Classifying Intimate Partner Violence: A Functional Typology

By

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Abstract

A neglect of theoretical development has impaired psychological explanations for intimate partner violence (IPV), which in turn has hindered effective interventions for people who perpetrate IPV. This thesis addresses this problem by applying recent perspectives on classification to examine whether typologies of IPV facilitate useful explanations of these behaviours, and proposes an alternative strategy for classifying IPV. First, the role of classification is discussed, in terms of the theoretical requirements typologies should fulfil, and with specific reference to the classification of offending behaviour. Second, two of the most influential typologies of IPV – Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994), and Johnson's (1995, 2006) typologies – are critically analysed according to their conceptual problems. Third, a preliminary alternative approach to classifying IPV is proposed, in response to recent theoretical developments that suggest a focus on the function of IPV behaviours is required. This Motivational Systems Typology classifies individuals who have perpetrated IPV based on their motivations, and its capacity for facilitating explanations of IPV is demonstrated through an exemplar. Finally, the implications of this typology for understandings of IPV and classification are discussed.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a serious public health issue, with far-ranging physical, psychological, and economic consequences for women and men. The World Health Organisation (WHO; 2010) outlines the scope of intimate partner violence (IPV) as any behaviour that occurs in the context of a current or former intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological, or sexual harm. This encompasses a range of behaviours, such as kicking or slapping, forced sexual contact, humiliation, intimidation, and monitoring or restricting a partner's activity. Estimates of prevalence both in Aotearoa-New Zealand and internationally suggest that one in three women who have ever been in a relationship have reported experiencing physical or sexual violence, with this rising to above 50 per cent when emotional or psychological violence is considered (New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, 2017; Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; WHO, 2010). Although data on male victims of IPV is more limited, research has found that men experience similar rates of IPV (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018; Lien & Lorentzen, 2019; Powney & Graham-Kevan, 2019). Indeed, the results of the most recent New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey show that victims of psychological abuse are equally likely to be male or female (Ministry of Justice, 2019). As well as physical injury, experiencing IPV is associated with a range of psychological consequences such as depression and anxiety, and post-traumatic stress (Ansara & Hindin, 2011; Murphy et al., 2014; Próspero, 2007). More broadly, the economic cost of offering intervention services, and loss of labour have been estimated to cost upwards of one billion dollars in Aotearoa-New Zealand alone (Snively, 1994). As such, there has been a concerted effort by government agencies to reduce the harm caused by IPV (Crichton-Hill, 2010).

To aid practitioners and policymakers who implement prevention programmes, an understanding of what causes individuals to aggress against a partner is crucial (Dixon &

Graham-Kevan, 2011). Intervention with those who perpetrate IPV is underpinned by theories about the behaviours involved – if the causes of a behaviour can be understood, these causes may be targeted and changed during treatment. Explanations of behaviour should provide a rich understanding about the causes of the target behaviour, and offer specific mechanisms to be targeted in treatment, thereby increasing the effectiveness of interventions (Dent et al., 2020). Theoretical frameworks are essential for understanding why people engage in IPV (Ward, 2019), however the relevant literature has been plagued by debate as to how best to conceptualise and explain IPV behaviours (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011). An understanding of how IPV has traditionally been explained is important, as it demonstrates what work there remains to be done with regard to theory development.

Explanations and treatment programmes for people who perpetrate IPV have been influenced by gendered conceptualisations about the nature of IPV, which were devised in the 1970's, and are still influential today (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Graham-Kevan, 2007). This gendered perspective views IPV as primarily a problem of men's violence toward women intimate partners, resulting from a patriarchal society in which men are conditioned to control women, and in which using aggression and violence is one means by which to achieve this (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Yllö, 1994). The prevailing treatment framework for IPV, the Duluth Model, is derived from this *sociological* explanation (Pence & Paymar, 1993; Shepard & Pence, 1999). The Duluth model provides psycho-educational programmes and aims to target the range of strategies men use to control or maintain power over women (Gondolf, 2010; Pence & Paymar, 1993). While this approach has formed the basis for most IPV interventions (Maiuro & Eberle, 2008), there has been considerable debate over the accuracy of the assumption that men use violence to control women, and that women use violence primarily in self-defence (e.g. Dutton & Corvo, 2006; Dutton & Nicholls, 2005; Gondolf, 2007; Straus, 2011). The Duluth model assumes that all those who perpetrate IPV do so for

the same reasons and should therefore all be offered the same intervention. However, there is limited empirical support for the idea that IPV can be wholly explained by patriarchy (Archer, 2000; Stith et al., 2004). What's more, reviews of intervention programmes based on this approach have found that although they may be more effective than no treatment, effect sizes are small (Babcock et al., 2004; Eckhardt et al., 2013). It has been argued that gendered theory inaccurately conceptualises men as a homogeneous group, who are equally subject to patriarchal influences (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Weak demonstrable effectiveness of interventions focusing on gender would suggest that another approach to explaining IPV may be more appropriate (Hamby, 2009).

While the gendered paradigm of IPV may offer a piece of the puzzle, individuals who perpetrate IPV are in fact a heterogeneous group who differ in terms of the pattern of violent behaviours they engage in, as well as their individual characteristics (Cascardi et al., 2018; Dixon & Browne, 2003; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Morrison & Davenne, 2016). Thus, more specific *psychological* explanations of IPV behaviour are needed if interventions are to be effective (Lien & Lorentzen, 2019). Researchers have theorised that different 'types' of people who perpetrate IPV exist, and these different types will vary in terms of the specific behaviours they engage in, as well as personality and developmental characteristics (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). This assumption forms the basis of IPV typologies, which have been used to inform the development of cognitive-behavioural approaches to IPV treatment. Typologies usually consist of at least two different subtypes or categories to reflect these differences, with the argument made that individuals in different categories may be suited to different treatment programmes (Babcock et al., 2004; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000).

