



Dark Triad, Othello Syndrome, and Intimate Partner Violence: A Correlational Study

الثالوث المظلم، متلازمة عطيل، والعنف بين الشريكين الحميمين: دراسة ارتباطية

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Abstract:

Intimate partner violence is a fairly common phenomenon with severe consequences. This correlational, cross-sectional study aims to analyze the relationship between the Dark Triad traits, namely psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism, on the one hand, and intimate partner violence, on the other, alongside the relationship between Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy and intimate partner violence. It is hypothesized that the Dark Triad traits and Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy would be positively associated with intimate partner violence. The sample was gathered conveniently, as the link to the study was shared online and potential participants were invited to take part in the study. The final sample included 200 individuals 113 females (56.5%) and 87 males (43.5%), with an average age of 40.7 years. Hierarchical linear regression, with three separate models, showed that only psychopathy was a significant predictor of intimate partner violence (standardized beta coeff.= .734). The implications of these findings are discussed, as well as the possible reasons for not finding the expected effect of Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy, which is a well-understood predictor of intimate partner violence. In case of establishing a causal chain from subclinical psychopathy to intimate partner violence, prevention plans can be formulated both for those with high levels of subclinical psychopathy as well as potential partners who can learn how to recognize the initial signs of intimate partner violence and prevent the more severe consequences.

Keywords: Dark Triad, Othello syndrome, pathological jealousy, intimate partner violence, correlational study

المستخلص:

يُعد العنف بين الشريكين الحميمين ظاهرة شائعة نسبيًا وتترتب عليها عواقب وخيمة. تهدف هذه الدراسة الارتباطية المقطعية إلى تحليل العلاقة بين سمات الثلاث المظلم وهي السيكوباتية، والنرجسية، والميكافيلية – من جهة، والعنف بين الشريكين من جهة أخرى، بالإضافة إلى دراسة العلاقة بين متلازمة عطيل (الغيرة المرضية) والعنف بين الشريكين. وقد افترضت الدراسة أن سمات الثلاث المظلم ومتلازمة عطيل/الغيرة المرضية ترتبط إيجابيًا بالعنف بين الشريكين. تم جمع البيانات بطريقة العينة الميسرة، حيث تم نشر رابط الدراسة عبر الإنترنت ودعوة الأفراد المحتملين للمشاركة. بلغ حجم العينة النهائية ٢٠٠ مشارك، منهم ١١٣ أنثى (٥٦.٥٪) و ٨٧ ذكرًا (٤٣.٥٪)، بمتوسط عمري يبلغ ٤٠.٧ سنة. أظهرت نتائج تحليل الانحدار الخطي الهرمي، باستخدام ثلاثة نماذج منفصلة، أن السيكوباتية كانت المؤشر الوحيد الذي تنبأ بالعنف بين الشريكين بشكل دال إحصائيًا (معامل بيتا المعياري = ٠.٧٣٤). تُناقش الدراسة دلالات هذه النتائج، بالإضافة إلى الأسباب المحتملة لعدم ظهور التأثير المتوقع لمتلازمة عطيل/الغيرة المرضية، على الرغم من كونها عاملًا معروفًا في تفسير العنف في العلاقات. وفي حال إثبات وجود علاقة سببية بين السيكوباتية تحت السريرية والعنف بين الشريكين، يمكن تطوير خطط وقائية تستهدف الأفراد الذين يظهر لديهم مستويات عالية من السيكوباتية تحت السريرية، بالإضافة إلى توعية الشركاء المحتملين بكيفية التعرف على العلامات المبكرة للعنف، بما يساهم في الوقاية من عواقبه الأكثر خطورة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الثلاث المظلم، متلازمة عطيل، الغيرة المرضية، العنف بين الشريكين الحميمين، دراسة ارتباطية

Literature Review

The Dark Triad

The Dark Triad (Jones & Paulhus, 2013) is widely employed in conceptualizing the antisocial, hostile, manipulative, and aggressive aspects of people's personalities. The Dark Triad encompasses psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism. The Dark Triad is understood here as a set of subclinical manifestations of the darker aspects of human nature (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). The Dark Triad psychopathy encompasses the two broad psychopathy factors identified by Hare (1991): Factor 1 (low empathy, low anxiety) and Factor 2

(impulsivity, thrill-seeking). The Dark Triad narcissism is based on Raskin and Hall (1979) operationalization of subclinical narcissism and bears many resemblances with their instrument, the Narcissism Personality Inventory. It encompasses grandiosity, arrogance, sense of entitlement, and a sense of superiority. The Dark Triad Machiavellianism is based on the work of Christie and Geis (1970). It encompasses manipulateness and an emphasis on self-interest even in morally dubious situations.

