

# Dyadic Concordance in Victimization within the Family: Results from a New Approach for a Nationally Representative Sample of USA Families<sup>1</sup>

Concordancia diádica en la victimización intrafamiliar:  
Resultados de una nueva aproximación en una muestra  
nacional representativa de familias estadounidenses

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## abstract

This article presents empirical results on an approach to victimization research and practice intended to provide a practical way to take into account the frequent overlap of victimization and perpetration. The approach is to begin research or interventions by identifying the *Dyadic Concordance Type* (DCT) of the cases. For example, the DCTs for cases of partner physical violence are *Female-Only* victim, *Male-only* victim, and *Both* victims. They are identified by determining if the female partner had been attacked, if the male partner had been attacked, and then cross-classifying those two variables. For parent-child violence the three DCTs are named *Parent-Only*, *Child-Only*, and *Both* victims of violence by the other. The percent in each of these DCTs covering three domains of victimization: (1) Parent-child relationships (concordance in being a victim of violence by father and mother and concordance in victimized by violence between parents). (2) Problematic behaviors of partners (drunkenness and chronic aggression of partner). (3) Partner abuse (physical assault, chronic denigration, and intransigence by a marital or cohabiting partner). An important percentage of families were found in all three DCTs. However, the most frequent type was *Both* victims. That is, when there is victimization in a family relationships, both parties in the relationship are typically victims, rather than one being the victim and the other the perpetrator. Implication for victimization theory, research and practice are suggested.

1 Other publications on this and related issues can be downloaded from <http://www.pubpages.unh.edu/~mas2>. Earlier phases of the work was partly supported by National Institute of Mental Health grant T32MH15161.

### key words

Dyad, family, abuse, violence, parent, child, crime.

Most of what we know about victimization within families is about the *individual* family members who are either victims or perpetrators. That, of course, is critically important information. However, it is also important to recognize that victimization of one family member by another is inherently a *dyadic* phenomenon, even if the victim «does nothing (for example not getting help) because that can be a very consequential behavior. The assumption of this article is that both victims and offenders can be better understood and more effectively helped if research and practice conceptualized and measured victimization at the *dyadic* level, or at the family systems level of which dyadic analysis is a part. This article is intended to facilitate doing that by presenting a conceptual and measurement approach to identifying dyadic patterns of victimization called *Dyadic Concordance Types* (DCTs). DCTs classify the cases in a study or receiving assistance into three categories: *Female-Only* victim, *Male-Only* victim, and *Both* victims.

The objectives of the article are (1) Introduce the conceptual and measurement approach of DCTs to victimization research and practice. (2) Illustrate the applicability of DCTs to victimization in both parent-child relationships and relationships between married and cohabiting partners, and to different types of within-family victimizing behaviors such as violence, drunkenness, and intransigence. (3) Present results for a nationally representative sample of USA families on the percent in each DCTs for eight seven behaviors, for example, the percent of *Female-Only* victim of physical assault, the percent of *Male-Only* victims of assault, and the percent of couples in which *Both* partners were victims of being assaulted by the other. (4) Suggest ways in which identification of the DCTs of the cases in a study or intervention can help understand the causes and effects of victimization and enhance efforts to help both victims and offenders.

## Dyadic Concordance Types

Dyadic Concordance Types (DCTs) are intended to provide a systematic and practical way take into account the evidence that, when victimization occurs, offenders may also be victims. Recent attention to the possible overlap of being a victim and an offender (Jennings, Piquero, & Reingle, 2012; Shapland, Gwen, & Angela, 2011) reflects a renewed concern with a focus that was present early in the development of victimology. DCTs are intended to facilitate that approach for intra-family victimization by identify whether the situation is one of

a sole victim or more than one such as both parent and child or both husband and wife, and if a sole victim, whether it was the mother or the father or the wife or the husband. The both victims category is especially likely to occur in the family. It also applies to other ongoing dyads, but this article is restricted to intra-family dyads, such as marital partners, and parent and child. The theory underlying DCTs is described in Straus (In Press).

Identification of DCTs is practical in both research and victim services. For example, to identify DCTs for violence in the parent-child relationship, requires knowing only whether the child was a victim of assault by the parent *and* whether the parent was victim of assault by the child. When these two dichotomous variables available, it is possible to almost instantly identify the three DCTs: *Child-Only Victim*, *Parent-Only*, and *Both* victims. Similarly, if the focus is on violence in the relationship of married and dating couples, by asking the presenting partner if they have been assaulted, *and also* if they have hit their partner, a simple cross-tabulation results in four logically possible cells. One of them identifies cases of *Female-Only* victims, another of *Male-Only* victims, a third identifies couples in which *Both* partners were victims. The fourth of the possible cells identifies couples in which *Neither* was a victim. For statistical analysis this serves as the «reference» category.