The proliferation of typologies of IPV means it is important to consider the utility of this kind of research for the task of explanation. The construction of typologies involves

systematically categorising individuals into groups based on their commonalities. In other words, typologies are a product of classification (Bailey, 1994). Classification is the grouping of phenomena (stable, underlying features of the world; Haig, 2014) into non-arbitrary categories (Bailey, 1994; Ward & Carter, 2019; Wilkins & Ebach, 2014). The classification of phenomena is an important theoretical task, one which has implications for how explanations are structured and how useful they are in informing treatment (Khalidi, 2013). If existing typologies are to be used to develop theories of IPV, they should classify these behaviours in a way that is conducive to this task.

This thesis will examine IPV through the lens of classification. The broad purpose of this is two-fold. The thesis aims to examine the classification of IPV, and how typologies may best be constructed to facilitate explanations that may form the basis of interventions. In doing so, a framework for constructing a psychologically informed typology of IPV will be proposed. Simultaneously, the role of classification as a conceptual task will be explored, drawing on the example of IPV to demonstrate the links between classification, explanation, and practice.

The position of classification in science and in the study of crime will be explored in the second chapter of this thesis. Specifically, the relationship between classification and explanations will be outlined. The idea of the *unit of classification* – the overarching category that forms the basis for the classification of phenomena – will be introduced as an important factor in structuring subsequent explanations. The advantages of employing multiple different classification systems to describe the same phenomena are also considered. The focus is then narrowed to the classification of crime, and the potential problems with current approaches to classification. This chapter concludes with a discussion of how a typology aimed at explanation should be evaluated, and two broad questions to prompt analysis of typologies of IPV are posed.

Guided by these theoretical questions, chapter three will focus on how IPV has been classified, by analysing two specific typologies and how they function to explain IPV behaviours. If typologies purport to offer explanations of IPV that may be more useful than that of the gendered perspective, their categories must be selected and described in a way that facilitates these explanations. Two influential typologies of IPV are selected for analysis in this respect – those proposed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994), and Johnson (1995; 2006). These are described and systematically critiqued. It is suggested that these typologies may not be appropriately targeted at explaining IPV behaviours. As a result, ways forward for understanding IPV suggested in the literature are presented, including the need to understand IPV within the context of a dynamic relationship, and the need for individualised formulations which seek to understand the *functions* of behaviour.

On this basis, an approach to the classification of behaviour that is aimed at delineating the causes of IPV, and that is not reliant on the normative construct of crime, is proposed. Chapter four draws on the recent work of Ward & Carter (2019) and Del Giudice (2018) to propose a framework for classifying IPV that understands behaviour from a functional, goal-directed perspective. The Functional Offending Behaviours Classification Framework (Ward & Carter, 2019), which suggests that behaviour is underpinned by motivational systems, is used as a starting point for this. While the development and statistical validation of a specific and in-depth typology of IPV is beyond the scope of this thesis, this alternative approach to classification is suggested as a valuable starting point for the development of such a typology. As such, a preliminary framework and conceptual model for a Motivational Systems Typology of IPV is proposed, and a hypothetical case study is used as an exemplar of how it may be applied to facilitate the explanation of IPV. The implications of this approach for theory and practice are discussed in chapter five, including how a motivational systems approach may influence the treatment of people who engage in

IPV behaviours, and how the typology aligns with the dominant frameworks of correctional rehabilitation. This is supplemented by a broader discussion of implications for classification in general, and particularly the classification of offending behaviours. The final chapter will summarise the key arguments made, briefly suggest some directions for the further development of IPV typologies, and finish with some concluding remarks about this research.

Chapter Two: Classification

The symbiotic relationship between scientific theory and practice is well established. Theory informs the design of observations and experiments against which the theory can be tested and revised. Connecting theory and practice is therefore a primary concern in the conceptualisation and explanation of phenomena in all scientific pursuits (Ward, 2019). In order to connect theory and practice well it is necessary to be able to identify and describe the phenomena that are to be tested or observed. Classification is a conceptual task, and one way of clearly identifying and describing phenomena (Bailey, 1994; Wilkins & Ebach, 2014).

Classification is central to the way humans make sense of the world, permeating everything from the scientific endeavour of grouping species into taxa, to even the most mundane tasks, such as organising a wardrobe based on the seasonal appropriateness of clothing, or splitting school students into classes based on their academic performance. Despite its position as a conceptual exercise, Bailey (1994) notes that classification is vulnerable to being overlooked as an important step in the process of understanding phenomena. This chapter will examine the position of classification in science. In particular, the relationship between classification and explanation will be described, and an argument for pluralism in classification will be put forward. The latter half of the chapter will outline how offending behaviours are typically classified, and the pitfalls that arise from this, drawing on an analogy with the classification of mental disorders. Finally, an approach to evaluating typological research is suggested.