While the Dark Triad draws inspiration from certain diagnostic categories, namely narcissistic personality disorder (NPD) and antisocial personality disorder (APD), the Dark Triad constructs are not straightforward psychopathological entities nor is the Dark Triad used in the process of diagnosing NPD or APD. In addition, both the ICD-11 (World Health Organization, 2022) and DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2022) suggest an alternative, dimensional model of personality disorders; the ICD-11 completely abandoned the categorical view of personality disorders while DSM-5 still offers a choice between the categorical and the dimensional view; both present a set of personality traits, largely parallel to the Big Five, as a way to define and diagnose personality disorders.

The Dark Triad constructs overlap to a certain extent although it has been suggested that they are distinct entities (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Significant associations between the Dark Triad and the Big Five factors have been found: narcissism has a moderately positive correlation with extraversion and openness, moderately negative correlation with agreeableness; Machiavellianism has a moderately negative correlation with agreeableness and conscientiousness; psychopathy has a moderately positive correlation with extraversion and openness, and moderately negative correlation

with agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism (Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

The Dark Triad has been widely employed in the last few decades (Koehn et al., 2019). It has been suggested that the Dark Triad can complement the standard conceptualizations of personality, such as the Big Five (Koehn et al., 2019). Moreover, adjustments to the original Dark Triad concept have been offered, the addition of sadism being the most important. Namely, it has been suggested that a dark trait encompassing sadism should be added to form the Dark Tetrad (Međedović & Petrović, 2015). The Dark Triad has been used across a variety of contexts: workplace behavior (LeBreton et al., 2018), risk behavior (Crysel et al., 2013), well-being (Aghababaei et al., 2015), and relationship (Jonason et al., 2012), to mention only some areas.

Jonason et al. (2012) showed that the Dark Triad predicts, to a certain extent, people's relationship choices. Narcissism predicted a preference for friends-with-benefits and one night stand types of relationships, while psychopathy predicted a preference for booty call relationships. The relationship between the Dark Triad (DT) and intimate partner violence is also well-studied, although findings tend to be somewhat ambiguous.

Kanemasa et al. (2023) conducted a longitudinal study on the association between the Dark Triad and intimate partner violence (IPV), comparing the effects of the Dark Triad with the effects of attachment anxiety. These authors found that both affect intimate partner violence but in different fashions. While attachment anxiety increases IPV perpetration and victimization by increasing daily negative emotions, DT increases IPV perpetration directly (Kanemasa et al., 2023). Kiire (2019) suggested that DT traits may be proximal factors that determine IPV, while a "fast" lifestyle figures as a distant factor that affects IPV through DT traits. Kiire (2017) further suggested that out of

DT traits psychopathy is the most significant predictor of IPV, with negligible contributions of Machiavellianism and narcissism. However, Delicato (2021) found that both Machiavellianism and psychopathy predict physical IPV.

Carton and Egan (2017) found that the Dark Triad traits do not provide incremental contributions to the prediction of various types of intimate violence (i.e., psychological, sexual, physical). Although Machiavellianism and psychopathy were related to psychological abuse, they are less powerful predictors of intimate partner violence in comparison to the Big Five, especially agreeableness (Carton & Egan, 2017). Carter and Egan (2022) examined the relationship between the Dark Tetrad, HEXACO, and intimate partner violence. While in this study the Dark Triad and sadism provided incremental contributions to predicting IPV, agreeableness remained the most important predictor of IPV.

