumford et al., 2019)

Nationally representative sample of young adults (18-32 years) in the United States

Self-report survey of conflict and conflict management styles in intimate relationships; and with friends/acquaintances or strangers (non-intimates)

**Wave 1**  Aug 2016 - Apr 2017  
N = 2284, 37% men 63% women

**Wave 2**  Dec 2016 – Sep 2017  
N = 1629, 36% men 64% women

Coercive Control

- **Physical**
  - Push, slap, shove, punch, kick, beat up (intimate, non-intimate)
  - Purposefully physically hurt/forced to do sexual things (intimate only)

- **Verbal**
  - shouted at, angrily accused of doing something wrong, accused of disrespect

- **Coercive Control**
  - Threaten to use information to control
  - Put down, disrespect
Coercive control perpetration

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**Intimate Partner** | **Non-Intimate**

![Graph showing the percentage of Coercive control perpetration by gender (Men and Women) for Intimate Partner and Non-Intimate situations. The y-axis represents the percentage of perpetration, ranging from 0 to 70%. The x-axis shows the types of control: Coercive, Verbal, and Physical. The graph indicates higher rates of perpetration for Women in Intimate Partner situations compared to Men, and lower rates in Non-Intimate situations.]
Coercive control is correlated with physical IPV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Correlations in Total Sample</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wave 1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Intimate partner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Coercive control</td>
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<td>.462***</td>
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<td>3. Physical violence</td>
<td>.360***</td>
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Intimate Partner | Non-Intimate
...verbal abuse is a weaker correlate of IPV

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Coercive control correlated with general aggression

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![Graph showing percentage of perpetration by gender and type of violence](image-url)
... but verbal abuse only related to IPV

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Intimate Partner | Non-Intimate

- Coercive
- Verbal
- Physical

% Perpetration

Men | Women
Coercive control predicts Wave 2 IPV

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE B</th>
<th>Exp (B)</th>
<th>95% CI (B)</th>
<th>( p )</th>
<th>Cox &amp; Snell ( R^2 )</th>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.685</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.068</td>
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<td>&lt; .001</td>
<td>.072</td>
<td>.149</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.100</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>8.169</td>
<td>5.720</td>
<td>11.667</td>
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Findings

- Coercive control is a risk factor for physical IPV
- Coercive control an indicator of general physical aggression
- Coercive control is a predictor of subsequent physical IPV

Limitations

- Examined perpetration only
- Small regression model effect sizes
- Coercive control measure (disrespect, info control, threats)
Is coercive control...

A feature of general antisociality?
- not unique to intimate partner relationships
- relation to psychopathy (manipulative), instrumental aggression (controlling partner)?

A predictor of IPV recidivism, and IPV severity?
- next step – examine prediction of IPV recidivism in police reports
Thank you! Questions?

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Coercive Control in Police Reports

# Table Of Content

- Background
- Research Aim
- Current Study
  - Methods
  - Results/Conclusion
- Qand A
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Physical and Sexual Violence

Burczycka, 2019; Klein, 2009

Coercive Control
Pattern of behaviors and attitudes designed to control and dominate a partner

Bishop & Bettinson, 2018; Myhill & Hohl, 2019
Coercive Control

Power and Control Wheel

https://www.theduluthmodel.org/

- Physical and sexual violence
- Coercion and threats
- Use of male privilege
- Intimidation
- Isolation
- Emotional abuse
- Economic abuse
- Minimizing and denying responsibility
Coercive Control

Patriarchal Terrorism
Systematic pattern of abuse by men for the control of women
M. P. Johnson (1995)

Female Perpetrators
2SLGBTQIA+ Relationships
Research Gap

- Construct of Coercive Control
- Operationalization of Coercive Control
- Coercive Control and IPV Recidivism
Research Aim

- Examine indicators of coercive behaviours and attitudes, as an underlying construct of coercive control
- Test the association between coercive control and severity of physical intimate partner violence at index
- Understand the relationship between coercive control & future IPV recidivism and its severity
Methods

Participants

• 1,421 men with a police record for physical assault against a female partner in Ontario, average 5 year follow-up

• 37.27 years (SD = 11.07)

• 83% living with a partner at the time of index

• 68% charged at index
Methods

Variables - Coercive Control

- Controlling activities
- Attitudes that support or condone IPV
- Extreme minimization or denial of IPV history
- Psychological abuse
- Jealousy
- Stalking
- Suicide threats
Methods

- **Variables - Index physical violence**
  - Assault severity (CTS2)
  - Level of injury

- **Variables - IPV recidivism**
  - Any post index IPV
  - Post index severity (CTS2)
  - Post index CLCH score
Analytical Plan

- Jealousy
- Psychological Abuse
- Stalking
- Suicide Threats

Psychological Control

Controlling Activities
IPV Denial
IPV Attitudes

Controlling Attitude

Coercive Control

Physical Violence at Index

IPV Recidivism
Figure 1

Full Structural Equation Model Showing Direct Paths of Psychological Control and Controlling Attitudes on Coercive Control, and Direct Paths of Index Physical Violence and Coercive Control on IPV Recidivism

Note.  $ap = .14$.  **$p = .004$.  All other coefficients $p < .001$.