Classification and Explanation

The utility of classifying phenomena into groups is such that, when done well, an observer should be able to make inferences about the qualities of a given entity based on the category it has been grouped into. For example, knowing a hedgehog is a mammal

should lead to the conclusions that it is warm-blooded, has mammary glands, a four-chambered heart, and so on. In this way, classifications are heuristics for understanding the nature of phenomena. Therefore, classification is descriptive. On their own, descriptive categories do not offer causal power (Wilkins & Ebach, 2014) – the elements that constitute an entity say little about its aetiology, or the mechanisms that have led to its continued existence. However, a descriptive category can provide a target for explanation, particularly in new areas of study that have limited explanatory theory. Several scholars have argued that classification can in fact be a prerequisite condition for explanation, as it forms a representation of the phenomena which are to then be explained (Bailey, 1994; Khalidi, 2013; Ward & Carter, 2019; Wilkins & Ebach, 2014). If a concept can be described, explanations about its origins and maintaining factors can begin to be inferred (Haig, 2014). Therefore, whilst classifications may serve a number of purposes including providing a heuristic for effective communication and resource allocation, it is argued that the most scientifically salient role of classification is that of linking ideas through underlying mechanisms (Khalidi, 2013). In other words, classification forms the basis for the *explanation* of common phenomena.

It has been argued that ideal scientific explanations should be based on classifications that identify naturally occurring clusters of properties, or *natural kinds* (Zachar & Kendler, 2007). In this approach, classifications are valuable if phenomena are grouped based on shared underlying properties, rather than on surface-level features. The classification of elements into the periodic table, or species into taxa are common examples of this approach. If natural features of the world can be identified, their causal processes and aetiology can more clearly be explained. While this is the standard to which scientific explanations are usually held, classification can also be a practical undertaking, with the classification strategy chosen according to the needs of the user (Wilkins & Ebach, 2014;

Zachar & Kendler, 2007). A radical example of this perspective might argue that the distinctions between male and female genders only exist because humans have identified these distinctions as important in structuring social systems. The different ways of approaching classification constrain what classification systems can be used for, particularly if the aim is to construct scientific explanations of phenomena.

As such, the unit by which a classification system is constructed should be taken into account when considering whether a classification is appropriately targeted for explanation. The *unit of classification* here refers to the overarching category that forms the basis by which phenomena are further categorised. Examples of different units of classification might include 'types of mental disorder', 'level of risk', 'crime types', or 'motivations'. For example, the researcher aiming to uncover the aetiology of schizophrenia, may place more importance on a classification of psychiatric disorder based on causal components, rather than a classification based on clusters of symptoms, which are labelled and changed according to social priorities (Bolton, 2012). In the same vein, those seeking to explain behaviours such as IPV must consider whether types of behaviours (analogous to symptoms of psychiatric disorder) are the most appropriate unit of classification for discovering the causal mechanisms and processes underlying these behaviours. Classifying behaviours that are based on *social categories* that reflect changing legal priorities, rather than *natural categories* which reflect underlying causal properties, constrains the scope of any explanations made about these categories. In the case of IPV and other offending behaviours, this is because explanation is made under the assumption that offending behaviours are qualitatively different from non-offending behaviours, perhaps resulting from different causes. This approach to classification, and the implications of the unit of classification for explanation, will be discussed further throughout this thesis.

The position of classification in science is greater than that of simply labelling groups. Rather, classification is an essential conceptual task that facilitates explanation and theory-building through providing a clear description of the phenomena to be explained. Classification systems structure the natural and social worlds for those aiming to understand them. However, it must be acknowledged that certain kinds of classification may be more appropriately constructed for explaining the aetiology underlying clusters of phenomena. Before narrowing the focus to further explore the classification of offending behaviours, an argument for constructing multiple classification systems will be discussed.

Pluralism in Classification

While classification can be situated as a key step linking the conceptualisation and explanation of problems, classification is not always concerned with explanation, nor should it be. For example, the Ministry of Health collects clinical notes on patients in Aotearoa-New Zealand public hospitals, which are coded according to the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, Tenth Revision (ICD-10; WHO, 2016). Classifying large data in this way may be used to further research diseases and outcomes, but also informs hospital resource allocation, mortality analysis, and is used to improve hospital practices (Ministry of Health, 2019). Furthermore, the ICD-10 itself consists of different versions depending on the target audience. A statistically oriented version of the ICD-10 is intended for researchers and clerical workers and offers precise guidance on diagnosis and symptom counts, whereas a clinically oriented version offers more flexibility to account for cultural variation and clinical judgement (Reed et al., 2016). This relationship between classification system and user is a perfect demonstration that the epistemic goals of the user determine what different classification systems are used for.

If the goals of classification users vary, then attention should also be directed to the scope and limits of classification systems themselves. Pertinent to this, Kutschenko (2011) lays out a framework labelled epistemic hubs. Their central thesis argues that the scope of a classification constrains its use, and calls for pluralism in classification – or having multiple different classification systems – in response to the many questions that arise from research. For example, the classification of mental disorders is an essential task in psychiatry, represented by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th edition (DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013), and the ICD-10 (WHO, 2016). These are large bodies of research that aim to describe and define the phenomena of mental disorders. Yet the complex interaction of internal and external causes that contribute to the manifestation of mental disorders has led to difficulty explaining them. The categories of mental disorder are designed to capture a range of conditions, yet do not offer specific explanations, because individuals within the same category may present with entirely different sets of symptoms (Lilienfeld, 2013). It is a near impossible task for the DSM-5 and ICD-10 to balance the need to provide broad universal classification systems, that also offer precise descriptions of complex phenomena that lead to causal explanations. In response, Kutschenko argues that broad classification systems serve as hubs of knowledge, which can communicate knowledge about different conceptualisations of phenomena. The DSM-5 and ICD are useful reference points that allow for the dissemination of information for a wide range of professionals (Tsou, 2015). While they have proven extremely fertile in producing new research areas, clinicians may also benefit from access to other conceptualisations of mental disorders that are better suited to explanation. Thus, multiple broad classification systems are needed to fully understand phenomena such as mental disorders. with the differences lying in the way they choose to classify. Each broad

classification system can provide a framework from which to understand phenomena from a different perspective.

