Perceived risk and safety-related behaviors after leaving a violent relationship.

Rosaura Gonzalez-Mendez* and Juana D. Santana-Hernandez

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ABSTRACT

Given that victim’s risk perception could improve risk assessment in cases of intimate partner violence research is paying attention to it. However, it is not clear whether perceived risk relates to safety-related behaviors. This study is aimed to analyze how perceived risk by women who have left a violent partner relates to their safety-related behaviors and post-separation violence. Participants were 249 women (from protection services and the community) who had concluded a violent relationship. A structural equation model describes the relationships between three groups of factors: (1) women’s risk perception; (2) three types of conditions that increase the opportunity for victim/abuser contact: (a) women’s actions that make them easier to track, (b) women’s reasons for not protecting themselves, and (c) batterers’ strategies to gain access to their former intimate partners; and (3) post-separation violence. Results indicate that psychological violence is positively related to perceived risk and helplessness. Moreover, while women’s risk perception predicts less contact and self-deception, male strategies predict greater contact and routines. In turn, contact predicts intimacy, whose absence fully accounts for 93.3% of the prediction of no re-abuse, six months later. The results’ implications for intervention are discussed.

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Percepción de las conductas relacionadas con el riesgo y la seguridad tras terminar con una relación violenta

RESUMEN

Dado que la percepción de riesgo de las víctimas podría mejorar la valoración de riesgo en casos de violencia de género, la investigación le está presentado atención. No obstante, no está clara la relación entre riesgo percibido y conductas que afectan a la seguridad. Este estudio se propuso analizar dicha relación en mujeres que habían roto una relación violenta. Participaron 249 mujeres (servicios sociales y comunidad). Un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales describe las relaciones entre tres grupos de factores: (1) percepción de riesgo; (2) tres tipos de condiciones que incrementan la oportunidad de contacto víctima/agresor: (a) acciones que facilitan la localización de las mujeres, (b) razones de las mujeres para no protegerse, y (c) estrategias de los maltratadores para establecer contacto con sus ex parejas; y (3) violencia tras la separación. Los resultados indican que la violencia psicológica se relaciona positivamente con el riesgo percibido y la indefensión. Mientras la percepción de riesgo predice menos contacto y autoengaño, las estrategias de los agresores predicen mayor contacto y rutinas. A su vez, el contacto predice la intimidad, cuya ausencia da cuenta del 93.3% de los casos sin reabuso (seis meses después). Se discuten las implicaciones de los resultados para la intervención.

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Given that victim’s risk perception could improve risk assessment in cases of intimate partner violence research is paying attention to it. However, it is not clear whether perceived risk relates to safety-related behaviors. This study is aimed to analyze how perceived risk by women who have left a violent partner relates to their safety-related behaviors and post-separation violence. Participants were 249 women (from protection services and the community) who had concluded a violent relationship. A structural equation model describes the relationships between three groups of factors: (1) women’s risk perception; (2) three types of conditions that increase the opportunity for victim/abuser contact: (a) women’s actions that make them easier to track, (b) women’s reasons for not protecting themselves, and (c) batterers’ strategies to gain access to their former intimate partners; and (3) post-separation violence. Results indicate that psychological violence is positively related to perceived risk and helplessness. Moreover, while women’s risk perception predicts less contact and self-deception, male strategies predict greater contact and routines. In turn, contact predicts intimacy, whose absence fully accounts for 93.3% of the prediction of no re-abuse, six months later. The results’ implications for intervention are discussed.

