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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between intimate partner violence and adult attachment in a sample of 70 couples. The attachment style of each partner and the interaction of the partners’ attachment styles were examined as predictors of intimate partner violence. Additional analyses were conducted to examine violence reciprocity and to explore differences in the relationship between attachment and violence using continuous and dichotomous violence measures. Results of hierarchical regression analyses indicated the “mispairing” of an avoidant male partner with an anxious female partner was associated with both male and female violence. When controlling for partner violence, the relationship between attachment and violence was significant for males only. In addition, analyses using a dichotomized violence variable produced different results from analyses using a continuous violence measure. Clinical implications include focusing on the discrepancy between partners’ needs for intimacy and distance within the couple as a strategy for treating intimate partner violence.

Intimate partner violence represents a significant social problem in the United States. According to recent survey data, approximately 1.5 million women and 800,000 men report experiencing intimate partner violence in their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Although intimate partner violence has been examined from a range of theoretical perspectives, attachment theory has recently been identified as a way to integrate several psychosocial risk factors for violence, thus potentially providing a unifying theoretical explanation (Mahalik, Aldarondo, Gilbert-Gokhale, & Shore, 2005). In addition, attachment theory provides a useful model for understanding the co-occurrence of violence and intimacy within a relationship (Mayseless, 1991). In this framework, violence is examined from a systems perspective, identifying violence as a means to regulate closeness and distance between partners in the relationship (Pistole, 1994). Specifically, discrepancies between preferences for intimacy and changes in the “socioemotional distance” between partners may serve as catalysts for intimate partner violence (Dutton, 1988)

A growing body of research has identified attachment theory as an important framework for understanding emotional and interpersonal processes occurring throughout the lifespan (Shaver & Hazan, 1993). Attachment theory is based on the concept of an attachment behavioral system in which attachment behaviors are organized around a specific attachment figure with the goal to promote security. According to Bowlby (1973), differences in infant attachment styles stem from “internal working models” of the self and other that are formed through the

interactions of the child with the parent. These internal models can be classified along two dimensions - model of the self, characterized by the degree of emotional dependence on others for self-validation, and model of other, characterized by expectations about the availability of others.

Similarly, adults have a tendency to seek and maintain proximity to and contact with specific attachment figures in order to promote physical and psychological security (Sperling & Berman, 1994). When attachment needs are threatened, individuals become alarmed and attempt to regain the desired level of proximity with the attachment figure. As with infants, adult attachment behaviors are also regulated by internal working models of self and other. For adults, internal working models are formed through experiences in the individual's interpersonal world. Adult attachment style, then, refers to particular working models of attachment that determine an individual's responses to real or imagined separation from important attachment figure.

While many models of adult attachment have been proposed in the literature (e.g., Bartholomew, 1990; Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Hazan & Shaver, 1987), the four-category model proposed by Bartholomew & Horowitz (1991) is widely used in the study of intimate partner violence. Following directly from Bowlby's theoretical view, this model postulates two underlying dimensions: a positive or negative image of self and a positive or negative image of other. This generates a model of four quadrants, each describing an attachment style: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful. Preoccupied and fearful patterns are characterized by high attachment anxiety, or a fear of abandonment and rejection related to a negative self-model, and fearful and dismissing patterns are characterized by high attachment avoidance, or a discomfort with closeness and intimacy related to a negative other-model. Continuous measures of these styles are often used to allow for the study of dimensions of attachment within an individual, rather than assigning individuals to one attachment style (Corcoran & Mallinckrodt, 2000).

From an attachment theory perspective, intimate partner violence can be viewed as an attempt to establish or maintain a level of personal security within the relationship. When a threat to the attachment relationship is perceived, individuals become alarmed and the resulting anxiety leads to responses designed to preserve the attachment system (Bowlby, 1984). A violent episode may be precipitated by a real or imagined threat of abandonment or rejection by the attachment figure. Attachment theory also implies intimate partner violence may be used as an attempt to manage conflict created by opposing needs for closeness or distance (Pistole, 1994). For example, an individual with high levels of attachment anxiety may respond to attachment-related cues with proximity-seeking behavior, while an individual with high levels of attachment avoidance may respond with distance-seeking behavior. Closeness-distance struggles, therefore, should be most evident in couples with a discrepancy between preferred levels of closeness or distance between partners.