To strengthen the argument for pluralism in classification, consider how different broad classification systems may be used in daily life, depending on different goals. Take the example of classifying kitchen implements. Generally, kitchen implements can be classified based on either form or function, and the utility of each depends on the goal of the user. If the goal is to determine whether an implement can be used near hot surfaces, one might consider features of the implement's form, such as material. It might be concluded that stainless steel implements could be used safely on or near the stovetop. In this case, all stainless steel implements might be classified in the same group, such that a pot and a colander can exist in the same category. If the goal, however, becomes to determine the implement most suited to cooking soup, using material as the unit of classification becomes a problem. A colander would be inappropriate for holding soup and therefore should not be placed in the same category as a pot. In this case, a classification based on the function of the implement is more appropriate. This is an example of how different classification systems may be used as heuristics in everyday life and illustrates the importance of being flexible in the use of different classifications depending on the goal. In a scientific context, the goals of a researcher are likely to have greater consequence than the decision to make soup. No one classification can account for the myriad ways to understand human behaviour, and thus the creation of multiple classifications may be an important strategy for innovation.

Ultimately the notion of epistemic hubs argues for multiple classification systems to exist within a given area, to promote the exchange of information, integrate different levels of explanation, and suit the purpose of the user (Kutschenko, 2011). This is neither the first time, nor is psychology the first field of science, in which the use of multiple classification

systems for different purposes has been considered. Debates around whether typologies and classification systems reflect natural differences in the world, or are merely arbitrary, have ensued wherever the social and natural worlds intersect, such as the fields of archaeology and anthropology. Generally, a consensus seems to form in which "the attributes used and the form of the typology should vary according to the problem being solved" (Whittaker et al., 1998, p. 130). Debate around the 'best' way of classifying phenomena feasibly be cast aside once the purpose of classification is considered, as the answer is likely to vary depending on the questions asked. This view is consistent with the idea that, although some classifications should seek to identify natural kinds (Zachar & Kendler, 2017), they need not always do so – grouping social classes also serves a purpose, such as facilitating shared understandings between parties. Practically, this sets up the responsibility for researchers to consider this purpose when classifying entities at the outset, and to determine the most appropriate unit of classification for achieving this. Users of classification systems similarly have a responsibility to look at the goals that guided the classification's creation, especially when looking for rich explanations of phenomena.

The Classification of Crime

Forensic psychology is concerned with applying psychological principles to the study of crime. There are many agencies and government departments associated with the identification, management, and treatment of those who have committed offending behaviour. Classifying these individuals serves a broad range of purposes at every stage of the justice process, from assigning a label to a defendant's actions when they are convicted, to identifying those who may require higher security monitoring in the community. The criminal justice system does already make use of multiple units of classification (Ward & Carter, 2019). Incarcerated individuals are classified according to their level of risk (with the resulting categories of low, medium, or high risk), which influences decisions such as

eligibility for treatment programmes and parole. However, the unit of classification which most obviously permeates the functioning of the justice system is types of crime. The notion of different crime types as the major unit of classification by which offending behaviour is understood has restricted the focus of explanation in forensic psychology.

Crime is an inarguably normative construct. While moral codes certainly bear some influence on the behaviours enacted by individuals, no behaviour is inherently 'criminal', and liable to legal repercussions, until it is labelled so (Bradley & Walters, 2011; Ward & Fortune, 2016). The labelling of problematic behaviours is dictated by legal systems, which vary across time and context, with real world consequences. The Family Violence (Amendments) Act (2018) introduced strangulation or suffocation as a new offence category in Aotearoa-New Zealand, meaning it will be specifically recorded for research and assigned its own sentencing guidelines. Establishing different types of commonly occurring crime enables policing decisions to be made, and resources to be allocated to specific support groups or treatment programmes (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). Using offence category as the unit of classification is necessary and advantageous in this sense. What follows is the assumption that it needs to be understood why, for example, people commit assault, or destroy public property, in order to put strategies in place to minimise these behaviours. This approach may be useful in some cases in which environmental changes can be made to prevent crime, such as installing security measures around a property to prevent theft, or limiting alcohol supply to intoxicated individuals to reduce violence. The discipline of crime prevention through environmental design is testament to the use that understanding different types of crime can have (Cozens & Love, 2015). Yet this approach does little for explaining why individuals commit crime – there is nowhere from which to infer the psychological aetiology of the behaviour in question.

Inherent in the classification of crime types is the assumption that there is something fundamentally unique about behaviours that are labelled criminal, compared to its prosocial and non-criminal counterparts. Here lies a tension. The canon of knowledge held by the legal system would identify offence types as the categories to be explained. These categories are inherently value-laden (Ward, 2016; Ward & Heffernan, 2017a), and as such there is no 'natural kind' of crime to be discovered or explained. Human behaviour exists independently of how it is judged, and it is therefore nonsensical to seek out specific individual causes of 'crime'. An understanding of offence-related behaviours that is free from the notion of crime types, and views crime as serving the same functions as other behaviours (Boorse, 2014), may offer more longevity and be more precisely targeted towards individual explanations of behaviour. The current single classification of 'crime' from which all research into the causes of offending behaviour stems is reductive, as the output of research will be constrained by the epistemic goals and assumptions of this classification system.