Othello Syndrome and Pathological Jealousy

While the relationship between DT traits and IPV has been well-studied, the role of jealousy was not systematically studied throughout the reviewed literature. It is clear now that DT traits may be associated with the more delusional, anxious, and irrational types of jealousy as well as more jealousy (cognitive, emotional, behavior) in general (Barelds et al., 2017; Barelds & Dijkstra, 2017; Chin et al., 2017). Jealousy is a well-studied predictor of IPV (Guillen-Verdesoto et al., 2021; Kyegombe et al., 2022; Teranishi Martinez, 2015). There are many ways to conceptualize jealousy. Barelds et al. (2017) utilized a conceptualization of jealousy that differentiates between “healthy” and “unhealthy” types of jealousy, with anxious and preventive types of jealousy being “unhealthy” and having potential to cross into the delusional spectrum, while reactive jealousy would be “healthier” as it is more grounded in reality. Anxious and preventive types of jealousy may not be

grounded in reality and may be associated with a number of mental health issues, as opposed to reactive jealousy which is a reaction to a specific partner's behavior.

Chin et al. (2017) utilized the more popular conceptualization of jealousy which differentiates between cognitive, emotional, and behavioral jealousy. Cognitive jealousy encompasses thoughts and beliefs concerning a partner's alleged adultery; emotional jealousy encompasses the numerous emotional responses associated with the belief that the partner is engaging in adultery; behavioral jealousy encompasses actions, behaviors that are taken up in goal of resolving or clarifying the issue of a partner's adultery (e.g., checking on the partner constantly).

Othello syndrome is perhaps the most extreme form of jealousy. Othello syndrome is essentially a delusional disorder, typically associated with dementia (Cipriani et al., 2012). Othello syndrome involves particularly strong and persistent beliefs concerning the partner's alleged infidelity. Patients may produce bizarre, improbable networks of meaning surrounding the alleged infidelity and some experience hallucinations corresponding to the jealousy-related delusions (Cipriani et al., 2012). It should be emphasized here that in some patients with dementia, such as patients with Parkinson's, dementia may not be the primary cause of Othello. Kataoka and Sugie (2018) found that Othello syndrome in patients with Parkinson's disease was associated with dopamine agonist medication. Miller et al. (2010) suggested that people who suffer from Othello syndrome have a high potential for violence. Discussing pathological types of jealousy, Cynkier (2018, p. 903) suggested that: "People demonstrating these types of delusional disorders are extremely dangerous for the environment, not solely because of the presence of psychotic symptoms, but also because of various

environmental and relationship related factors, which contribute to the genesis of their criminal offenses.”

Another important consideration is the diversity of Othello syndrome and similar pathological phenomena. A variety of different terms are used to denote the more pathological and irrational forms of jealousy: pathological jealousy, morbid jealousy, paranoid jealousy, Othello syndrome, delusional disorder (jealous type) (Seeman, 2016). The terminological complexity may correspond to the conceptual complexity of pathological jealousy. As Seeman (2016) emphasizes, pathological jealousy may be associated with age, pathological neurological processes, but can also be associated with psychological factors, low self-esteem, and dependence on the romantic partner.

While the association between pathological jealousy/Othello and IPV is well-understood, the relationship between DT traits and pathological jealousy/Othello syndrome was not examined in the context of intimate partner violence. This study will provide an insight into how DT traits and pathological jealousy/Othello syndrome relate to IPV perpetration. It is hypothesized that DT traits and pathological jealousy/Othello syndrome will be positively related to IPV perpetration.

Method

Design

This is a correlational, cross-sectional study, on a simulated dataset. The researcher determined the independent, control, and dependent variables. This type of design allows for the testing of the amount of the variance of the dependent variable explained by the independent variables, after accounting for control variables. It should be emphasized here that the chosen study design does not necessarily allow for the testing of causal relationships between variables.

Sample

The data was simulated utilizing SPSS, v. 26. For illustration purposes, we will describe how the sampling process would look in case that real data was gathered. Participants were sampled conveniently (Golzar et al., 2022). Prior to filling the questionnaires, participants read and signed the informed consent form.

