

Research Into Young People's Experiences of Exploitation and Violence in their intimate Relationships: A focus on instigators

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DO YOU MAKE YOUR GIRLFRIEND
**WEAK AT
THE KNEES**

BECAUSE
**SHE'S
SCARED**
OF YOU?

Does her heart beat faster
when you threaten her?
Do you charm the pants off her,
or does a slap work better?

This is abuse. Stop yourself.

For information and help search

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Notes on instigation

- Findings on instigators needs to be viewed alongside results on experiencing partner violence – especially the gendered nature of impact.
- In the survey far fewer young people reported instigating partner violence than stated they had experienced it.
- Fewer interview participants spoke about instigating violence against their partners.
- We therefore need to ask where are all the instigators?

Methodology



- **National Survey – Questionnaires**

1,361 young people, aged 13-17* (*15-17)

8 schools: 4 England; 2 Scotland; and 2 Wales

- **Semi structured Interviews**

91 young people

- **Disadvantaged Study-** range of projects,

82 interviews

- **Young People's Advisory Group**

Experiencing Partner Violence



- **25% of girls and 18% of boys reported physical violence – 75% of girls and 14% of boys stated a negative impact**
- **75% of girls and 16 % of boys reported physical violence – 70% of girls and 13% of boys stated a negative impact**
- **75% of girls and 50% of boys reported emotional violence - 31% of girls and 6% of boys reported a negative impact**

Instigators of physical violence: Survey findings



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- **25% of girls and 8% of boys reported using physical violence**
- **3% had used severe physical violence**
- **Most stated they had used it only once**
- **Reasons:**

Girls more likely to report using violence due to negative reasons.

Boys more likely to say they were messing around

44% of girls and 30% of boys stated they used the violence in self-defence

- **Use of violence increased with age**

Qualitative findings on physical violence instigation



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- **Female instigation; two main reasons – self-defence and play fighting (low-level only)**
- **Most girls who used PV stated they had also experienced PV in their relationships**
- **Male instigation – only a minority reported use of physical violence – Higher proportion in disadvantaged study.**
- **Physical violence mostly positioned by boys as reciprocal or self-defence; however in most accounts the violence used was disproportional and the initial act of female violence was not associated with fear – need to question the use of the concept reciprocal/self-defence in these circumstances**



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Instigators of emotional violence: Survey findings



- **59% of girls and 50% of boys reported instigating emotional violence**
- **Higher level of repeated use of violence compared to other forms**
- **Girls more likely to report using violence due to negative reasons. Boys more likely to say they were messing around.**
- **Name-calling and controlling behaviours most common**
- **Use of violence increased with age**

Qualitative findings on emotional violence instigation



- **Name calling and shouting frequently reported - need for more positive conflict resolution strategies**
- **Few reports of boys use of overt controlling behaviour except in respect to appearance – most stated their actions were caring concern – however some showed pride in their ability to control their partners.**
- **Girls reported attempting to control their partners access to other female peers**
- **However boys reported that girls' strategies were ineffective whilst girls' experiences of control were viewed as detrimental**

Instigators of sexual violence; Survey findings



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- **Lowest level of reporting for all forms of partner violence instigation**
- **12% of boys and 3% of girls reported perpetrating some form of sexual violence.**
- **Most reported cases involved boys pressuring girls into doing something sexual (11% of boys)**
- **Reasons given for use of sexual violence were similar irrespective of gender; half stated negative reasons and one-third said they had been messing around.**
- **Use of violence increased with age**



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Qualitative findings on sexual violence instigation



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- **No girls reported instigating any form of sexual violence**
- **No boys reported the use of physical force**
- **Boys did reveal sexually coercive tactics**
- **Group male interview revealed mutual admiration of coercive tactics**
- **Some boys unsure if their behaviour constituted sexual coercion/pressure**
- **Sexual reputations double standard implies some girls are more acceptable targets**



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Multivariate analysis



- **Used to understand the relative weight of key associated factors identified in the Chi-Squared analysis**
- **Six key indicators used: respondent's age; ethnicity; religion; family violence; peer violence; age of partner.**
- **Analysis undertaken separately by gender**

Results of Multivariate analysis



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- **Main predictor variables for boys in explaining instigation variance: *age* and *peer group violence*.**
- **Main predictor variables for girls in explaining instigation variance: *family violence*; *peer group violence* and *age of partner*.**
- **For girls the same two predictor variables (fv and pv) account for a significant proportion of variance in both receiving and instigating partner violence. However, for boys although both age and peer group violence predictors account for a significant proportion of both experiencing and instigating partner violence, family violence was only a predictor for boys victimisation.**



Typology of Teenage Instigation: Implications for intervention



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Frequency

- One off/Infrequent acts → → → → Frequent/Repeat acts
- One relationship → → → → → Patterned

Awareness of impact

- Unknowing instigator → Uncertain → Knowing
 - Self-defence → gendered accounts
 - Messing around → gendered accounts
 - Mutual → gendered accounts

Recognition of unacceptability

- Unacceptable → Justification → → Normalised/status

Wider Violence

- Isolated violence → → wider (peer) violence repertoire
- **Instigator** Young person → → → **Adult**