Evidence that the use of offence categories may not lead to the best explanations of offending behaviour can be found in evaluations of treatment programmes. The Risk-Need-Responsivity model (RNR; Bonta & Andrews, 2017) is the most widely used approach to correctional rehabilitation in the Western world. This model is concerned with both treatment content and delivery. The 'risk' principle specifies that the intensity of treatment should correspond with an individuals risk of reoffending, while the 'responsivity' principle refers to delivering treatment in a way that is consistent with the learning style and ability of the individual. The 'need' principle posits that treatment should primarily focus on modifying the individual and social factors that are most associated with crime. It is this principle that shall be the focus of analysis here. The factors that are associated with crime are referred to as dynamic risk factors (DRFs). While Bonta and Andrews (2017) identify

the core risk factors which may be present in most types of criminal offending, different types of crime may be more strongly associated with specific risk factors. Although meta-analyses have found that treatment programmes that follow the RNR principles tend to result in the largest decreases in recidivism (Hanson et al., 2009), mean effect sizes for treatment programmes tend to be weak ($r = .16$; Koehler et al., 2013; Prendergast et al., 2013). This suggests more could be done to reduce offending behaviour, and explanations may be inappropriately targeted at DRFs.

There is a strong argument as to why a focus on DRFs leads to impoverished explanations of offending behaviour (Ward, 2016; Ward & Fortune, 2016). DRFs are comprised of the statistical correlates of crime, yet are often conflated with causal mechanisms of behaviour (Ward, 2016). For example, emotional congruence with children is commonly cited as a cause of sexual offending against children (Mann et al., 2010). This may plausibly indicate the causes of offending, such as the adult viewing a child as a consenting partner. It may also refer to a variety of mental states, such as feelings of fear towards adults and safety around children, or contexts, such as having regular access to children or a lack of intimate relationships with adults (Ward & Heffernan, 2017b). It is unclear what exactly emotional congruence with children refers to, and therefore it cannot be treated as a single cause or explanation of sexual offending. DRFs do not necessarily denote the causes of different types of crime, and yet the commitment to studying the construct of crime and its various forms means alternative targets for explanation have been neglected.

To further demonstrate the issues that arise when the unit of classification is incongruent with the objective of identifying causal explanations, a parallel can again be drawn with the classification of mental disorder. There has been much debate regarding the validity of classifying of mental disorders according to their signs and symptoms (Lilienfeld

et al., 2013; Widiger & Clark, 2000). Critiques of this model are numerous, however those that are most relevant to forensic classification are the problems of comorbidity and heterogeneity.

In a review of the challenges associated with diagnostic classification, Lilienfeld et al. (2013) cite a major indicator for concern as high comorbidity rates between mental disorders. It is often assumed that overlap between the symptoms and occurrence of disorders are the result of equifinality (Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1996), which means that disorders that share features remain aetiologically distinct. Yet it may also be the case that the current classification ignores the possibility of different manifestations of one underlying condition (Barkley & Mash, 2014; Lilienfeld et al., 2013). The problem of comorbidity in diagnostic categories can be applied to offence categories. It is true that behaviours relevant to each offence type may be distinct – for example, a sexual offence is comprised of different behaviours from a drug offence. Yet it is not uncommon for individuals to be convicted of multiple different offence types, even in the presence of similar sets of risk factors (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). Classification according to offence type is only precise enough to differentiate between the *features* of behaviours associated with each offence, and not between the *causes* of behaviour. This indicates the phenomena which forensic psychology seeks to explain are not clearly categorised.

A related problem lies in the idea of heterogeneity. To continue the analogy of mental disorder, labelling an individual with one disorder does not give a clear indication of the symptoms they are experiencing. There are multiple ways of meeting the criteria for a diagnosis, and there is no reliable indication of an individual's exact symptoms based on a diagnosis (Allsopp et al., 2019; Lilienfeld, 2013). An individual diagnosed with depression may experience feelings of sadness, inability to concentrate, and weight gain, or they may experience anhedonia, difficulty falling asleep, and weight loss. Similarly, heterogeneity is

observed within offence categories. Individuals differ as to the targets and nature of their offending, and the contexts in which they offend. The literature on individuals who sexually offend against children notes an important distinction lies between those who are sexually attracted to children and those who are not (Gerwinn et al., 2018). The characteristics of people who offend also vary significantly even within each type of crime (DeHart, 2018; Dixon & Browne, 2003). This means that no explanation exists that can account for all offending within one category. In efforts to overcome the issues of heterogeneity, it is common for typologies to be constructed to capture different subgroups of people who commit a specific type of offence (Dixon et al., 2008). Typologies are systematically constructed to group and label phenomena or individuals based on commonalities across multidimensional variables. These may offer opportunities for more precise explanations of an individual's behaviour. However, if the overall unit of classification is inappropriate (as is the case with using of crime types to categorise and explain behaviour), this may pose downstream problems for any typologies constructed on this basis.

Simplicity is a desirable feature of any coherent explanatory framework – a theory should offer the most parsimonious account of the behaviour in question (Thagard, 1989; Ward et al., 2006). The problems of comorbidity between, and heterogeneity within offence categories violate this principle. If classifications cannot easily distinguish between behaviours, this will lead to theories of crime which are at best underdeveloped, and at worst mistaken.

Evaluating Typologies

The study of crime relies on systems of classification to direct research and treatment decisions. Typologies are constructed in response to a need to identify different pathways to crime and the varying characteristics to those who offend. In keeping with rigorous scientific process, the next logical step should be to ask whether these typologies are useful in

performing the tasks required of them, and how that information can be clarified. There is no standardised method for constructing or evaluating typologies of crime. Being a relatively young field, questions as to the usefulness of classification for forensic psychology have only recently been posed (Ward & Carter, 2019). To untangle whether and why classifications of crime are useful, similar debates in other disciplines, and the role of classification in science, can be considered.