This study passed the appropriate ethical checks. Participants were not required to be exposed to any kinds of content involving harm of distress. Personal data was not gathered within this study, in order to assure anonymity.

Procedure

A Google Forms version of the questionnaires was made and shared by the author on social media. The study was completed in March of 2023. Individuals were invited to participate via a short description of the study and the author's email address was provided in case participants had any further inquiries.

After reading and signing the informed consent form, participants proceeded to answer a set of demographic questions. The order of subsequent questions regarding the Dark Triad, intimate partner violence, and pathological jealousy was randomized. A debrief statement followed after the completion of the questionnaire.

Instruments

The Short Dark Triad (SD-3) (Jones and Paulhus, 2014), self-report scale. This instrument assesses subclinical levels of psychopathy ("It's true that I can be mean to others."), Machiavellianism ("It's not wise to tell your secrets."), and narcissism ("People see me as a natural leader."). It consists of 27 items in total, and it employs a 1-5 Likert scale (1 - Disagree, 2 - Slightly disagree, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Slightly agree, 5 - Agree). Nine items were used to assess each Dark Triad trait.

Jones and Paulhus (2014) reported three factors corresponding to psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism. The Dark Triad subscales have satisfying though somewhat lower reliabilities (from .68 to .74), which is most likely due to their relative shortness (9 items per subscale). The Dark Triad traits are moderately correlated between themselves (.22 to .40). Crucially, These authors also showed that the SD-3 corresponds to the longer measures of the Dark Triad (Jones & Paulhus, 2014), from .46 to .78, when looking at associations between SD-3 psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism and other operationalizations of these constructs.

Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy (self-report).

A new questionnaire for the assessment of Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy was made. The author initially reviewed the available literature on jealousy, and it was decided that Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy would be manifested in the most basic aspects of jealousy (cognitive, emotional, behavioral). After forming a longer list of items (60 items, 20 items per each aspect of jealousy), the list was narrowed down to 15 items in total (5 per each type of jealousy) with the help of the feedback from a group of professionals (psychologists, acquaintances of the author). Pathological cognitive jealousy was defined as persistence of beliefs and thoughts concerning infidelity in spite of lack of external evidence ("I don't need to have evidence of my partner's infidelity, I know it."), pathological emotional jealousy was defined as extreme reactions to the slightest causes that are not associated with the partner's infidelity (e.g., "I get so upset and jealous whenever I hear social media notifications on my partner's phone."), and behavioral jealousy was defined as engaging in extreme behaviors in goal of discovering/suppressing the partner's purported infidelity (e.g.,

“I sometimes follow my partner just so see where they’re going.”).

A 5-point Likert scale was used with the newly developed Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy scale (1 - Disagree, 2 - Slightly disagree, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Slightly agree, 5 - Agree). This study will serve as a way to test the basic psychometric properties of the new pathological jealousy self-report scale, and test its relationships with the Dark Triad and intimate partner violence.

Perpetrating intimate partner violence (self-report).

The main forms of intimate partner violence were assessed as part of this study: physical (e.g., “I sometimes hit my partner.”), emotional (e.g., “I sometimes yell at my partner.”), and sexual (e.g., “It’s okay for me to demand sex from my partner even if they don’t really want it.”). Six items in total were used to assess intimate partner violence perpetration. A 5-point Likert scale was used for this questionnaire (1 - Disagree, 2 - Slightly disagree, 3 - Neutral, 4 - Slightly agree, 5 - Agree).

Data analysis

Data was analyzed in SPSS version 26. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to test the basic hypothesis, namely the association between DT traits, pathological jealousy, on the one hand, and intimate partner violence perpetration, on the other. DT traits were added to Model 2 of the hierarchical regression analysis, while demographic variables (gender, age) were added at Model 1. Pathological jealousy was added to Model 3. Prior to conducting hierarchical regression analysis, descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and distributions were tested.