A growing body of literature has identified adult attachment as a risk factor of intimate partner violence. Several studies have identified a relationship between insecure attachment and intimate partner violence in male batterers, documenting higher levels of preoccupied and fearful (Dutton, Saunders, Starzomski, & Bartholomew, 1994) or preoccupied and dismissing (Babcock, Jacobson, Gottman, & Yerington, 2000) styles in violent males compared to nonviolent males. Similarly, research examining the attachment style of victims of male violence indicates the preoccupied and fearful styles are over-represented in abused women compared with nonclinical samples (Henderson, Bartholomew, & Dutton, 1997). Preoccupied attachment is also a consistent predictor for both perpetration of violence and receipt of violence in both males and females (Bookwala & Zdaniuk, 1998; Henderson, Bartholomew, Trinke, & Kwong, 2005).

While the literature on the relationship between adult attachment and intimate partner violence has largely focused on the attachment style of the male perpetrator, and to some extent the female victim, to fully understand how attachment style affects the dynamic interaction of the couple, research needs to examine the interaction between partners' attachment styles (Bartholomew, 1997). To date, however, only a handful of studies have examined the relationship between partners' attachment styles within a couple as a predictor of intimate partner violence (Bond & Bond, 2004; Kesner & McKenry, 1998; Roberts & Noller, 1998). For example, Kesner and McKenry (1998) examined the dissimilarity between male and female attachment styles as predictors of male violence in a sample of 149 community couples. A dissimilarity score was calculated for each couple by summing the squared differences between male and female scores on four attachment styles (secure, preoccupied, fearful, and dismissing). Attachment style and dissimilarity score interaction terms were also created for each attachment style. Although both male and female insecure attachment predicted male violence, results indicated the degree of dissimilarity in attachment style between partners was not a significant predictor. More recently, Bond and Bond (2004) examined

the combination of partners' attachment styles as a predictor of male and female victimization in 41 couples receiving couples counseling. Results indicated female anxious attachment and male dismissing attachment predicted violence, and a combined variable created by selecting all anxious females and all dismissing males also predicted victimization.

Although the above studies provide some evidence for the combination of partners' attachment styles as a predictor of violence, several methodological issues, including small sample sizes, non-standard assessments of violence and attachment, and non-standard statistical analyses, limit the generalizability of the findings. In contrast, Roberts and Noller (1998) examined the interactions between partners' attachment styles as predictors of violence using a large sample of 181 couples, appropriate measures, and strong methodology and statistical techniques. Results indicated that for both male and female violence, one's own anxiety over abandonment was related to violence. In addition, for female violence, partner anxiety over abandonment was also related to violence. Two-way interactions between partners' attachment scores on the two attachment dimensions anxiety over abandonment and discomfort with closeness were also examined. Findings indicated the interaction between one's own anxiety over abandonment and the partner's discomfort with closeness predicted both male and female violence. In addition, after controlling for partner violence, results indicated attachment only predicted female violence (Roberts & Noller, 1998).

Although the literature examining partners' attachment styles is sparse, research does provide some evidence that the interaction between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance is predictive of intimate partner violence. The above studies, however, have some important limitations. In all three studies, the measure of violence was transformed from a continuous measure to a dichotomized variable. Dichotomizing violence scores into violent and nonviolent categories results in grouping those who commit one violent act with those who are repeatedly violent. Although this is not uncommon, it is generally preferable not to dichotomize continuous variables (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003). In addition, although Kesner and McKenry (1998) used a combined violence score for male violence, both Bond and Bond (2004) and Roberts and Noller (1998) used only a single report to measure violence. As evidence suggests both males and females are likely to underreport violence (e.g., Stets & Strause, 1990), collecting and combining reports of self and partner violence may improve the reliability of the measure. Finally, although survey data indicate that 49% of participants who report violence indicate that both partners in the couple have been perpetrators (Stets & Straus, 1990), only Roberts and Noller examined the reciprocal relationship of violence by controlling for partner violence in their analyses.