A study by Ulman (2003) of a nationally representative sample of USA families found that either the child or the parent were victims of violence by the other in 78% of the families. Cross tabulation of the child victimization by the parent victimization revealed that the child was the only victim in 48% of those families, the parent the only victim in 17% of the families, and both child and parent were victims in 35% of the families. These dyadic aspects of victimization have important implications, but they are less likely to be noticed when individual-level victimization of the child and of the parent are considered separately. The differences in the percent in each of these three DCTs also illustrates the importance of cultural norms for understanding patterns of victimization. In most societies there are norms *permitting or requiring* parents to hit children, and norms *condemning* children for hitting. Without these norms, 48% percent in the *Child-Only* victim DCT would probably be much lower, and the 17% in the *Parent-Only* type and the 35% in the *Both* DCT would be much higher.

Many other social factors can influence the percent in each DCT such as the resources available to potential victims, socially scripted power hierarchies, reciprocity in social interaction, assortative mating and social and genetic inheritance. Individual differences such as level of aggressiveness, fear, attachment anxiety, or self-efficacy, are extremely important.

**DCTs Based On Concordance In Victimizing Others.** The above examples are of DCTs to identify concordance in victimization by the other member of a dyad. In addition, DCTs are an important way to describe and analyze con-

cordance in behavior that victimizes others. An example in this article is children who were victims of being hit by the mother only, the father only, or by both.

**Intentionality.** Victimization within the family does not have to be intentional and often is not intended. When children are hit for misbehavior, anger is often part of the motivation. However, it is also often, and sometimes entirely, intended as for the benefit of the child. Even when that is the case, longitudinal research has shown harmful side effects such as a greater probability of the child being physically aggressive (Straus, Douglas, & Medeiros, 2014). Another example of victimization occurring regardless of the intent is the results in this article on problematic behavior such as drunkenness. Few get drunk to hurt a partner, but being the partner of someone chronically drunk is a victimizing experience, psychologically, socially, and sometimes economically.

## Method

### Sample

The behaviors for which intra-family DCTs presented in this article are all the behaviors for which dyadic data was available for the 6,002 adults who participated in the *Second National Family Violence Survey* (Gelles & Straus, 1988; Straus & Gelles, 1986, 1990). Dyadic data consist of having a measure of the same variable for both partners in a dyad. The data itself, and a detailed description of the study, including the questionnaire and all other key documents, can be downloaded from the *Interuniversity Consortium For Political And Social Research* website <http://dx.doi.org> and requesting study 9211 by Gelles and Straus.

Although more recent data would be advantageous, recent studies with dyadic data were not available. For example, the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey* (Black et al., 2011) could not be used because each study participant was asked only about their own victimization, whereas for dyadic analysis each would have to be asked about both their own and that of their partner. This is a standard and proven procedure. *One example is the Conflict Tactics Scales* or CTS (Straus & Douglas, 2004; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996; Straus & Mattingly, 2007).

All study procedures were carried out in compliance with the procedures on protection of human subjects specified by the Internal Review Board of the University of New Hampshire.

### Identification of DCTs

Most of the dyadic data was for partners in a married or cohabiting relationship. Therefore, most of the DCTs in this article identify *couples* in which the victim-

izing behavior or characteristic was *Male-Only*, *Female-Only*, and *Both* victimized. However, the study also included two aspects of childhood victimization experiences. Detailed information on each of the measures is available in the references cited in the previous section.

To identify DCTs requires categorical variables indicating whether the behavior has or had not occurred. However, for many behaviors such as psychological aggression there is almost no one who never did it to a partner or child. These were measured as continuous variables indicating how many times it occurred in the previous 12 months. To create DCTs for such variables, a threshold or «cut point» was necessary to transform them into dichotomous variables. (Straus & Douglas, 2004; Straus et al., 1996; Straus & Mattingly, 2007). Because victimization is greatest when the harmful behavior is chronic, a relative high score, such as the 50<sup>TH</sup> percentile was used to identify presence of the victimizing behavior. The dichotomized scores for the partners were then cross classified to identify the *Female-Only*, *Male-Only*, and *Both* victims of *chronic* psychological aggression.