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Researchers interested in intimate partner violence (IPV) have
focused on predicting reabuse and identifying the most severe cases
of violence (Campbell, Alhusen, Draughon, Kub, & Walton-Moss,
2011; Cattaneo & Goodman, 2005; Garcia, Soria, & Hurwitz, 2007;
Hilton & Harris, 2009). To this end, several waves of risk assessment
tools have been developed (see for a review Bowen, 2011; Nicholls,
Pritchard, Reeves, & Hilterman, 2013). Most are based on structured
professional judgments. This is the case of the Spousal Assault Risk
Assessment (SARA, Kropp, Hart, Webster, & Eaves, 1995), the
Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA, Hilton et al., 2004),
the Severe Intimate Violence Partner Risk Prediction Scale (SIVIPAS,
Echeburúa, Fernández-Montalbo, Corral, & López-Góhi, 2009), etc.
Others, such as the Danger Assessment (DA, Campbell, 1995;
Campbell, Webster, & Glass, 2009), rely on victims’ responses.

Recently, researchers have also begun to consider victims’ risk
perception as a tool that may improve risk assessment (Bell, Cattaneo,
Goodman, & Dutton, 2008; Cattaneo, Bell, Goodman, & Dutton, 2007;
Connor-Smith, Henning, Moore, & Holdford, 2011). According to
the evidence accumulated, the combination of risk assessments by
female IPV victims and by different risk assessment tools leads to
more accurate predictions (Bowen, 2011; Eke, Hilton, Harris, Rice,
& Houghton, 2011). In this sense, it has been suggested that women
might attend to factors that are different of those assessed by risk
assessment tools. For example, female risk assessments seem
strongly related to past relationship violence and weakly related to
the partner’s criminal history (Connor-Smith et al., 2011). Some
forms of IPV also seem more related than others with feelings of
insecurity (Ditcher & Gelles, 2012). Moreover, researchers have
examined factors that may influence victims’ perceptions and their
accuracy (Cattaneo et al., 2007). Thus, while stalking seems to lead
women to make accurate estimates of reabuse, female substance
abuse erroneously reduces risk estimation.

Perception of risk is usually taken into account in many areas
because it may change the probability of an event occurring and the
severity of its consequences (Breakwell, 2007). However, there are
few studies on how perceived risk for battered women may affect
their help seeking and safety-related behaviors (Heckert & Gondolf,
2004). Zoelner et al. (2000), for example, pointed out that the
perception of threat predicts whether women would follow through
with or withdraw from a protection order process.

The present study looks at the relationships between women’s
perceived risk, their safety-related behaviors, and post-separation
violence. Based on previous interviews with professionals working in
protection services and IPV victims (Gonzalez-Mendez & Santana-
Hernandez, 2012), it was analyzed how women may involuntarily
increase the opportunities for victim/batterer contact after separation.
For example, women may become involved in routine activities that
make them easier to track, keep in touch with their former intimate
partners, or not protect themselves for different reasons. In addition,
batterers may use different strategies to make such contacts occur. The
question is whether women’s perception of risk prevents these
situations and whether it contributes to their safety.

Women’s activities that make them easier to track

The routine activities perspective has demonstrated its usefulness
in accounting for different types of victimization. Evidence indicates
that guardianship has a negative correlation with victimization and
offending, while target attractiveness, deviant lifestyles, and
exposure to potential offenders will have a positive correlation
(Spano & Frellich, 2009). It also seems clear that routine activities
involve risk for women who have left their abusers, especially for
those who live in the same community or relate within the same
social network (Mele, 2009). However, the association between
routine activities after leaving a violent relationship and women’s
risk perception has not been explored.

Moreover, there are other conditions which increase the
opportunities for victim/batterer contact. For example, having
children in common with their abusers (Hardesty & Ganong, 2006)
or economic hardship may force women to maintain contact with
them (Scott, London, & Myers, 2002). Also reconciliation attempts
are rather frequent after separation, and the risk of reabuse tends to
increase when they fail (Aldridge & Browne, 2003).

Women’s reasons for not protecting themselves

Women may not take measures for protecting themselves, even
after reporting abuse. Professionals working in protection services
give different explanations for this, ranging from lack of awareness
of the seriousness of the problem to feelings of helplessness. For
example, they mentioned that some women believe that divorce will
end their problems, making subsequent protection unnecessary.
Likewise, women may also distrust protection measures, and not
consider them truly helpful in preventing their abusers from trying
to do harm to them. In short, more research is needed to generate
strategies to enhance women’s ability to protect themselves.