The aim of the current study is to add to the research on the relationship between partners' attachment styles and intimate partner violence by addressing these limitations. First, we used a more reliable measure of violence by 1) collecting both self and partner violence data from both partners and using the higher of the two reports to measure male and female violence, and 2) using a continuous measures of physical violence. We hypothesized male and female violence would be predicted by a "mispairing" of attachment styles. Specifically, the highest levels of violence would be evident in couples in which one partner has high levels of attachment anxiety and the other partner has high levels of attachment avoidance or in couples in which partners have opposite (high vs low) levels of attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance. In addition, we recognize that violence may be reciprocal. Thus, we replicated the analyses controlling for partner violence. Finally, we examined whether or not the distinction between continuous and dichotomous measures of violence is important by replicating the above analyses using dichotomous scoring.

Method

Participants

Seventy heterosexual couples were recruited through advertisements in local newspapers and at a large metropolitan university campus in the northwest. In order to participate in the study, couples were required to be together for at least 6 months. Female ages ranged from 17 to 67 ($M = 27.03$, $SD = 10.52$). Female participants were primarily Caucasian (84.3%), with 4.3% Native American, 4.3% Hispanic, and 1.4% African American, and 5.8% other. Females reported earning \$0.00 to \$60,000 ($M = \$15,272.31$, $SD = \$13,874.48$). Male ages ranged from 16 to 69 ($M = 28.46$, $SD = 10.36$). Male participants were primarily Caucasian (81.4%), with 7.1% Hispanic, 2.9% African American, and 8.6% other. Males reported earning \$0.00 to \$100,000 ($M = \$23,776.62$, $SD = \$18,643.62$). Couples reported having been together for 6 months to 22.5 years ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 4.54$), with 48.6% of couples reporting their marital status as single, 37.1% married, 8.6% with one partner divorced and the other single, 4.3% with one partner married and the other single, and 1.4% separated.

Procedures

The data for this study was collected from couples attending a one-hour session. Partners were given instructions, completed informed consent, and were debriefed at the same time, but were separated into two rooms to complete their questionnaires privately. Participants completed a packet of self-administered questionnaires that included background and demographic measures and measures assessing attachment style and intimate partner violence. Couples were paid \$25.00 for participation in the one-hour session.

Measures

Adult attachment. The Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) was used to assess adult attachment. The RQ provides four short paragraphs, each describing an attachment style (secure, preoccupied, fearful, and dismissing). Participants were asked to rate on a 7-point scale the “extent to which each description corresponds to your general relationship style.” The RQ attachment ratings show convergent validity with adult attachment interview ratings (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Bartholomew & Shaver, 1998) and moderately high stability over eight months (Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994). The RQ has been used as a measure of attachment in intimate partner violence research (Bookwala, 2002; Dutton et al., 1994; Kesner & McKenry, 1998; Mahalik et al., 2005; Mauricio & Gormley, 2001).

For this study, the continuous responses on the RQ were coded into the two dimensions of adult attachment: attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. These two dimensions have repeatedly been found to underlie individual differences in attachment style (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Shaver & Hazan, 1993) and are correlated with indicators of violence (Dutton et al., 1994). Attachment anxiety was obtained by summing the scores of the two attachment patterns with high anxiety, preoccupied and fearful, and subtracting the sum of the scores of the two attachment patterns with low anxiety, secure and dismissing. Similarly, attachment avoidance was obtained by summing the scores of the two attachment patterns with high avoidance, fearful and dismissing, and subtracting the sum of the scores of the two attachment patterns with low avoidance, secure and preoccupied.

Physical violence. The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979) was used to assess the frequency of physical violence. The CTS consists of 18 behaviors that make up three subscales: reasoning, verbal aggression, and physical violence. Items were rated on a 6-point scale with the anchors “Never”, “Once”, “Two to three times”, “Often, but less than once a month”, “About once a month”, and “More than once a month”. Participants report on the frequency of their own and their partners’ behaviors over the past 12 months. Participants were instructed to respond with reference to their current relationship. The CTS has been used as a measure of violence in studies examining attachment and intimate partner violence (Babcock et al., 2000; Bookwala, 2002; Henderson et al., 1997; Kesner & McKenry, 1998; Mauricio & Gormley, 2001).

For this study, only the physical violence subscale, created by summing the responses for items 11-18, was used. The physical violence subscale has good internal consistency, $\alpha = .87$, and demonstrated convergent and discriminant validity (Straus, 1979). Because men and women are both likely to underreport violence, we use the higher of the partners’ reports on the female and male physical violence subscale as the estimate of male and female violence, respectively.