## Data Analysis

Because the purpose of this article is to provide a gender-informed picture of the degree to which there is concordance and discordance in a variety of characteristics of American couples, the results presented are primarily descriptive. The only hypothesis tests was to determine if the gender of the participant who provided the data made a difference in the percent of couples in each DCT. This is an important methodological issue. It is also theoretically important because there are reasons to think that marriage is experienced differently by male and female partners. As Jessie Bernard (Bernard, 1982) put it, there can be «his» marriage and «her» marriage.» The variables for this study were not chosen to test that idea, but a few variables, such as intransigence are well suited to comparing gender differences in perceptions of what takes place in a relationship.

## Results

### Violent Socialization

**Concordance In Being A Victim Of Violence By Father And Mother.** Figure 1 shows the percent of children who were victimized by being hit by their father, their mother, or both parents. The text in the upper left indicates that 49% of American adults were victims of being hit by parents when there were in their early teens. This high rate is typical of the experience of children that age in many nations (Straus et al., 2014). The experience of

Figure 1: Concordance In Victimization Of Child From Corporal Punishment by Father, Mother, or Both Parents At Age 13

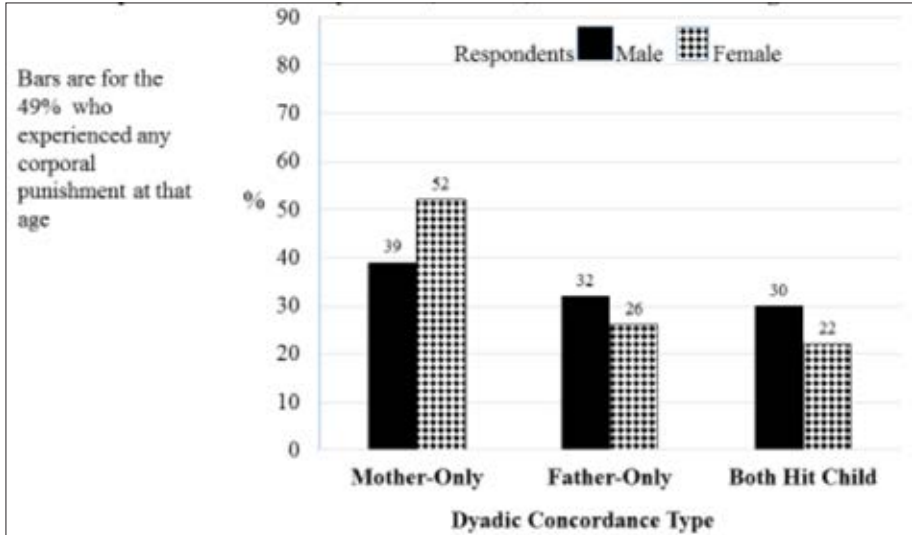
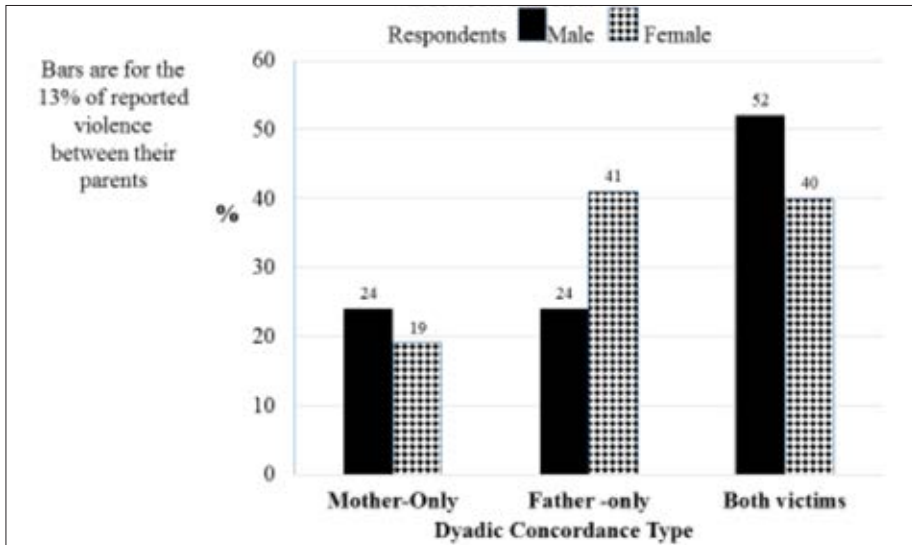


Figure 2: Concordance In Victimization From Witnessing Violence Between Parents



boys and girls was similar: For both, they were more often the victims of this type of violence by the mother than the father, except that for boys it was more often by the father and for girls at this age more often by the mother.