Batterers’ strategies to gain access to women

Several studies have examined batterers’ strategies aimed at
ensuring control over women at different times in relationships
(Hardesty & Ganong, 2006; Keeling & Fisher, 2012; Lila, Gracia,
& Murgui, 2013). For example, Hardesty & Ganong (2006) indicated
that controlling men tend to become more involved with their children
after separation as a way to continue exerting control over former partners.
Along with the use of children, previous interviews outlined other
strategies used to approach women, to get victims not to declare against
them at the trial, to restart the relationship, etc. For example, batterers
show repentance, threaten to commit suicide, use friends or family
members, etc. However, to what degree do these strategies allow men
to succeed in maintaining contacts with and tracking women? To what
extent do they contribute to increasing the risk of reabuse?

The aim of this study was to develop a structural equation model
describing the relationships between three groups of factors: (1)
women’s risk perception; (2) three types of conditions that
increase the opportunity for victim/abuser contact: (a) women’s actions
that make them easier to track, (b) women’s reasons for not protecting
themselves, and (c) batterers’ strategies to gain access to their former
partners; and (3) post-separation violence. A measure of reabuse six
months later was included. The proposed model is based on the
following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: The greater the frequency of post-separation
violence, the greater the women’s risk perception.

Hypothesis 2: The greater the women’s risk perception, the less
likely they are to act in a way that makes them easier to track or
to agree with the reasons offered for not protecting themselves.

Hypothesis 3: The greater the frequency of batterers’ strategies, the
more likely women are to act in a way that makes them easier to track
and to agree with the reasons offered for not protecting themselves.

Hypothesis 4: The more likely women are to act in a way that
makes them easier to track and to agree with the reasons offered
for not protecting themselves, the higher the risk of reabuse six
months later.

Method

Participants and procedure

Participants were 249 women who had concluded a violent
relationship. Their ages ranged from 18 to 67 (M = 36.9, SD = 10.7),
while their former partners were aged between 19 and 86 (M = 40.9,
SD = 11.8). The age difference between partners was, on average, 3.7
(SD = 5.7). However, the differences reached up to 19 more in some women and 20 more in some men. The educational level of the women was higher than that of their male partners (e.g., 11.7% of the women and 7.7% of the men had a college education), but women experienced higher unemployment than men (60.9% and 38.5% respectively). In 20.9% of cases, one or both members of the couple were foreigners i.e., non-Spanish nationality.

With respect to the relationship status of participants, 76.5% were divorced, 15.8% were in the process of divorce, and 7.3% cohabited with a new intimate partner. Relationships had begun when women were aged 12 to 58 (M = 23.0, SD = 8.3), had lasted a mean of 10.9 years (SD = 9.1), and had ended a mean of 1.4 years before the study (SD = 1.2). Most participants were mothers (84.9%) and many of them had children in common with their abusers (68.2%). They had suffered violence during a mean of 7.4 years (SD = 7.8), but only 58.8% had reported it. About half of participants (59.7%) lived in their own homes, 21.3% lived in a shelter, and 19.0% lived with their parents.

Participants were selected by means of two non-probabilistic procedures. A first group was selected through different services for the protection of women who suffer from violence at the hands of their intimate partners (n = 151). After receiving authorization from the agency that coordinates these protection services, staff invited women over 18 to collaborate. Participation was voluntary and all women who agreed to respond were selected for the study. With the second group, a snow-ball procedure was used. Social work students on work experience programs in different community settings collaborated by selecting battered women who did not attend protection services (n = 98). Both groups of participants received identical instructions. Confidentiality of data was assured.