In this sample, 25% of men reported perpetrating violence, whereas 30% of women reported being the recipient of violence, and 36% of women reported perpetrating violence, whereas 24% of men reported being the recipient of violence. Correlations between the standard scoring of the CTS and the combined scoring used in this study are as follows. All correlations were significant at the $p < .01$ level. For male violence, $r = .68$. for the correlation between the male and female report, $r = .65$ for the correlation between the male and couple report, and $r = .96$ for the correlation between the female and couple report. For female violence, $r = .52$ for the correlation between the male and female report, and $r = .83$ for both the correlation between the male and couple report and the correlation between the female and couple report.

Results

Means and standard deviations for attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, and physical violence are presented in Table 1. A series of t-tests indicated there were no significant gender differences attachment or violence variables. Within-person and across-partner bivariate correlations for predictor and criterion variables used in the analyses are presented in Table 2.

Attachment as a Predictor of Physical Violence

Two hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between partners' attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and the interaction between partners' attachment styles to male and female physical violence. Because length of the relationship was significantly correlated with violence, we included this as a control variable on Step 1. Self-reported attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were entered simultaneously on Step 2. Partner-reported attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were entered simultaneously on Step 3. The four male-female interactions between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were entered simultaneously on Step 4. All attachment variable scores were centered to reduce problems of multicollinearity introduced into equations containing interaction terms (Aiken & West, 1991). Tolerance levels for predictor variables for the final step of the regression analyses ranged from .83-.94.

As shown in Table 3, for the final step of the regression analysis, the main effect for female attachment anxiety and the interaction term between male attachment avoidance and female attachment anxiety were significant predictors of male violence. No other main effects were significant on the prior steps of the regression analysis. As seen in Table 4, results were similar for female violence. On the final step of the regression analysis, the main effect for female attachment anxiety and the interaction term between male attachment avoidance and female attachment anxiety were significant predictors of female violence. No other main effects were significant on the prior steps of the analysis.

To examine the nature of the interactions, we plotted the interactions using Aiken and West's (1991) procedure. For male attachment avoidance, participants were divided into groups according to whether they scored above the mean (high) or below the mean (low) on attachment avoidance. Similarly, for female attachment anxiety, participants were divided into groups according to whether they scored above the mean (high) or below the mean (low) on attachment anxiety. The means used as cutoff scores are reported in Table 1. As seen in Figure 1, both male and female physical violence was highest in couples with a male partner with high attachment avoidance paired with a female partner with high attachment anxiety.

Partner Violence as a Covariate of Violence

We were also interested in whether or not attachment variables would still be predictive of violence after controlling for partner violence. When examining female violence, partner violence is defined as violence perpetrated by the male partner. Similarly, when examining male violence, partner violence is defined as violence perpetrated by the female partner. We re-ran the above analyses including partner violence on Step 1. For male violence, results indicated female attachment anxiety was a significant predictor ($\beta = .18, p < .05$). No other main effects or interaction effects were significant. In contrast, for female violence, no attachment variables were significant after controlling for partner violence, suggesting male violence may be a mediator in the relationship between female attachment anxiety and female violence.

To test this hypothesis, we used the process outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). Results of a series of regression analyses indicated male violence mediated the relationship between female attachment anxiety and female violence. Specifically, female attachment anxiety predicted male violence ($\beta = .37, p < .01$) and male violence predicted female violence ($\beta = .77, p < .001$). In the final regression, female attachment anxiety predicted female violence ($\beta = .24, p < .05$). Female attachment anxiety, however, was no longer a significant predictor of female violence after controlling for male violence ($\beta = -.05, ns$), indicating male violence mediates the relationship between female attachment anxiety and female violence.

Attachment as a Predictor of Violence Using Dichotomous Scoring

We were also interested in examining whether or not the results would be similar using the approach used by Roberts and Noller (1998). For the following analyses, both the male and female violence variables were dichotomized (violence = 0 vs violence ≥ 1). Two logistic regression analyses were conducted to predict male and

female violence. Length of relationship was entered as a control variable on Step 1. Self-reported attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were entered simultaneously on Step 2. Partner-reported attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance were entered simultaneously on Step 3. For male violence, the main effect for male attachment anxiety was significant ($B = .17, p < .05$). For female violence, both the main effect for female attachment anxiety ($B = .15, p < .05$) and male attachment anxiety ($B = .15, p < .05$) were significant. Following the approach used by Roberts and Noller, we also conducted two logistic regression analyses examining the four male-female interactions between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance as predictors of male and female violence. For male violence, none of the interactions were significant. For female violence, the male attachment avoidance x female attachment anxiety interaction was significant ($B = .04, p < .05$).