**Concordance In Victimized By Violence Between Parents.** Figure 2 shows that 13% percent of the participants in this national survey were victimized by growing up in a family in which there was violence between their parents. This is almost the same as the 14% was recently found by a study of the parents of university students in 15 nations (Straus & Michel-Smith, 2014). The bars in Figure 2 are for the sub-set of 13% of the participants who experienced violence between their parents. They show that, when there was violence between parents, the predominant pattern was both parents were victims: Of the sub-sample of men with violent parents, in 52% of those cases, both parents were victims. Of the women with violent parents, in 40% of those cases, both parents were victims.

Figures 1 and 2 are similar in that both describe concordance in victimization of children by parents. However, they are different in that Figure 1 identifies parent-child dyads in which the parents who were also victims.

Problematic Behavior Of Marital and Cohabiting Partners

**Alcohol Abuse.** Figure 3 provides results on concordance in drunkenness. The graph is more complicated than the previous ones because it repeats the results for two levels of chronicity. The left panel shows the DCTs when drunkenness is only occasional, and the right panel when it occurred three or more times. Usually, just the one judged to be the most valuable results would be pre-

Figure 3: Concordance In Victimization From Drunkenness Of Partner (Any and 3 or more times) in Past Year

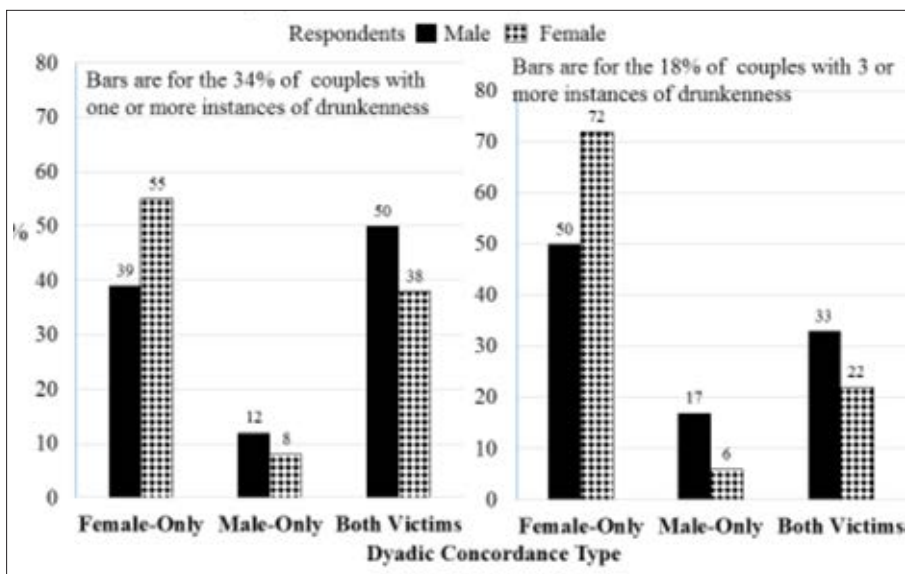
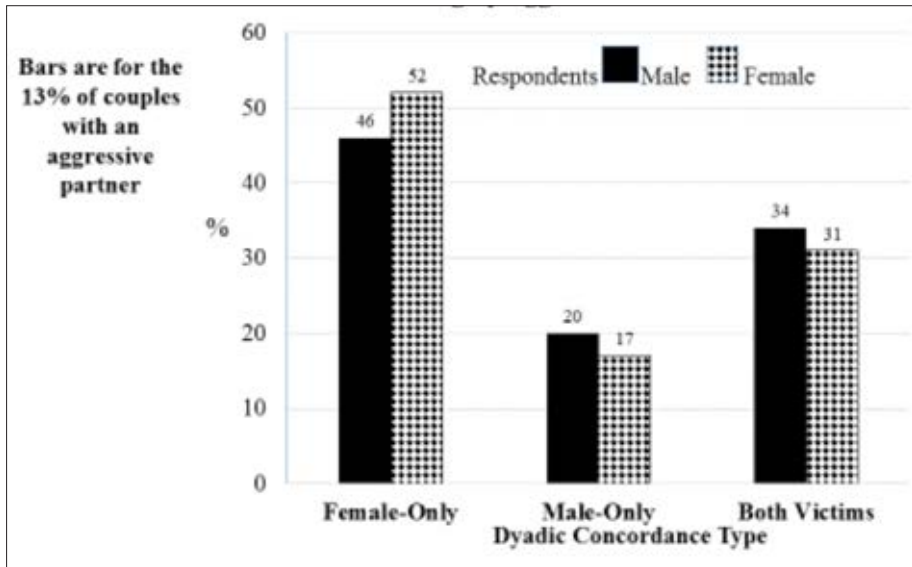


Figure 4: Concordance In Victimization From A Relationship With A Partner Who is Highly Aggressive To Others



sented. However, because one purpose of the article is to illustrate the method of analyzing DCTs, both are in Figure 3.