**Measures**

The instrument used in this study was developed through several steps. First, the literature related to IPV risk assessment was reviewed and conditions that increase the risk of reabuse were explored by means of in-depth interviews (Gonzalez-Mendez & Santana-Hernandez, 2012). Then, a first questionnaire was designed and tested in a previous pilot study. Finally, exploratory factorial analyses allowed developing a smaller but more rigorous instrument, which consists of several scales whose psychometric properties have been established (Santana-Hernandez, 2012). Besides collecting data on socio-demographic variables, relationship characteristics, safety-related information, etc., the scales included were: (1) a scale on women’s risk perception; (2) three scales on conditions that increase the opportunity for victim/batterer contact: (a) women’s activities that make them easier to track, (b) women’s reasons for not protecting themselves, and (c) batteries’ strategies to gain access to their former intimate partners; and (3) a scale on post-separation violence.

Six months later, it was retested whether women had suffered any aggression during this period (yes/no). This information was obtained in 77.9% (n = 194) of cases (52.6% of women attending protection services, and 47.4% from the community group).

**Women’s risk perception.** A six-item scale was used to measure women’s risk perception. Participants were asked to estimate the level of risk, for themselves and their families, of suffering these aggressions. The scale ranged from 0 (no risk) to 10 (high risk) and its reliability was .87 (Cronbach’s α).

**Women’s activities that make them easier to track.** In this case, three different scales were used: (1) a three-item scale to assess routines (α = .70); (2) another three-item scale to measure contact with former intimate partner or his family (α = .75); and (3) a last two-item scale to measure intimacy (α = .70). Participants were asked to estimate how often they engaged in each of these activities. Their answers ranged from 0 (never) to 10 (very often).

**Post-separation violence.** Finally, two scales were used to measure post-separation violence: (1) a five-item scale covered psychological violence (α = .84); and (2) another three-item scale measured physical violence (α = .80). Participants indicated the frequency of each of the types of aggression on a scale ranging from 0 (never) to 10 (very frequently).

**Results**

Covariance structure analyses were performed with LISREL 8.80 for Windows (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2006), using Maximum Likelihood Estimation. First, measurement models were calculated for the nine latent variables expected. Table 1 shows the indicators properly loaded on these factors. Second, a Structural Equation Model (SEM) was adjusted for the entire sample to determine whether the postulated model adequately generated the sample variance-covariance matrix. The first SEM estimated included all the variables of each theoretical dimension and the hypothesized relations between the factors without other restrictions. This model was re-estimated until a factorial structure with fit was achieved. In the first SEM, Physical Violence covaries with both Risk Perception (φ < .38, p < .001) and Psychological Violence (φ = .42, p < .001), but it did not relate to any endogenous variable in the model. Thus, it was estimated a SEM without this factor. The modification indices based on Wald’s test and the expected change statistics (ECs) guided model modifications. This strategy led to an eight-factor model which fits the data adequately, χ²(300) = 342.83, p < .01, χ²/df = 1.14, RMSEA = .024, 90% CI [0.010, 0.035], SRMR = .051, CFI = .98.

As shown in Figure 1, Psychological Violence, Risk Perception, and Batterers’ Strategies exhibited covariance with each other, and predict the other five factors included in the SEM estimated. However, while Risk Perception reduces the likelihood of Self-deception and Contact, the other two factors positively relate to other endogenous variables. Specifically, Batterers’ Strategies increases the likelihood of Contact and Routines, and Psychological Violence positively relates to Helplessness. Moreover, Self-deception predicts Routines and Contact predicts Intimacy. Therefore, the SEM estimated supports the first three hypotheses. Risk Perception and Batterers’ Strategies relate to female actions that make them easier to track and reasons for not protecting themselves, but in the opposite way, which supports hypotheses 2 and 3. Moreover, Psychological Violence and Risk Perception positively relate to each other, as stated in hypothesis 1. Indirect effects were not detected.