Finally, we re-ran the above analyses controlling for partner violence. When controlling for partner violence, we found that attachment still predicted violence only for females. Specifically, after controlling for male violence, the main effect of female attachment anxiety was still significant on the final step of the regression analysis ($B = .42, p < .05$).

Discussion

This study examined the relationship between attachment style and intimate partner violence in a sample of 70 couples. The attachment style of each partner and the interaction of the partners' attachment styles were examined as predictors of intimate partner violence. Violence reciprocity was also examined by controlling for partner violence. Based on these results, additional analyses were also conducted to examine partner violence as a mediator of the relationship between attachment and female violence. Differences in the relationship between attachment and violence using continuous and dichotomous violence measures were also explored to determine whether or not this distinction is important.

Results indicated that female attachment anxiety was related to both male and female violence. In addition, the "mispairing" of males with high attachment avoidance and females with high attachment anxiety was related to violence. The gender-specific combination of male attachment avoidance coupled with female attachment anxiety is consistent with previous literature indicating this pattern is related to couples violence (Bond & Bond, 2004). Findings of this study also support the theoretical assumption that intimate partner violence is associated with attachment related closeness-distance struggles (Pistole, 1994) and research indicating a relationship between intimate partner violence and the demand/withdrawal pattern (Berns, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1999; Holtzworth-Munroe, Smutzler, & Stuart, 1998). In couples with a male with high attachment avoidance and a female with high attachment anxiety, different needs for closeness and distance, as well as perceptions regarding changes in "socioemotional" distance (Dutton, 1988) may be related to episodes of intimate partner violence. The discrepancy between the anxious female partner's need for closeness and reassurance and the avoidant male partner's need for distance and emotional separateness may result in violent behavior.

In addition, because individual violence may actually occur in response to a partner's violence, we examined the reciprocal nature of violence. When controlling for partner violence, we found that female attachment predicted male violence. As research indicates one of the strongest predictors of violence is partner violence (Straus & Gelles, 1990), it is noteworthy that female attachment contributed to the variance in male violence even after controlling for partner violence. When controlling for male violence, however, attachment no longer predicted female violence. Additional analyses indicated that the relationship between female attachment anxiety and female violence was mediated by male violence. One interpretation of these findings is that avoidant males may respond to anxious females with violence and females may then respond with violence as a self-protective behavior. Alternatively, a female with high attachment anxiety may view her partner's violence as an act of rejection and respond to this activation of her fears of abandonment with violence toward her partner.

We also conducted a series of analyses using a dichotomized violence variable in order to examine the importance of the distinction between continuous and dichotomous scoring. Consistent with Roberts and Noller's (1998) findings, results indicated male violence was predicted by male attachment anxiety and female violence was predicted by female and male attachment anxiety and the interaction of male attachment avoidance and female attachment anxiety. In contrast to Roberts and Noller's results, however, we did not find a significant attachment interaction in the prediction of male violence. After controlling for partner violence, attachment remained a significant predictor of violence for females only. Although these results closely replicate the findings of Roberts and Noller, the results are largely inconsistent with those from the continuous scoring analyses. In fact, in some

cases, the results are the opposite pattern from what we found using the continuous violence measures. A review of the findings indicates that the distinction between continuous and dichotomous measures of violence is important. In fact, significantly different conclusions follow from the results of the continuous vs dichotomous scoring analyses and suggest this may be an important area for future research.

Although the discrepancies in the findings between results using continuous and dichotomous scoring are interesting, they likely reflect a measurement issue. By artificially dichotomizing the violence variable, individuals who commit one act of violence per year are grouped with those who commit more than 20 acts per year. Although one can argue that one act of violence is indeed violence, it is likely that there are differences between individuals who commit one act of violence and those who use violence repeatedly and often. Because dichotomizing a continuous measure artificially groups individuals together, using continuous scoring for a continuous measure is preferable (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003). Thus, we view the results from the analyses using the continuous measure as a more valid test of the research questions than those from the analyses using the dichotomous measure.