Although the percent in each DCT differs when the criterion is chronic victimization (3 or more instances of drunk partner) compared to any victimization (1 or more instances), the results for one or more instance and 3 more drunk occasions are parallel. Both panels show that women are much more often the sole victim of being in a relationship with a drunk partner than men. This, of course, reflects the well-established tendency of more men than women to have a drinking problem. But DCTs provide additional information. Using either the one or more instances or the three or more instances of drunkenness, Figure 3 shows a very high prevalence of both partners suffering this type of victimization. The implication for efforts to prevent or treat this type of victimization is that that this problem needs to be addressed as a couple behavior in from a fifth to half of the cases.

**Chronic Aggression.** Figure 4 presents results on concordance in victimization from being partnered with someone who is chronically aggressive *to persons other than their partner*. (Aggression against the partner is addressed in the next section). No studies of the relationships of couples with a highly aggressive partner have been located. But it seems reasonable to assume this is victimizing experience because it is likely to be stressful because of the difficult social relationships of such a person and the stigma of being his or her partner.

Given the extensive evidence of greater overt aggression by men than women, including higher crime rates, it is not surprising that the *Female-Only* victim DCT describes about half of all couples with a high aggressive partner. What is revealed when the DCTs of such relationships are identified that might have been missed otherwise, is that in about a third of relationships with a highly aggressive partner, both are victims of being coupled with a highly aggressive partner.

### Physical and Psychological Abuse by Partners

**Physical Abuse.** Figures 5 and 6 provide information on relationships in which the two most widely studied forms of partner abuse have occurred: physical assault and denigrating a partner as measured by the Physical Assault and Psychological Aggression scales of the Conflict Tactics Scales (Straus & Douglas, 2004; Straus et al., 1996)]. Both scales have demonstrated reliability and validity and have been used in hundreds of studies.

Figure 5 shows that, among couples in which an assault had occurred in the previous 12 months, about half of such cases were in the *Both* victimized DCT. Of the remaining half about a quarter were in the *Female-Only* victim type and the other quarter in the *Male-Only* victim type. The solid bars are

Figure 5: Concordance In Victimization From Assault By A Marital Or Cohabiting Partner

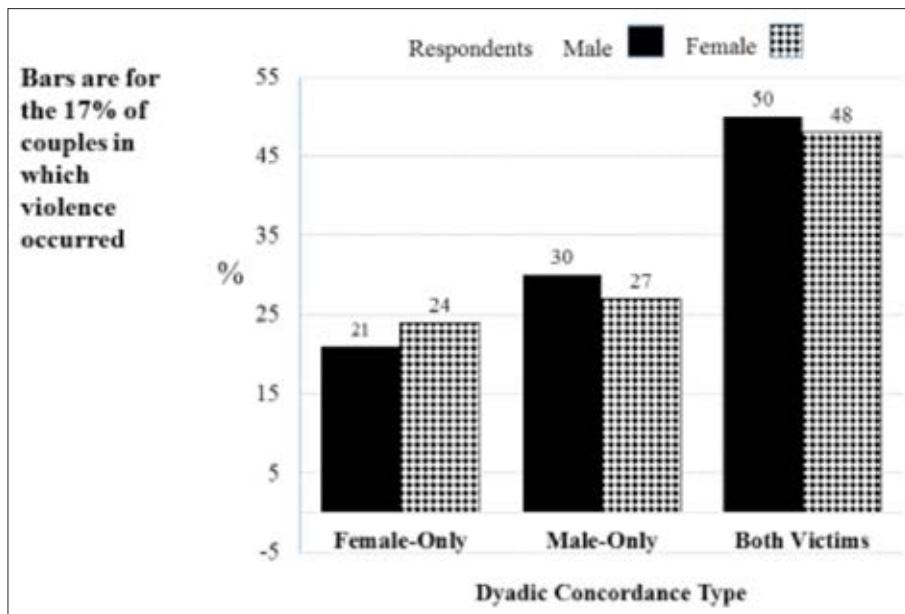
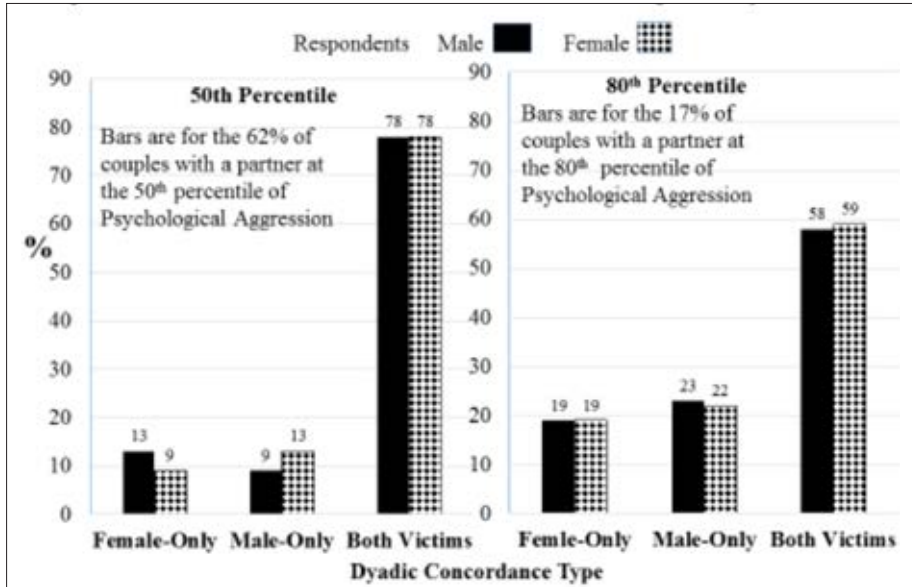