Once this model was adjusted for the complete sample, it was simultaneously estimated for both groups of participants. The fit indexes were: χ²(344) = 247.39, p < .01, χ²/df = 0.72; RMSEA = .030, 90% CI [0.10, 0.44], CFI = 1; SRMR = .05. The SEMs estimated for both groups were similar to that estimated for the entire sample and comparable to each other (Figure 2). Standardized parameters of each group may be seen on Table 2.

Six-month later, it was surveyed whether women had suffered any aggression since the completion of the study (yes/no). Given that this information was only obtained in 77.9% (n = 194) of cases (67.4% had suffered a new aggression: 5.1% from protection services and 1.6% from the community), a binary logistic regression analysis was carried out, including all the former latent variables to predict
### Table 1
Measurement Model for Each Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Measurement Model</th>
<th>Self-deception $\alpha = .86, \chi^2(10) = 14.03, p &lt; .05, CFI = .99</th>
<th>$\lambda$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk Perception $\alpha = .87; \chi^2(7) = 9.68, p &lt; .05; CFI = .99</td>
<td>Try to do harm to the children</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>She is not afraid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to kidnap the children</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>She knows how to defend herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to do harm to her family</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>Somebody cares for her safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to kidnap her</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>He has a new intimate partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to do physical harm to her</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>He does not want to hurt her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Try to kidnap then himself</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psych. Violence $\alpha = .84, \chi^2(16) = 22.26, p &lt; .05; CFI = .99</td>
<td>Threaten her</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>Protection orders are useless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insult her</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>If he wants, he will be able to find her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Falsey charge her of things</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>Batterers’ Strategies $\alpha = .80, \chi^2(7) = 8.87, p &lt; .05; CFI = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stalk her</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>He promises her that it will not happen again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Destroy her documents</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>He blackmails her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Violence $\alpha = .80$</td>
<td>Batterers’ Strategies</td>
<td>$\chi^2(7) = 8.87, p &lt; .05; CFI = 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stalk her</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>He promises her that it will not happen again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Destroy her documents</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>He blackmails her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routines $\alpha = .70$</td>
<td>Batterers’ Strategies</td>
<td>$\chi^2(15) = 20.56, p &lt; .05; CFI = .99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His friends and family are aware of her movements</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>He speaks to him on the phone and responds to his messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She always takes the same route to go home and return</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>She meets him to talk about the children and other issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She meets his family to hand over the children</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>She meets her former partner to hand over the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intimacy $\alpha = .70$</td>
<td>Batterers’ Strategies</td>
<td>$\chi^2(15) = 20.56, p &lt; .05; CFI = .99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She spends some evenings with him</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She accepts his gifts</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Figure 1.** Structural Equation Model with all participants.  
*Note. “ $p < .05$ ** $p < .005$*

**Figure 2.** Structural Equation Model comparing the two groups.  
*Note. The slashes separate standardized parameters for women from services/community.  
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .005$*

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[Image of tables and figures]
The aim of this study was to analyze the relationships between women’s risk perception, certain conditions that increase the opportunity for victim/batterer contact, and post-separation violence. More specifically, it has tried to answer whether women’s risk perception relates to their behaviors and safety after separation. The results also shed light on factors associated with risk perception.

As stated in hypothesis 1, women’s risk perception is positively related to post-separation violence. Firstly, Risk Perception and Psychological Violence covary in the SEMs estimated for both groups. This is consistent with research that points to the importance of some forms of psychological abuse such as stalking or threats in the estimation of risk of new assaults by victims of IPV (Cattaneo et al., 2007; Ditcher & Gelles, 2012). However, given that both measures were taken at the same time in this study, causality cannot be determined. Thus, it is equally probable that psychological abuse affects the perceived risk as vice-versa, i.e., that the estimated frequency of threats, insults, etc. is altered by risk perception. Secondly, although physical violence does not relate to women’s activities or reasons for not protecting themselves, it is associated with the perceived risk of future violence.

