Sub-Category B-i: Development of Risk Assessment Instruments

COMPENDIUM OF RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

1993-2020

Table of Contents

Category B: DEFINITION & MEASUREMENT

i.   Development of Risk Assessment Instruments

1998-WT-VX-0019:	Field Testing Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Instruments: A Planning Study for an Experimental Evaluation
Amount:	$97,661
PI:	Chris O'Sullivan
Status:	Completed

A variety of instruments are currently being used to assess a domestic abuse victim's level of risk, but rigorous evaluation of the validity and reliability of the assessment instruments have been lacking. The investigators in this project will address these issues and conduct test of such instruments. In addition, investigators will address the need to search for practical, quasi-experimental designs that will answer the question of predictive validity while protecting victims and treating offenders appropriately. This project's investigators will assess feasibility and design a study to provide empirical data on the value, benefits and consequences of using a variety of relatively new risk assessment instruments and techniques. The goal of the experiment will be to assess the impact on victims of the risk assessment process; to determine the validity of risk assessment factors on the six most widely-used instruments, to evaluate in particular one instrument, the Mosaic-20, and to determine the appropriate weighting of the risk factors for women to be re-victimized, stalked, assaulted, or killed by partners or ex-partners. The following project (2000-WT-VX-0011) built on this feasibility/planning study.

2000-WT-VX-0011:	Risk Assessment Validation Study
Amount:	$1,323,241
PI:	Jacquelyn C. Campbell
Status:	Completed

This project evaluates the effectiveness of four extant risk assessment instruments in predicting future danger of intimate partner violence which are already in use. The four instruments under study are the Mosaic-20 (DV-MOSAIC) and the Danger Assessment (DA), which are intended to assess the risk of lethal violence; and the Domestic Violence Screening Instrument (DVSI) and the Kingston-Screening Instrument for Domestic Violence (K-SID), which aim to predict re-assault. The four instruments and other assessments of risk will be randomly administered to 3,000 battered women who have sought help against a violent partner in various ways: by calling 911, filing for a protective order, going to a shelter or hospital emergency room, or enrolling in a program for stalking victims or troubled families. Six months later, participants will be queried about all forms of abuse and violations of court orders since the risk assessment. They will also be asked about protective measures and offender sanctions. Criminal records will be checked one year after the baseline interview.

Product: NCJ# 209731/209732
Intimate Partner Violence Risk Assessment Validation Study (2005) – J. Roehl, C. O'Sullivan, D. Webster, J. Campbell
To respond to the increased demand for services, agencies dealing with victims and offenders have adopted a number of mechanisms to identify high risk cases in order to direct scarce resources and intensive services to those most in need. The central purpose of this study was to assess the accuracy of several different approaches to predicting risk of future harm or lethality in domestic violence cases. The four methods assessed (DV-MOSAIC, DVSI, K-SID, and DA) were designed for different purposes and settings and therefore vary greatly in length and complexity. These methods were chosen because of their widespread usage and because little is known about how accurately they assess the likelihood of future violence. In addition to assessing these four methods, researchers also tested the predictive accuracy of the victims' own assessment of re-assault and other risk factors drawn from the literature and other assessment tools. Researchers found that: (1) 91 percent of the cases in which a follow-up interview was conducted, some sort of action was taken after the baseline interviews that could have reduced the risk of subsequent abuse, many of which were taken by the victim; (2) all four of the risk assessment tools were significantly related to subsequent severity of abuse, but not very highly related; (3) the DA and the victim's self-rated level of risk had the highest correlations with subsequent abuse, although these correlations were low; (4) the risk assessment methods correctly

classified most of the women who were indeed re-assaulted, (i.e. they showed the highest sensitivity); (5) despite protective actions, 31 percent of the women were physically abused between baseline and follow-up interviews; and (6) the risk assessment methods (including the victims' predictions) also had a high rate of predicting re-assault for women who did not experience assaults during the follow-up period.

2001-WT-BX-0503:	Development and Validation of a Coercive Control Measure for Intimate Partner Violence
Amount:	$430,924
PI:	Mary Ann Dutton
Status:	Completed

This study will develop a conceptual model of coercive control by conducting a comprehensive review of the literature followed by input from an expert panel. The study will then develop an ecologically and statistically valid measure of nonviolent coercive control using ethnographic and classical test theory methodologies. The psychometric properties of the newly-developed measure will then be assessed within each of five heterogeneous subgroups: 1) identified male IPV perpetrators ($n = 100$); (2) identified female IPV perpetrators ($n = 100$); (3) identified female IPV victims ($n = 100$); and (4) a community sample of 100 males and 100 females. A community sample of 50 males and 50 females involved in a current relationship but with no reported IPV will be used to examine content validity. A preliminary test of Johnson's typology will then be conducted using data from the validation groups.