Figure 6: Concordance In Victimization From Chronic Denigration By Partner



for estimates based on data provided by male participants in the study and the lined bars are for data provided by female participants. Comparison of the bars in each pair shows that the results are very similar using data provided by men and women.

**Self-Defense.** The half of violent couples in which both partners were assaulted might have occurred because the women were acting in self-defense. Those that were acting in self-defense are a group that is urgently need of help. However, far from all of the women in the *Both* victims category were acting in self-defense. For the current sample, according to male respondents, in 49% of the cases where there was a violent incident, the female partner was the first to hit. According to female respondents themselves, they were the first hit in 51% of such cases. These results are consistent with a systematic analysis of 16 studies (Straus, 2012). Seven of the studies asked who had hit first. The percent of women who initiated violence ranged from 25% to 61%, with a median of 46%. Of the nine studies which asked participants to judge if they had acted in self-defense, the percent of women who believed they acted in self-defense ranged from 5 to 42% with a median of 20%. Thus, according to women themselves, none of the nine studies found that a majority of women believed they acted in self-defense.

**Chronic Denigration.** Figure 6 provides another opportunity to examine the results of the cut point used to identify a DCT. The left panel used a score at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in Psychological Aggression as the criterion

of chronically denigrating the partner. The right panel used a score at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile as the criterion. When the criterion was the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, both partners were victims in 78% of the relationships in this large and representative sample according to both male and female study participants. When the criterion was truly extreme chronicity as measured by having a partner who at the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile, there were more cases of *Female-Only* victims and also more cases of *Male-Only* victims. However, even at this extreme level of denigration, the results using data provided by both men and women participants show that, when there is a pattern of denigration in the relationships of a couple, the typical situation is both partners are being victimized. These results are consistent with many studies of psychological aggression which have found similar rates of male and female victims (O'leary & Woodin, 2009).

**Intransigence.** A final aspect of victimization investigated was intransigence when there was disagreement between partners. This was measured by reversing the Negotiation scale of the Conflict Tactics Scales. A high score indicates refusal to negotiate disagreements. Dyadic Concordance Types were identified for relationships in which a partner was chronically intransigent as indicated by a score at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile. The results were not graphed, but can be summarized as follows: The *Female-Only* type was 14% of such cases according to male study participants and 25% according to female participants. The *Male-Only* type was 13% of such cases according to both male and female study participants. For 73% of the couples, both were victims of an intransigent partner according to male study participants and 62% according to female participants. Thus, when there was chronic intransigence, both partners were victims of this aspect of victimization among more than two thirds of the couples. It seems reasonable to infer from this that efforts to reduce this form of victimization will usually require helping both partners deal with disagreements.

