1 in 18 Americans experience physical intimate partner violence (IPV), rape, or stalking each year (Black et al., 2011).

Desire for control is among the most-cited risk factors for IPV (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000).

Risk for abuse differs by victim’s contextual situation:
- Need to understand a person’s macro contexts (Browning, 2002).
Current measures fail to take into account the impact of abusive actions within different macro contexts (Johnson, 2006)

Goal: make a first step towards addressing gaps in the literature, like how a person's macro contextual situation facilitates a perpetrator’s control over that person (Whitaker & Abell, 2014)
Method

- Used 5 controllability domains to facilitate concept coverage and feedback
- Initially generated 45-60 items under each domain; after testing, retained 46 total items
  - Social: sources of emotional or social support (9 items)
  - Financial: sources of monetary support to meet personal needs (8 items)
  - Cultural: beliefs about which party should hold power in intimate relationships (9 items)
  - Physical: access to material resources for action and self-preservation (9 items)
  - Institutional: relationships with health and safety systems (11 items)
- 241 completed surveys from male and female students from upper level classes at a public university, public community college, and community events

(Whitaker & Abell, 2014)
Results

• Item content analysis of the strongest factors resulted in labeling three factors: power, dependence, and resources—29 items were retained.
• Conducted confirmatory factor analysis on the reduced item pool.
• Final model had 29 items and improved reliability compared to the 5-domain model.
• Based on good model fit and moderate correlations among factors, there is initial support for a three-factor structure.

(Whitaker & Abell, 2014)
Implications for Practice

- Practitioners could assess people who are thinking about a relationship, in one, or leaving one
- Low scores could be used as a lead-in to conversations on client needs for resources, independence, or power
- The CIRS could be used to identify macro contextual trends across clients and practitioners could address system change needs

(Whitaker & Abell, 2014)
References


Prepared by H Goldstein (2014)