The work of Hill and Evans (1972) can be examined as a starting point in determining the value of typologies. In an essay evaluating models of typology and classification in archaeology, Hill and Evans emphasised an approach to classification which places the researcher as an active participant in constructing and imparting meaning onto categories, rather than merely observing clusters of data. Hill and Evans situate *the problem to be solved* at the centre of typology construction and argue that attributes should be deliberately selected for classification based on their use in solving the problem. Understanding the *reasons* for classification is a core component of what makes classification useful – the existence of categories without context is meaningless. This is consistent with Kutschenko's (2011) argument for pluralism in classification, as each typology should select the units of classification most suited to its purpose.

This thesis is concerned with the task of *explaining IPV* behaviours with a view to informing tasks such as psychological treatment of people who perpetrate this crime. Thus, classifications of IPV should be evaluated against whether they contribute to this. A 'good' theory should offer a comprehensive, parsimonious, and internally consistent explanation of a phenomenon – and a typology that aims to guide explanations should do the same (Austin & Vancouver, 1996). Given that individual typologies need the flexibility to serve their desired function, it would be imprudent to set a list of restrictive criteria by which to evaluate them.

However, two guiding principles are useful to stimulate analysis about the strengths and weaknesses of specific classifications.

The first guiding principle in evaluating classification systems and typologies should be to determine the purpose and users the classification was created to serve, and whether the authors have been explicit about this. This is important as it will impact the conclusions that can be drawn about whether the typology is appropriately constructed for its purpose. If the purpose of classifying is not considered by the authors, then it may not be clear what typologies are suited to achieve, running the risk that they are misused. These initial theoretical considerations are crucial in guiding decisions about the variables included in the typology. Following on from this, a classification that is fit for purpose should clearly and coherently describe the categories it proposes and the relationships between them (Khalidi, 2013; Wilkins & Ebach, 2014). This is particularly important as description constrains the scope of any explanation. If it is not clear what a category is, what the core features of its members are, or what distinguishes one category from another, then any conclusions or explanations of the categories may be misguided.

The next chapter of this thesis aims to critically analyse existing typologies of people who offend against an intimate partner according to their theoretical assumptions and coherence, guided by two questions derived from the above literature. Specifically, they are: 1) has the typology been constructed for a specific purpose and, 2) does the typology provide a clear and coherent description of the categories it proposes? Questioning the basic assumptions of a classification in this way will clarify its potential for standing up to the task of explanation. Much as a house built from straw would not fit the purpose of providing shelter, the assumptions or variables a typology is constructed from determine its practicality.

Summary

Classification is an oft-overlooked task in science. This chapter makes explicit the role that classification plays in facilitating deeper understandings of phenomena. In areas with limited theoretical work, such as forensic psychology, working first with groups of phenomena that share features can simplify the process of theorising compared with studying individual phenomena. The study of offending behaviours, and importantly the rehabilitation of those who offend, are influenced by the way behaviours are described, grouped, and explained.

While the construct of crime itself is rooted in a legal context, and not a scientific one, the pervasiveness with which so-called criminal behaviours are isolated from behaviour in general is indicative that the concept has some utility. The purpose of this thesis is not to refute the notion that crime should act as a central character in structuring legal and governmental institutions. However, if the goal is to explain these behaviours, it must be carefully considered whether classifying *criminal* behaviour, versus human behaviours more generally, adds value to this endeavour. The weak effect sizes in evaluations of dominant approaches to rehabilitation would suggest work remains to be done if explanations of crime are to inform effective rehabilitation. It makes little sense to commit to one system of classification, at the risk of obscuring innovative approaches. Crime is but one interpretation of human behaviours that can be classified in different ways, and so the construction of multiple classifications is a logical approach. This philosophy guides discussion in the following chapters.

Chapter Three: Typologies of Intimate Partner Violence

IPV is a significant problem both internationally and in Aotearoa-New Zealand (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004; WHO, 2010) with very real consequences for families (Ansara & Hindin, 2011; Murphy et al., 2014; Próspero, 2007). Understanding the aetiology of this phenomenon is therefore a necessary step in combatting a major public health issue. Explanations of IPV offending need to target appropriate causal factors to ensure limited available resources are directed toward effective programmes that can prevent future harm and increase public safety.

The discussion of crime classification in chapter two suggests that pursuing explanations of IPV as a category of offending behaviour may be fruitless. However, research that has developed typologies of people who have aggressed against an intimate partner is plentiful, particularly research involving men. This chapter sets out to critique whether existing typologies provide the foundations from which explanatory frameworks can be launched, using two case examples. Specifically, Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) Typology, and Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology will be described and critiqued regarding their utility in explaining IPV offending behaviour. Critiques are guided by the two questions: 1) has the typology been constructed for a specific purpose and, 2) does the typology provide a clear and coherent description of the categories it seeks to explain? Alternative approaches to understanding IPV that have been suggested in the literature are then considered with respect to how these perspectives may inform the development of a new typology of IPV.

Critique of Existing Typologies

Typologies of people who perpetrate IPV have existed since the 1970's and 1980's and theorise that different 'types' of people will vary across different characteristics. Typological approaches have been used to inform the development of cognitive-behavioural approaches to IPV treatment (Babcock et al., 2004; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000).

However, both cognitive-behavioural and gendered approaches to IPV treatment yield small effect sizes (Babcock et al., 2004). Thus it is important to examine the theoretical basis and utility of typologies that seek to explain IPV. Although reviews comparing different IPV typologies exist (e.g. Ali et al., 2016; Chiffriller et al., 2006), no work has yet investigated the theoretical underpinnings of the classification of people who have perpetrated IPV behaviours. Comparing existing typologies means little if they have not been constructed in a way that enables them to fulfil the purpose for which they exist – largely to explain IPV and allocate individuals to treatment.