## Discussion

### Summary

Measures of victimization by another member of the family were investigated in a nationally representative sample of USA families. The study procedure used a unique method of identifying intra-family victimization: *Dyadic Concordance Types* (DCTs). DCTs identify three victimization types: *Female-Only* victimized, *Male-Only* victimized, and *Both* victimized. The percent in each of these three DCTs was reported for three domains of victimization: (1) Parent-child relationships (concordance in being a victim of violence by father and mother and concordance in victimized by violence between parents). (2) Problematic behaviors of partners (drunkenness and chronic aggression of partner). (3) Part-

ner abuse (physical assault and chronic denigration by a marital or cohabiting partner). For all victimizations, an important percentage of families were found in all three DCTs. This has important implication for victimization theory, research and practice. Some of these implications are suggested below

### Limitations

**Data 25 years old.** Some things will have changed, such as more equality between men and women in society and in marriage. However DCTs refer to cases in which the focal behavior occurred, not the entire sample. The relevance of such cases is probably as great now as 25 years ago because the adverse effect are probably very similar.

**Data Provided By One Partner.** Although the results in this article refer to the behavior of partners in a dyad, the data used was provided by just one of the partners (or in the case of corporal punishment by an adult child). The implications for research are discussed below in the section on Methodological Implications.

**No Theory Tested.** Although the results show many interesting characteristics of American families in the degree to which victimization was experienced similarly by male and female partners and by both, they do not provide an explanation of what leads a family to be in the *Male-Only*, *Female-Only*, or *Both* DCT, and do not provide information on what difference being in one DCT compared to the other two DCTs makes for them and for their children. Those crucial questions are addressed in other papers. Two of them are summarized below.

### Unique Contributions of Dyadic Concordance Types

The value of the broad applicability of DCTs depends not only on their applicability to many types of victimization, as shown by the results in this article, but also on the extent which DCTs make a difference in enhancing understanding victimization and helping victims. Two examples the way DCTs provide information that is in addition to what would otherwise be found follow.

**Partner Violence and Depression.** A study of the relation of partner violence to depression among 11,048 University student couples in 15 nations (Straus & Winstok, 2013; Winstok & Straus, 2014) found that, according to both male and female participants, and consistent with almost all other studies, half the couples were in the *Both* victims of assault DCT category. This probably would have been missed if DCTs were not identified. Turning to the link

to depression, as hypothesized, women in the sole-victim category had much higher level of depression than women who assaulted but were not victims of assault. In respect to the other hypotheses, use of DCTs revealed unexpected and important results. One of the most important is that for men as well as women, perpetration, not just victimization, was associated with an increased probability of depression.

**Sexual Coercion and Relationship Distress.** A second example of the unique information revealed by use of DCTs is the study of sexual coercion of partners in the relationships of students in 32 nations (Straus and Kemmerer, 2015). It found verbal sexual coercion in a third of relationships and physical coercion in 3%. Among the minority of couples in which there was coercion in the relationship, for *verbal* coercion, it was by both in 67% of the relationships according to men and 57% according to women. Among the 3% of couples in which there was *Physical* coercion, 55% both physically coerced according to men and 43% according to women. When just one was the victim of physical coercion, it was more often the woman according to women and more often the man according to men, i.e. each gender perceived themselves as more victimized.

Use of DCTs to investigate the relation of sexual coercion to distress in the relationship found, not surprisingly, when neither coerced there was the least distress, that *Female-Only* victims of sexual coercion was associated with the most distress by women, and that *Male-Only* victim was associated with the most distress by men. However, contrary to the hypothesis, the *Both* victims type was not associated with the highest distress for either men or women. Rather, partners in that type of relationship, reported middle levels of distress. This applied to both verbal and physical coercion, and to reports by male as well as female participants. A possible explanation is that subjective feelings of victimization are lower when a victim is also a perpetrator. Another possible explanation is assertive-mating of persons with coercive behavior tendencies.

## Research Implications

**Need For Couple-Level Analyses.** The results in this article suggest the need to measure victimization at the *couple-level* as well as the individual-level. This provides information that is in addition to information on each partner. It identifies cases in which both partners were victimized, or if only one, which one it was. This is an extremely important first step in research because it needs to be taken into account in developing the next steps, such as analyses to understand the causes and effects of victimization. The causes could be different for relationships in which only the female partner is victimized, only, the male partner, or both. The same applies to research on the effects of victimization.

**Need To Compliment APIM By Also Identifying DCTs.** The most widely used method of dyadic analysis is the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model of APIM (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). APIM is a powerful and flexible mode of analysis. Despite that concordance and discordance between partners is not encompassed in the usual APIM which focuses on the independent effects of each partner, rather than their interaction. This is probably why an examination of more than 50 papers using APIM found only one that provided information on the effect of being in a relationship which identified the couple as Female-Only, Male-Only, or Both victims (or beneficiaries) of a behavior by a partner.

