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Victimization Trajectories of Intimate Partner Violence

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Abstract

The literature has argued that the risks of intimate partner violence (IPV) and the factors explaining them differ across various types of women over the life course. However, few studies have empirically identified such clusters of women, and most prevention programs are often designed indiscriminately for all survivors. The objectives of this paper are to identify groups of women based on their lifetime trajectories of IPV victimization, to describe the types of victimization characterizing each, and to estimate the socio-demographic characteristics of both survivors and aggressors. To achieve this, we apply group-based trajectory modeling to a unique longitudinal dataset comprising a full cohort of male aggressors convicted of at least one IPV crime between 2010 and 2015 (about 7,000) in Catalonia (Spain) and the women survivors of such crimes, provided they were granted a protection order at any point in their lives (about 4,000). The data cover the entire criminal careers of aggressors and the complete victimological paths of survivors, from their earliest experiences until March 31, 2019, along with some basic socio-demographic characteristics. The results identify three distinct trajectories of lifetime IPV victimization: a first group victimized mostly at early ages, a second group more likely to have been victimized after forming stable, cohabiting unions, and a third group characterized by complex and sustained patterns of victimization over the life course. These groups differ in the types of victimization they experience and the socio-economic profiles of survivor and aggressors, posing distinct problems and demanding distinct policy responses.

Keywords: age-related risk factors; criminal records; gender-based violence; longitudinal analysis; women survivors