The present study adds to the literature in several ways, including using a partner-combined measure of violence, examining male violence as a mediator of the relationship between attachment and female violence, and comparing analyses using continuous and dichotomous scoring of violence. Certain limitations and methodological issues, however, deserve note. First, the participants in this study were primarily Caucasian, limiting the generalizability of the results. In addition, the low levels of violence reported in this community sample differentiate this sample from clinical samples used in other research. Information in this study was also obtained through self-report, potentially leading to biased or distorted reporting. To mitigate this problem, particularly the tendency to underreport perpetration of physical violence, we used a combined report of both partner's reports of violence. Further, although the CTS is a widely used measure of violence, it has been criticized for minimizing the gendered nature of domestic violence and not measuring the severity of violence, injuries resulting from violence, or the use of violence as a self-protective behavior. In addition, although we focused on violence perpetration in this study, results can also be viewed from a framework of victimization, as male violence in this study is also a measure of female receipt of violence and female violence is also a measure of male receipt of violence. Finally, although we constructed attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance dimensions from the RQ for this study, the RQ does not measure these dimensions directly. Thus, although we have discussed attachment avoidance and anxiety as predictors of violence, future research should examine these relationships using newer multi-item measures designed to measure the anxiety and avoidance dimensions.

An additional interpretational consideration is related to the correlational nature of this study. It should be noted that attachment only accounts for some of the variation in violence, indicating other factors contribute to violence perpetration. Further, although we discuss a "mispairing" of attachment styles as a risk factor for intimate partner violence, the present study does not indicate that this "mispairing" causes violence in these relationships. It is also possible that relationship violence impacts the development of attachment anxiety in women and attachment avoidance in men. Theoretically, however, attachment begins in childhood, thus preceding romantic relationships. Further, it is likely that the relationship between attachment and violence is bi-directional, or may be represented as a feedback loop, with the closeness-distancing pattern leading to violence. While the avoidant male's need for separation may reinforce the anxious female's need for reassurance about abandonment, the anxious female's need for closeness likely reinforces the avoidant male's need for separation. These discrepancies between needs for closeness and distance may serve as catalysts for intimate partner violence, with violence being used to regulate the "socioemotional distance" within the couple. A longitudinal design would add to the current literature by addressing the causal direction between attachment and intimate partner violence, as well as the mechanisms that operate to perpetuate this relationship.

Despite these limitations, results of this study add to the literature by identifying a relationship between intimate partner violence and the interaction between partners' attachment styles. Further, these results have important implications for the treatment of intimate partner violence and support the treatment violence in the context of couples therapy. This study indicates the "mispairing" of a male with high attachment avoidance and a female with high attachment anxiety is a risk factor for intimate partner violence. Therefore, when treating distressed couples, assessment of these variables may help identify couples who may be engaging in violence or who may be at risk violence in the future. Further, couples with a "mispairing" of attachment needs may engage in reciprocally violent behavior as a way to re-establish comfortable levels of closeness or distance with each other. Thus, addressing

discrepant needs for emotional and physical proximity and identifying how attachment insecurities may lead to misperceptions of neutral behavior are important components of treatments.

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Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Predictor and Criterion Variables by Gender

| Variable | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Males | | | | |
| Attachment Anxiety | -1.22 | 4.35 | -9.0 | 7.0 |
| Attachment Avoidance | -0.68 | 4.27 | -9.0 | 9.0 |
| Physical Violence | 1.35 | 3.13 | 0.0 | 20.0 |
| Females | | | | |
| Attachment Anxiety | -0.71 | 4.26 | -9.0 | 10.0 |
| Attachment Avoidance | -0.25 | 4.47 | -10.0 | 10.0 |
| Physical Violence | 1.97 | 3.60 | 0.0 | 20.0 |

Note. Negative scores on the attachment anxiety and avoidance scales indicate low levels of anxiety and avoidance and positive scores indicate high levels of anxiety and avoidance. The mean physical violence scores for males and females are in between the anchors that correspond to one to three acts of physical violence in the past year.