Product: NCJ# 214438

Development and Validation of a Coercive Control Measure for Intimate Partner Violence (2006) – M.A. Dutton, L. Goodman, R. James Schmitt

Two decades of research on intimate partner violence (IPV) have failed to resolve the controversy concerning gender symmetry. Based on the position by advocates and researchers, it seems clear that the notion of nonviolent coercive control should be included in future work on typologies of IPV. However, ongoing effects to understand the relational context of IPV are hampered by two significant obstacles: (1) the field has yet to develop a clear theoretical understanding of coercive control; and (2) there exists no adequate measure of "nonviolent coercive control" for IPV. The overall goal of this project was to address the issues raised above in the development of a measure of nonviolent coercive control for use in the measurement of IPV. The study team developed: (1) a conceptual model of coercive control and (2) an ecologically and statistically valid measure of nonviolent coercive control. The psychometric properties of the newly developed coercive control measure were assessed in a total sample that included males and females recruited from community agencies involving identified intimate partner violence victims and perpetrators, agencies providing non-IPV services to demographically similar participants, community college settings, and general public community settings. Psychometric analysis of Coercion, Demand, Surveillance, and Response scales found evidence for hypothesized factors. Convergent and predictive validity of the Coercion measure was also found.

2002-IJ-CX-0029:	Risk Management of Sexually Reactive Children and Adolescents
Amount:	$534,420
PI:	Robert Prentky
Status:	Completed

The overarching goal of the proposed research is to improve the accuracy of management and dispositional decision about high risk, sexually abusive youth, thereby decreasing the incidence of victimization and re-victimization of other children. Toward this end, this study proposed to implement two strategies: (1) examine the predictive efficacy of J-SOAP, a scale developed specifically for assessing risk with juvenile sex offenders and (2) develop and test an alternative, empirically-driven archival risk assessment scale adapted specifically for use with a broad range of sexually abusive youth. These primary goals are expected to be achieved with seven concrete objectives: (1) base rate analyses, (2) testing risk models, (3) predictive accuracy, (4) cross-validation, (5) assessing risk posed by female abusers, (6) classification, and (7) testing etiologic models. The project will select from a sample of 1,500 boys and girls, ages 5-18, who have engaged in sexually abusive behavior and have been evaluated as part of the Assessment for Safe and Appropriate Placement process in Massachusetts. All of the subjects involved are or were in the care and custody of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services. The data analysis plan will address the objectives in five phases.

Product: NCJ# 214261

Risk Management of Sexually Abused Youth: A Follow-Up Study (2006) – R. Prentky
This study is a continuation of ongoing research designed to test the predictive accuracy of the Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol–II (J-SOAP-II), a risk assessment scale designed for juvenile sex offenders. The current study obtained data on a sufficiently large number of juvenile sexual re-offenders to examine the J-SOAP-II's predictive validity. Although study findings provided strong evidence of the predictive validity of the J-SOAP, the findings were specific to a child welfare sample drawn from one northeastern state (Massachusetts). The J-SOAP cannot be assumed to have comparable predictive validity in racially and ethnically diverse samples of youth drawn from the juvenile justice system. Since the J-SOAP is used mostly with youth in the juvenile justice system, its predictive accuracy must be bested on large samples of such youth. The J-SOAP has 28 items in four scales: Sexual Drive and Preoccupation, Impulsive, Antisocial Behavior, Clinical Intervention, and Community Stability.