**One Partner Can Provide The Data.** Dyadic analysis requires data on the same variable for both partners. The results in this article suggest that valid data on victimization can be obtained from one member of a relationship, especially if it refers to behavioral *acts*. Reporting the behavior of the partner is, of course, subject to bias, but so is reporting one's own behavior. There is no clear evidence on which is a greater problem. When the issue is concordance in *beliefs and attitudes*, one partner cannot be assumed to accurately perceive the beliefs and attitudes of the other. However, those perceptions, have important consequences as shown Rodriguez and colleagues study (2013) of each partners perception of whether there was a drinking problem.

**DCTs for Victimization and Perpetration.** The analyses in this article examined concordance in victimization. However, DCTs inherently provide data on both victimization and perpetration. Research on perpetration such as the two studies cited as examples of the unique contribution that identification of DCTs can make, uses the same method to identify each of the three DCTs, except that they are labeled differently. Thus, in research on perpetration of physical assault such as (Straus & Saito, 2014; Straus & Winstok, 2013), the *Female-Only* victim DCT is labeled as the *Male-Only perpetrator* type, and the results are discussed within the framework of perpetration rather than victimization.

#### Implications for Research and Practice

The few minutes necessary to identify DCTs at intake provides preliminary diagnostic information that is important for research and practice.

**Research.** Researchers need to identify which cases are *Male-Only*, *Female-Only*, or *Both* victims to provide a basis for determining how to develop a data analysis strategy which will add to what is known about the gender and the dyadic interaction aspects of intra-family victimization. Conceptual and methodological information on using DCTs in analyses intended to enhance understanding of the etiology and effects of DCTs are presented in Straus (In

Press). This article adds to that information by giving results on an important step in identifying DCTs: the effect of using different cut points to identify DCTs. For two forms of victimization (drunkenness and denigration by a partner) results were presented to compare the effect of using a low and high level of chronicity as the cut point to identify DCTs, i.e. on the percent in the *Male-Only*, *Female-Only* and *Both* DCT. For both drunkenness and denigration, the DCTs based on the low and high chronicity sides of each figure look very similar. That indicates a certain robustness in the procedure. However, there are also differences. The DCTs based on higher chronicity have a smaller percent in the *Both* category. It will take further research and clinical exploration to determine if it best to use a moderate or high level of chronicity as the basis for identifying the DCT of couples.

**Practice.** Programs for female victims of partner violence tend to avoid asking clients if she hit her partner. Some prohibit staff or researchers from asking about it. Helping these women requires reversing this policy. One of the reasons is research which has repeatedly found that women hitting a male partner is a strong predictor of the woman being a victim of partner violence. This includes longitudinal studies, by Feld and Straus (1989), Kuijpers, van der Knaap, and Winkel (2011), and Lorber and O’Leary (2011), and cross-sectional studies by O’Keefe (1997), Whitaker, Haileyesus, Swahn, and Saltzman (2007). Still other studies are reviewed in the meta-analysis by Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward, and Tritt (2004). It concluded that male victimization is the largest single risk factor for victimization of women. However, it is also important to keep in mind that, although men may be victims of attack by a partner as often as women, because of the average greater size and strength of men, women sustain about two out of three of the injuries. Thus, although equal attention needs to be paid to reducing assaults by women and men, services for female victims of partner violence need to continue to have priority.

## Conclusions

Identifying the DCT of each case in an intervention or research should be one of the default initial steps in research to understand the process which result in victimization and in interventions to help victims. The results presented in this article, as well as many other studies indicate that identifying the DCTs will reveal that in half or more of intra-family victimizations, both the presenting victim and also the presenting perpetrator need help. An early example, is the study of parents who were victims of repeated and severe aggression by the child (Patterson, 1982; Patterson, 1995; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992; Reid, Patterson, & Snyder, 2002; Snyder & Patterson, 1987). The presenting victims were the parents, but dyadic analysis revealed that the parents tended to

be highly coercive in dealing with the child, resulting in an escalating pattern of coercion. The help provided these parental victims therefore included not only treating the offending child, but also helping the victimized parents use less physically and psychologically coercive modes of dealing with misbehavior by the child in order to break the «escalating cycle of coercion» that led to the child's acting out and the parents victimization.

Implementing the dyadic research and treatment approach illustrated by the work of Patterson and colleagues is more likely to occur if identifying the *Dyadic Concordance Type* of each case is a default initial step.

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