Model fit $\chi^2(66) = 371.2151$, $p < .001$, CFI = .989; TLI = .986; RMSEA = .024; SRMR = .060.
Conclusion/ future studies

Coercive control is a distinctive concept comprising a variety of behaviors and attitudes (e.g., psychological control and controlling attitude).

Coercive control is an important component for the assessment of physical assault risk in IPV and should be documented during police domestic dispute investigations.

Research with more comprehensive measures of coercive control and IPV is recommended, using multiple data sources and gender-inclusive samples.
Coercive Control in Police Reports

Any Questions?

Thank You!
Elke Ham: eham@waypointcentre.ca
Soyeon Kim: skim@waypointcentre.ca
https://celiaproject.squarespace.com/
Measuring Coercive and Controlling Behaviour from Simulated Police Incident Reports of IPV

Meghan Weissflog
Waypoint Research Institute, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, Penetanguishene, Ontario L9M 1G3
Measuring Coercive Control

• **Coercive control (CC):** A pattern of behavior used to dominate, control, and manipulate an intimate partner
  – Significant impact on victim well-being; associated with IPV risk and severity

• Multiple existing CC measures in the current literature
  – Substantial variability in some respects…
    • E.g., breadth of measure, reliability/validity testing
  – Little variation in other respects…
    • E.g., victim self-report format (~90%), Likert scale format (~95%)
Current Study

Rationale:

• Importance of reliable measurement of CC
• Existing measures not suited for use by third-party (e.g., researchers, LE officers)
• Not known whether CC is measurable at time of police response to an IPV incident

Goal:

• Develop and validate tool to assess for the presence of CC behaviour in police incident reports of IPV incidents
  – Pilot study; for use in larger study regarding evidence-based police risk appraisal for IPV (CELIA)
Phase 1: Measure Development

- Identification of existing measures for inclusion/adaptation
  - Literature review of existing measures
  - Selection criteria:
    - Breadth of CC behaviours
    - Established reliability/validity

- Development of current measure
  - Subscales → items → examples
  - First- to third-person language
  - Yes/no response format
  - Instructions

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<th>FINAL MEASURES</th>
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<td><strong>Coercive Behaviour Scale – Revised (CBS-R)</strong></td>
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<td>No. Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Economic control</td>
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<td>(2) Threatening control</td>
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<td>(3) Intimidating control</td>
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<td>(5) Isolating control</td>
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<td>(6) Use of threats</td>
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<td>(8) Victim blaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Isolation</td>
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<tr>
<td>(10) Entitlement/male privilege</td>
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<td>Resp. Format</td>
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<td>Cronbach’s α</td>
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Phase 2: Inter-Rater Reliability Testing

- **Sample 1:**
  - Simulated police reports (2 coders, 3 cases)

- **Sample 2:**
  - ODARA 101 police reports (2 coders, 20 cases)

- **Data analyses:**
  - Total- and item-level score descriptive statistics
  - Inter-rater agreement (IRA)
  - Fleiss’ kappa
    - Probability of response agreement between raters
  - Overall level of agreement and item response tendency

---

**Recommendations for interpreting level of inter-rater agreement**

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<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Almost Perfect</th>
<th>(Excellent)</th>
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<td>Good</td>
<td>Fair to Good</td>
<td>Substantial</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Questionable</td>
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Kappa values:
- Cicchetti & Sparrow, 1981
- Fleiss, 1981
- Landis & Koch (1977)

Regier et al. (2012) – DSM-5
Sample 1: CBS-R

**Mean Score**

- **TOTAL ITEM**
  - IRA: 66% 80% 67% 67% 67% 100% 100% 0%
  - Coder 1: 3.70 3.70 0.33 0.67 0.67 1.00 1.00 0.00
  - Coder 2: 4.30 3.30 0.00 1.00 0.33 1.00 1.00 1.00
  - P(1|2): Yes 0% 80% 67% 100% 100% 0%

**Level of Agree.**

- 0 = unacceptable (.00 -.20)
- 1 = questionable (.20 -.40)
- 2 = good (.40 -.60)
- 3 = very good (.60 -.80)
- 4 = excellent (.80 - 1.00)

**Resp. Tendency**

- No
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes

---

**Mean Inter-rater Agreement**

- 0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%
Sample 1: CCB

| TOTAL | ITEM | IRA | Coder 1 | Coder 2 | P(1|2): Yes |
|-------|------|-----|---------|---------|------------|
| 85%   | 6.00 | 6.30| 100%    | 100%    | 100%       |
| 93%   | 6.00 | 5.30| 100%    | 100%    | 100%       |

Mean Inter-rater Agreement

Level of Agree.