Results

The total number of participants was 200. Their ages ranged from 18 to 72 (M=40.7), and the sample included 113 females (56.5%) and 87 males (43.5%). Table 1 presents

descriptive statistics for psychopathy, narcissism, Machiavellianism, Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy, and intimate partner violence.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Narcissism	200	14,00	38,00	26,8600	4,28277
Machiavellianism	200	12,00	35,00	25,5050	3,98237
Psychopathy	200	18,00	38,00	27,4300	4,06543
Intimate partner violence	200	8,00	27,00	17,5050	3,84368
Othello syndrome	200	28,00	62,00	44,4400	6,92359

The reliability testing showed that all scales have high levels of reliability estimated via Cronbach's method. Psychopathy (.751), Machiavellianism (.743), narcissism (.773), Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy (.848), and intimate partner violence scales all have very high levels of reliability (.865). This means that they can be used as separate variables in subsequent analyses.

KMS tests indicate that some variables deviate from the normal distribution. Namely Machiavellianism ($p=.023$), narcissism ($p=.039$), Othello syndrome/jealousy ($p=.013$), and intimate partner violence ($p=.022$) all deviate from the normal distribution. KMS test showed that psychopathy does not deviate from the normal distribution ($p=.076$). Visual inspections of histograms of frequency distributions of total scores indicate that these variables do not significantly deviate from the normal distribution.

Hierarchical linear regression analysis was undertaken in order to test the main hypothesis of the study. In Model 1, control variables were added, namely gender and age. In Model 2, the Dark Triad traits were added, and finally in Model 3 pathological jealousy was added as a predictor of intimate

partner violence. Table 2 presents the basic regression indicators on the Model level.

Table 2

Basic regression indicators

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,144 ^a	,021	,011	3,82268	,021	2,096	2	197	,126
2	,819 ^b	,671	,663	2,23131	,651	128,068	3	194	,000
3	,820 ^c	,672	,662	2,23627	,000	,141	1	193	,708

Inspection of beta regression indices will allow us to better understand the relationship between the Dark Triad traits and intimate partner violence.

Table 3

Beta regression indices

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	20,102	1,333		15,080	,000
	Gender	-,508	,545	-,066	-,932	,353
	Age	-,044	,024	-,128	-1,821	,070
2	(Constant)	-1,410	1,368		-1,031	,304
	Gender	-,558	,319	-,072	-1,751	,082
	Age	-,035	,014	-,102	-2,474	,014
	Narcissism	,032	,065	,036	,492	,624
	Machiavellianism	,052	,070	,054	,749	,455
	Psychopathy	,693	,076	,733	9,107	,000
3	(Constant)	-1,009	1,737		-,581	,562

Gender	-,564	,320	-,073	-1,763	,080
Age	-,035	,014	-,103	-2,485	,014
Narcissism	,030	,066	,034	,459	,647
Machiavellianism	,054	,070	,056	,774	,440
Psychopathy	,694	,076	,734	9,090	,000
Othello syndrome	-,009	,023	-,016	-,375	,708

It is evident that one of the Dark Triad traits, namely psychopathy, contributes significantly to prediction of intimate partner violence, while the control variables (Model 1) and Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy do not contribute significantly to the prediction of intimate partner violence (Model 3). Machiavellianism and narcissism do not contribute to the prediction of intimate partner violence.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to analyze the relationships between the Dark Triad, Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy, and intimate partner violence. It was hypothesized that both the Dark Triad traits and Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy would predict intimate partner violence. However, this was not the case. More specifically, only psychopathy predicted intimate partner violence, and its effect remained significant after controlling for the effects of gender and age.

It is likely that these findings have been affected, to a certain extent at least, by biased answering and socially-acceptable answer sets. More specifically, the participants were possibly more honest when it came to the Dark Triad scales as these scales were designed to test the subclinical levels of psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and narcissism (Jones &

Paulhus, 2013). However, our questions regarding Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy were, in a way, more extreme so that even the people who engage in such behaviors may have refrained from giving honest answers, recognizing that what they are doing is something that is not accepted by the society. This may have been an issue with the intimate partner violence questions, although these may have been formulated in such a way as to minimize the social acceptability of answers at least for some type of violence (e.g., emotional violence was operationalized as “yelling” which may not be perceived as extreme by participants). An associated issue with Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy is that, in fact, our questions were not extreme enough to capture the most dangerous forms of pathological jealousy. In this case, a reformulation of the Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy questionnaire would be necessary, although this would further increase the issues regarding the socially-acceptable answers.