Typologies of IPV, by definition, stem from an understanding that the causes of specific types of offending behaviours should be understood – that is to say, they share the same unit of classification. At a basic level they are structured around categorising specific sets of behaviour. Rather than review each individual typology of IPV, two of the most prominent typologies that have driven research since the 1990's will be described and critically analysed to demonstrate how IPV is typically classified, how typologies might be evaluated, and the problems that can arise when typologies are ill-conceptualised.

The first typology that will be analysed was developed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994).The earliest typological research focused on males who have offended against female partners and was synthesised by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart to inform the subtypes in their typology (which is described in detail in the next subsection). Dixon and Browne (2003) reviewed the IPV literature from 1994 to 2001 and found 12 studies that generally supported the categories described in Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's typology. This seminal piece of research has been the starting point for a wealth of research since (Brasfield, 2015), although researcher's have focused on a number of different variables as the basis for distinguishing different types (Chiffriller et al., 2006). The typology has had significant influence in spawning research avenues, and in the development of treatment

strategies. A large number of studies have used typology as a template for exploring types of IPV, or found types that overlap with those identified by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (e.g. Bernardi & Day, 2015; Chase et al., 2001; Chiffriller & Hennessy, 2006; Fowler & Westen, 2011; Mauricio & Lopez, 2009). This is also one of the most developed typologies. A developmental model has been proposed to provide explanations for the IPV perpetrated by the different subtypes (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000), meaning the typology well-placed as a starting point from which to examine the relationship between classification and explanation. The proposed subtypes in the typology have also been used to inform treatment practices. In Aotearoa-New Zealand, this typology is being used in a 'pathways model' of family violence to inform practice, which outlines features of the three groups proposed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994; Hall McMaster and Associates Limited, 2016). Thus, there is an important clinical and ethical necessity to ensure its validity in explaining IPV.

Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology will be the second typology examined. Johnson takes a unique approach to classifying IPV, as the categories within this typology are conceptually defined in terms of the supposed *motives* underlying individual's use of violence, rather than their characteristics or features of violence (Johnson, 2006). Focusing on the motivation behind abusive actions may be useful in constructing explanations of that behaviour, and Johnson focuses explanations of the different subtypes on whether or not violence was motivated by control. If people perpetrate IPV for different reasons, this may serve as a focal point around which to structure explanations of IPV. The typology also includes females who perpetrate IPV in its categories. Generally, research on females who perpetrate IPV is lacking, so it is important to understand whether Johnson's conceptualisation of female-perpetrated IPV is useful. Johnson's typology has also laid the foundations for studying coercive control in relationships. Coercive control has been identified as a pattern of control, manipulation, and restriction of a partner's liberties (Kelly

& Johnson, 2006; Stark, 2007), and is an extension of the violence perpetrated by some of the subtypes in Johnson's typology. There has been a slew of research focused on so-called 'controlling behaviours', informed by Johnson's typology and explanation for IPV (Callaghan et al., 2015; Myhill & Hohl, 2019; Tanha et al., 2010; Stark, 2009). It is therefore important to consider whether the initial typology from which this research stems is conceptually valid.

Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) and Johnson's (1995, 2006) typologies have been influential in shaping research regarding people who perpetrate IPV, and are the most popular typologies for classifying individuals in practice (Hamel, 2014). Each typology will now be described, and examined with respect to 1) whether the purpose of the typology has been considered in its construction, and 2) whether the categories or subtypes are described clearly and coherently, and in a fashion that allows explanations for the subtypes to be developed. As theoretical arguments about the importance of classification in understanding phenomena are relatively recent (Ward & Carter, 2019), it is important to understand how the construction of early typologies which have been so influential in the study of IPV may have shaped current understandings.

Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's Typology

Description

Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) reviewed 15 existing typologies of IPV, observing that men who perpetrate IPV tended be differ according to the severity and generality of their violence, and psychopathology or personality disorder. Severity of violence was informed by the frequency of physical or psychological violence used, with more frequent violence deemed to be more severe. Generality of violence refers to the target of an individual's violence, and whether it is limited to violence against a partner or occurs in other areas of life. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart theorised that differences on these three

descriptive dimensions could be used to identify three major subtypes of people who perpetrate IPV.

The first subtype was referred to as 'family only' (FO), and identified as those who commit the least severe violence in comparison to other violent individuals, whose violence is restricted to their intimate partners, and who show little evidence of psychopathology or disordered personality traits. A second subtype, labelled 'dysphoric/borderline' (DB), was thought to include those who engage in IPV that is moderate to severe, and is primarily confined to the family context. Importantly, this group was thought to display high levels of psychological distress or psychopathology, with features of borderline personality disorder. The third subtype was referred to as 'generally violent/antisocial' (GVA). Similar to the DB group, this was thought to include those who engage in moderate to severe violence, although extrafamilial violence was also a key feature of this group. This subtype was also hypothesised to display features of antisocial personality and psychopathy.

After identifying these three possible types from the literature, Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) integrated several theories of intrapersonal violence into a developmental model of IPV. This was the first time such a model had been proposed in relation to IPV, and it was thought that identifying important characteristics and developmental risk factors for IPV would help determine the causes of IPV behaviour. Distal developmental risk factors included parental violence and child abuse in the family of origin, and association with deviant peers. Proximal risk factors included attitudes supportive of violence towards women, impulsivity, insecure or dismissive attachment style, and poor social skills. It was proposed that different combinations of distal and proximal risk factors could explain the behaviour patterns of each of the three subtypes (FO, DB, GVA). The subtypes and developmental model were then tested in a follow-up study by Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000).