Risk Perception and Batterers’ Strategies also covaried among women from protection services, but not among the community sample. This suggests that information given by protection services professionals may have been useful in increasing women’s risk perception. The SEMs estimated also support hypothesis 2, since Risk Perception negatively relates to both the frequency of women’s actions that make them easier to track and the agreement with the reasons for not protecting themselves. Specifically, women who perceived a greater risk of reabuse also indicated less Contact with their former partners and less Self-deception. In turn, greater Contact relates to greater Intimacy, and as discussed below, this later predicts reabuse. In this way, women’s perceived risk seems to reduce the opportunities for victim/batterer contact, which makes it a protective factor. Additionally, women who exhibited less Self-deception also indicated fewer routine activities, but only in the protection services group. This again points to the effectiveness of information offered by protection services. Moreover, although Self-deception and Risk Perception are negatively related, the former tends to increase with Helplessness. This seems to confirm the need to add other resources to risk information in order to avoid female helplessness and reabuse (e.g., Goodman, Dutton, Vankos, & Weinfurt, 2005).

Hypothesis 3 is only partially supported, since Batterer’s Strategies predict women’s actions that make them easier to track, but not the reasons for not protecting themselves. Specifically, these strategies positively relate to Contact and Routines (this latter factor only in

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Perception</th>
<th>λ</th>
<th>Self-deception R²</th>
<th>λ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Try to kill her</td>
<td>.84/84</td>
<td>He does not want to hurt her</td>
<td>.74/74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to do physical harm to her</td>
<td>.78/78</td>
<td>She knows how to defend herself</td>
<td>.64/64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to do harm to the children</td>
<td>.59/60</td>
<td>She is not afraid</td>
<td>.57/79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to kidnap the children</td>
<td>.55/55</td>
<td>He has a new intimate partner</td>
<td>.57/57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to do harm to her family</td>
<td>.54/54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Psych. Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helplessness</th>
<th>R² = .35/35</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threaten her</td>
<td>.86/85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insult her</td>
<td>.76/76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FALSELY accuse her of things</td>
<td>.66/66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stalk her</td>
<td>.63/64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroy her documents</td>
<td>.59/59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Batterers’ Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>R² = .28/.27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He takes advantage of meetings with their children</td>
<td>.64/62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He tells her they have to talk about their children</td>
<td>.63/62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He shows repentance</td>
<td>.54/55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R² = .21/.31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>His friends and family are aware of her movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She meets his family to hand over the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She always takes the same route to go home and return</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>R² = .28/.27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She speaks to him on the phone and responds to his messages</td>
<td>.80/80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She meets him to talk about the children and other issues</td>
<td>.75/73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She meets her former partner to hand over the children</td>
<td>.59/59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The slashes separate parameters estimated differently for each group (protection services/community).
commit further psychological abuse. Therefore, intervention should relate to reconciliation attempts and opportunities to reabuse. They may also hinder women’s recovery, since these activities relate to reconciliation attempts and opportunities to commit further psychological abuse. Therefore, intervention should focus on preventing activities that increase the opportunities for victim/batterer contact after separation. As noted by Campbell et al., (2011), it will be useful to show women the relevance of their own perception of risk.

Other batterer’s strategies also could be analyzed. For example, Miller and Smolter (2011) have depicted procedural stalking used by batterers, namely “paper abuse”. This “includes a range of behaviors such as filing frivolous lawsuits, making false reports of child abuse, and taking other legal actions as a means of exerting power, forcing contact, and financially burdening their ex-partners” (pp. 637-638).

Although the retest (after six months) offers a follow-up assessment of the association between the factors included in the SEM and reabuse, the number of cases analyzed and reported assaults is quite small. This makes necessary a further analysis of the relationship between women’s actions and reabuse with a longitudinal design.

Conflict of interest

The authors of this article declare no conflicts of interest.

References