Table 2

Within-Person and Across-Partner Bivariate Correlations for Predictor and Criterion Variables by Gender

| Variable | Male | | | Female | | |
|-----------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|-----------|----------|
| | Anxiety | Avoidance | Violence | Anxiety | Avoidance | Violence |
| Male | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | — | | | | | |
| Avoidance | .14 | — | | | | |
| Violence | .08 | -.02 | — | | | |
| Female | | | | | | |
| Anxiety | .11 | -.09 | .36** | — | | |
| Avoidance | .02 | -.01 | .18 | .17 | — | |
| Violence | .17 | .13 | .54** | .23 | .08 | — |

** $p < .01$.

Table 3
Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Male Physical Violence

| Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β | R^2 |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------------|------------------|-------|
| Step 1 | | | | .03 |
| Relationship Length | .08 | .06 | .17 | |
| Step 2 | | | | .07 |
| Male Attachment Anxiety | .12 | .06 | .24 ⁺ | |
| Male Attachment Avoidance | .03 | .06 | .06 | |
| Step 3 | | | | .16** |
| Female Attachment Anxiety | .21 | .06 | .41*** | |
| Female Attachment Avoidance | -.03 | .06 | -.06 | |
| Step 4 | | | | .07 |
| Relationship Length | .12 | .06 | .26* | |
| Male Attachment Anxiety | .08 | .06 | .17 | |
| Male Attachment Avoidance | .05 | .06 | .11 | |
| Female Attachment Anxiety | .18 | .06 | .35** | |
| Female Attachment Avoidance | -.02 | .06 | -.04 | |
| Male Anxiety x Female Avoidance | .00 | .02 | .02 | |
| Male Avoidance x Female Anxiety | .03 | .01 | .28* | |
| Male Anxiety x Female Anxiety | .00 | .02 | -.03 | |
| Male Avoidance x Female Avoidance | .00 | .01 | -.05 | |

Note. Results for all predictor variables are presented in the final step; $R^2 = .33$ for the full model.

⁺ $p < .06$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 4
Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Female Physical Violence

| Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β | R^2 |
|----------|----------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Step 1 | | | | .07* |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------|-----|-------|------|
| Relationship Length | .21 | .10 | .27* | |
| Step 2 | | | | .09* |
| Female Attachment Anxiety | .27 | .10 | .31* | |
| Female Attachment Avoidance | -.02 | .10 | -.03 | |
| Step 3 | | | | .04 |
| Male Attachment Anxiety | .13 | .10 | .15 | |
| Male Attachment Avoidance | .10 | .10 | .12 | |
| Step 4 | | | | .10 |
| Relationship Length | .29 | .09 | .36** | |
| Female Attachment Anxiety | .22 | .11 | .25* | |
| Female Attachment Avoidance | -.02 | .10 | -.03 | |
| Male Attachment Anxiety | .11 | .10 | .13 | |
| Male Attachment Avoidance | .12 | .10 | .14 | |
| Male Anxiety x Female Avoidance | .01 | .02 | .04 | |
| Male Avoidance x Female Anxiety | .06 | .02 | .31** | |
| Male Anxiety x Female Anxiety | -.03 | .03 | -.14 | |
| Male Avoidance x Female Avoidance | -.01 | .02 | -.05 | |

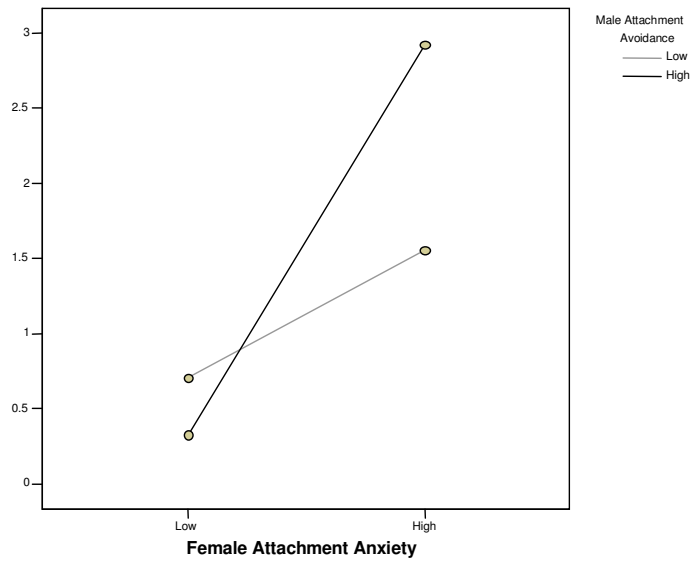
Note. Results for all predictor variables are presented in the final step; $R^2 = .30$ for the full model.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Figure 1

The interaction between male attachment avoidance and female attachment anxiety

Male Violence



Female Violence