- 0 = unacceptable (.00 - .20)
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- 2 = good (.40 - .60)
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- 4 = excellent (.80 - 1.00)

Resp. Tendency

- Yes
- No
- ~Yes
- ~No
Sample 2: CBS-R

### TOTAL Econ Threat Int Emo Iso

| ITEM       | IRA | Coder 1 | Coder 2 | P(1|2): Yes |
|------------|-----|---------|---------|------------|
| TOTAL      | 83% | 2.20    | 2.60    | 0%         |
| Econ       | 65% | 0.00    | 0.15    | 91%        |
| Threat     | 60% | 0.90    | 0.75    | 81%        |
| Int        | 45% | 0.65    | 0.95    | 80%        |
| Emo        | 65% | 0.35    | 0.40    | 67%        |
| Iso        | 55% | 0.25    | 0.35    |            |

#### Mean Inter-rater Agreement

- 0 = unacceptable (.00 - .20)
- 1 = questionable (.20 - .40)
- 2 = good (.40 - .60)
- 3 = very good (.60 - .80)
- 4 = excellent (.80 - 1.00)

#### Level of Agree.

- TOTAL: 4
- Econ: 3-4
- Threat: 3
- Int: 2
- Emo: 3
- Iso: 3

#### Resp. Tendency

- TOTAL: No
- Econ: Yes
- Threat: Yes
- Int: ~No
- Emo: No
- Iso: No
Sample 2: CCB

**Mean Score**

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<th>Emo</th>
<th>Econ</th>
<th>Int</th>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Blame</th>
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<td>65%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<td>45%</td>
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<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.05</td>
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<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.10</td>
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<td>P(1</td>
<td>2): Yes</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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**Level of Agreement**

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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Phys</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Emo</th>
<th>Econ</th>
<th>Int</th>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Blame</th>
<th>Iso</th>
<th>Ent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of Agree.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resp. Tendency</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>~Yes</td>
<td>~Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CBS-R and CCB performed well as third-party measures of CC in (simulated) police reports
- CCB performed better than CBS-R initially, **BUT** difference disappeared after “Other” excluded
- Categorical ID of CC behaviour not as effective, specific behaviours are better (less subjective)

Some forms of CC are more likely to be identified in (simulated) police reports than others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical abuse*</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
<td>Sexual control</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatening control</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
<td>Economic control</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimidating control</td>
<td>Good – Excellent</td>
<td>Minimization</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Control</td>
<td>Good – Excellent</td>
<td>Victim blaming</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolating control</td>
<td>Very good – Excellent</td>
<td>Entitlement</td>
<td>Good – Excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Directions & Next Steps

• CELIA Project
  – Combined modified items from BOTH measures into checklist format
    • Code for presence/absence of specific behaviours, not category of behaviour
  – Added items to assess for CC behaviours not captured in included measures
    • E.g., animal cruelty, technological surveillance, counselling suicide
  – Currently in use for data collection!

• Continuing research to better understand how CC may present during LE contact for IPV
  – Incorporation into existing IPV tools used by LE
Thank you for listening!

Questions?
A scoping review of the lived experience, measurement, and policing of coercive control in 2SLGBTQQIA+ relationships

Project team

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Coercive Control and “Male Privilege”? 

Types of coercive control reported in 2SLGBTQQIA+ relationships

Academic (264) and grey (13) studies
Gender- and sexual-minority specific acts in the context of coercive control

- identity abuse (e.g., pejorative names, questioning identity)
- threats to “out”
- deliberate misgendering
- deadnaming
- gender belittling
- pressure to de-transition
- controlling hormone use
- being told to “act straight”
- etc.

https://www.newportinstitute.com
Policing Context

- Individuals are reluctant to report to police
  - But generally have positive experiences with police

- Dual arrest more likely in same-gender couples (US context)
- Difficulty distinguishing perpetrator and victim (vignettes)

Protocol, reports, summaries online
https://celiaproject.squarespace.com/coercive-control-2slgbtqqia
Coercive Control: Research and Practice
Implications
Defining and measuring coercive control

Violence
- Breadth vs precision
- Violence prediction

Effects
- Self-report
- Clinical tools

Documents
- Bill C-332
- Police reports
Implications for clinical practice

- Screen for coercive control
  Risk factor: IPV and general

- Responsivity: engagement, delivery
  Trauma-informed care

- Coercion in therapy setting
  Therapist training, support
Implications for policing & criminal justice

- Recognizing the behaviour
- Identifying the aggressor

- Acknowledging identities
- Using preferred language

- Documenting coercive control
- Assessing IPV risk
Thank you! Questions?

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Find publications, presentations, and more at:

https://celiaproject.squarespace.com/