2008-WG-BX-0002:	Police Department's Use of Lethality Assessments: An Experimental Evaluation
Amount:	$581,232
PI:	Jill Messing
Status:	Completed

This research proposes to implement and evaluate the use of a Lethality Assessment protocol and intervention with 6 police departments in Oklahoma, a State where a substantial proportion of IPV victims are Native American. The intervention consists of two components: a brief Lethality Assessment is conducted by police at the scene of an IPV incident, which is designed to determine whether the victim is at high risk for homicide and, if so, immediate coordination with local social service providers. A nonequivalent groups, quasi-experimental design is proposed to examine the effectiveness of a Lethality Assessment Intervention (LAI) at decreasing violence and increasing help-seeking behaviors for victims of IPV. This research has four aims: (1) The Evaluation Aim will examine the effectiveness of the Lethality Assessment Intervention (LAI) at decreasing the rates of repeat, lethal, and near lethal violence, and increasing the rates of help seeking behaviors among victims of IPV. (2) The Validation Aim will assess the predictive and concurrent validity of the Lethality Assessment (LA), which is a shortened version of the Danger Assessment (DA). (3) The Implementation Fidelity Aim will assess the fidelity of the implementation of the Lethality Assessment protocol with the appropriate high risk victims. (4) The Satisfaction Aim will assess victim satisfaction with the police response and the Lethality Assessment Intervention. This research will introduce nationally a combined criminal justice and social service intervention that can be implemented in most jurisdictions throughout the U.S., affecting both policy and practice responses to the problem of IPV.

Product: NCJ# 247456
Police Departments' Use of the Lethality Assessment Program: A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation (2014) – J.T. Messing, J. Campbell, J.S. Wilson, S. Brown, B. Patchell, C. Shall
The purpose of this quasi-experimental research was to examine the effectiveness of the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP). Study participants were recruited by police officers at the scene of domestic violence incidents (index event) in 7 participating police jurisdictions in Oklahoma. A non-intervention comparison group was recruited prior to the intervention start. During the comparison group phase, 440 women participated in a structured baseline telephone interview lasting approximately 45 minutes; 342 (78%) of these women would have screened in as high danger based on their scores on the Lethality Screen and were compared to those women who received the intervention (classified as the high-violence comparison group). During the intervention phase, 648 women were interviewed; 347 (53.5%) of these women were screened in as high danger and spoke with a hotline counselor (classified as the intervention group). Follow-up interviews at a median of 7 months following the baseline interview were completed with 202 participants in the intervention group (58.21%) and 212 participants in the high-violence comparison group (61.99%). Women who participated in the intervention were significantly more satisfied with the police response and were likely to report that the advocate was at least somewhat helpful. While additional research needs to be conducted, the LAP demonstrates promise as an evidence-informed collaborative police-social service intervention that increases survivors' safety and empowers them toward decisions of self-care.

2017-VF-GX-0103:	Interpersonal Conflict and Resolution: Assessing Victimization and Perpetration Sequencing and Proximal Determinants
Amount:	$452,891
PI:	Bruce Taylor
Status:	Ongoing

The purpose of this study is to inform the sequencing and proximal determinants of the commonly identified phenomenon referred to as the "victim-offender overlap" in criminology. The goal of this study is to provide the field a closer understanding of the nature of the relationship between victimization and offending, and to provide an improved research base for designing prevention programs that address the victim-offender (V-O) overlap as well as the escalation of conflicts into violence. This project will address current measurement limitations through daily measurement of violence and aggression experiences using ecological momentary assessment (EMA) data collection. Specifically, the research team will (1) determine the sequencing of various forms of interpersonal conflict across all the potential conflicts of the day, irrespective of whether the incidents ended violently; (2) assess the role of conflict management style/tendencies in mediating the escalation of conflicts and the transition from victimization to offending (and vice versa); and (3) assess the elements or variables that facilitate daily rates of conflict escalation or transition between victimization to offending (or vice versa) that are deemed important theoretical constructs in research on aggression. The team will implement EMA data collection with a sample (n = 350) of an existing, nationally representative longitudinal sample of young adults 18-32 years old who are already participating in the NIJ-funded Interpersonal Conflict and Resolution (iCOR) Study. This proven technology has rarely been used in the field of criminology to examine the sequencing of the V-O overlap. Analyses will provide novel information on the short-term reciprocal processes of aggressive interactions, shared predispositions, retaliation, and conflict. The long-term purpose of the proposed study is to inform research on the prevalence and etiology of the V-O overlap. Our project data will provide insights into the sequencing of victimization to perpetration (and vice versa) by addressing measurement limitations with these phenomena, which is typically done at intervals of several months or annually. Our study will implement twice daily measurement of violence and aggression to sort out the sequencing of these constructs.

For an index of all grants, go to ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh241/files/archives/ncjrs/223572-grants-index.pdf.