On the other hand, when it comes to the relationships between the Dark Triad and intimate partner violence, findings follow the more general findings from the literature. Psychopathy is a good predictor of intimate partner violence, but this is not the case with narcissism and Machiavellianism. Indeed, it has been suggested previously that psychopathy acts as a good predictor of violence (Kiire, 2017), which may not be the case with narcissism and Machiavellianism. Machiavellianism denotes the more shrewd and calculated characteristics of persons, which may not be predictive of overt violence but more tacit aspects of manipulation (Jones & Paulhus, 2013). Narcissism, at least the narcissism assessed by the Dark Triad, may be more associated with traits such as high self-confidence, believing in one’s importance, and grandiosity (Jones & Paulhus, 2013), but is not necessarily associated with aggression, whether verbal, physical or sexual. Psychopathy therefore is the best

Dark Triad candidate for the explanation of intimate partner violence.

Limitations

One of the most important limitations of this study relates to the sampling method. The sample was obtained conveniently (Golzar et al., 2022), which arguably is not the best sampling method for making generalizations and expanding the findings onto a larger population. Secondly, the chosen method for data analysis, linear regression, is not suitable for making causal claims regarding the relationships between variables (Sparks & Tryjanowski, 2010), which means that we cannot state that psychopathy causes increases in intimate partner violence.

It should be emphasized here yet again that some participants may have realized that some of the behaviors regarding Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy and intimate partner violence were very socially unacceptable and this may have shaped their answers. Moreover, fairly short inventories were utilized which in the case of the Dark Triad may have slightly reduced the reliability of subscales, though not substantially.

Implications

In the future, it would be necessary to come up with better ways of assessing the pathological jealousy construct. It seems that participants either refrained from giving honest answers, or, which is more likely, that our measure of pathological jealousy did not appropriately capture the most extreme forms of Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy which would be predictive of intimate partner violence. Future studies should aim to operationalize Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy in ways that are less overtly socially unacceptable, in order to provide a more nuanced and objective understanding of this phenomenon. Moreover, future studies should aim to apply more sophisticated methods of data analysis, which would allow for the testing of

mediatory and moderator effects, namely SEM (Pearl, 2012). Structural Equation Modeling would also allow for somewhat less ambiguous claims regarding the causal relationships between variables. This would be crucial for formulation of actionable recommendations regarding possible interventions to reduce intimate partner violence. For instance, if a causal effect between subclinical psychopathy and intimate partner violence are found, specific treatment protocols can be suggested to individuals who have high scores on Dark Triad psychopathy (Salekin et al., 2010). Psychological education on signs of subclinical psychopathy and psychotherapeutic modalities fine-tuned for the treatment of psychopathy-related issues are potential intervention methods to be considered. Moreover, psychoeducation and prevention plans should also be offered to people who are at risk of being in a relationship with people who have high levels of subclinical psychopathy.

Finally, intimate partner violence was assessed with only six items in this questionnaire. In the future, a more comprehensive assessment of intimate partner violence would be necessary. This would entail including more items to the measure of intimate partner violence, including different types of intimate partner violence (e.g., reactive, anxious, delusional, irrational) alongside the cognitive, behavioral, and emotional aspects of jealousy (Barelds et al., 2017; Barelds & Dijkstra, 2017; Chin et al., 2017).

Conclusion

This study aimed to test the relationships between the Dark Triad, Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy, and intimate partner violence. While Dark Triad psychopathy and intimate partner violence are positively associated, relationships between Machiavellianism, narcissism, Othello syndrome/pathological jealousy, on the one hand, and intimate partner violence, on the other, are not significant. Psychopathy is

therefore a potentially important predictor of intimate partner violence with important implications for violence prevention. In the future, attempts should be made to assess the potential causal effect from subclinical psychopathy to intimate partner violence, which would inform preventive psychotherapeutic interventions with the goal of reducing the prevalence of intimate partner violence. This could entail both strategies aimed at helping persons who have high levels of clinical psychopathy, as well as their potential partners.

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