The theoretical model was tested using a sample of men who had been violent towards their current female partner, as well as a non-violent comparison group, both recruited from the community. Participants completed a battery of psychological measures. Notably, the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2; Straus et al., 1996) was used to measure severity and frequency of violence, and subscales from the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (MCMI-III; Millon, 1994) were used as measures of personality disorder and psychopathology. The authors then designed a measure of violence generality, the Generality of Violence Questionnaire (GVQ; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). The results of these measures were used to conduct cluster analyses to determine the IPV subtypes.

Generally, support was found for the three subtypes of people who perpetrate IPV proposed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994), with three clusters resembling the FO, DB, and GVA groups emerging (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). A fourth cluster was also found and labelled 'low-level antisocial' (LLA). This group tended to score between the FO and GVA group on key measures. Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000) explained this finding as being a product of sampling, and in-depth discussion of this finding has largely been missing in contemporary literature (Ali et al., 2016; Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004). Group differences on measures of the proximal and distal correlates from the developmental model were then compared. The outcomes of the study formed the basis of simple narrative explanations of IPV perpetration for the FO, GVA, and DB subtypes.

Briefly, the FO group displayed the lowest levels of risk factors, with perhaps evidence of only mild social skill difficulties, or some exposure to violence in childhood (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). The DB group tended to display more hostile attitudes towards women and violence, insecure attachment style, borderline personality characteristics, and jealousy. In this case, violence may occur when jealousy or fear of abandonment is triggered (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). The GVA group tended to have

a history of exposure to violence and deviant peers, and show impulsivity, attitudes supportive of violence, and antisocial attachment styles. This group may show a pattern of antisocial behaviour across many aspects of their life (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). Although not all of the differences between the subgroups were statistically significant (Brasfield, 2015), the authors concluded that their hypotheses were generally supported. In general there is a dearth of typologies that classify females who perpetrate IPV, however groups of women resembling the FO and GVA group have been identified, with the GVA group displaying more instrumental violence and more developmental risk factors for violence compared with the FO group (Babcock et al., 2003). This gives credence to the idea that there are distinct differences between those whose violence is confined to the relationship context and those who engage in violence in a range of contexts.

Purpose

The first question proposed to be useful in guiding typology evaluation asks whether the typology has been constructed for a specific purpose. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) Typology was created in response to the prevalence of the assumption that men who perpetrate IPV are a homogenous group. The authors state that a valid typology would be useful in understanding the heterogeneity of violence between partners and in identifying the processes that underlie this violence. Further, they propose that this typology could be useful in clinical practice, as different treatment programmes may be more, or less suited to certain types of people. For example, Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000) suggest that a treatment programme targeting antisocial personality traits and attitudes may be more suited to those who fit in the GVA group than the FO or DB groups. The purpose of this typology is explicitly considered to be identifying different causal explanations and treatment targets for IPV. Whilst a debate about whether a one-size-fits-all treatment approach is better suited to intervention than targeted approaches continues (Stewart et al., 2013), it is clear that

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Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's typology is being used to inform treatment in at least some settings (Hall McMaster & Associated Limited, 2016). Despite this, the authors have noted they are "hesitant to reify" the typology (Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004, p. 1378). At the time of publication, limited evidence validating the typology meant that firm conclusions could not be drawn as to whether the three identified subtypes represented stable features of between those who perpetrate IPV.

The fact that this typology and developmental model are theory-based, and constructed with a clear purpose in mind, is certainly an advantage of the classification (Hill & Evans, 1972; Ward & Carter, 2019). While the work of Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) was an excellent step forward in applying psychological literature to the study of IPV, recent theoretical developments require the typology to be analysed more closely. If this typology is to be useful in explaining and informing the treatment of IPV, then the constructs suggested to be related to each of the three subtypes must be valid explanatory targets (Bernardi & Day, 2015). Additionally, if individuals in each subtype are to be matched to specific treatments, the characteristics that define each subtype must be made clear to ensure this treatment-matching is appropriate. Analysis of whether the FO, DB, and GVA subtypes are sufficiently detailed to allow IPV to be explained has been glossed over in the wider literature. The following subsections highlight conceptual critiques which have been guided by the second question relating to typology construction: does the typology provide a clear and coherent description of the categories it seeks to explain? Specifically, reliance on statistical correlates in place of causal constructs, explaining the FO category only in terms of its deficits, and inclusion of severity of violence as a dimension all amount to a typology which has not been constructed in a way that facilitates rich explanations of its categories.

Conceptual Critiques

Statistical Correlates Not Causal Constructs

The developmental model proposed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) relies on the use of risk factors for IPV as explanatory targets – variables such as poor social skills, insecure attachment style, and attitudes supportive of violence as proposed as potential causes of IPV. In chapter two, the pitfalls of conflating statistical correlates with causal constructs were introduced, including that they tend to refer to many possible causes and thus lack specificity (Ward, 2016). The same principles apply in this case.

Using general categories of risk factors as explanatory targets without offering up the mechanisms by which they cause behaviour does little to identify meaningful explanations. For example, it is argued that 'antisocial personality' is an important factor to target in those individuals categorised as GVA (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). This is a broad statement, and makes no reference to what aspects of an antisocial personality may facilitate IPV. Perhaps these individuals, as a result of exposure to violence in childhood, are more vulnerable to interpreting ambiguous situations as hostile (Barkley & Mash, 2014). Or, perhaps these individuals are ill-equipped to self-soothe in highly emotional situations. Antisocial personality may be a characteristic of some people who perpetrate IPV, and may facilitate violence in some situations, however on its own it cannot be considered a specific explanatory target. While it is useful to identify potential risk factors for IPV, it is these factors which are used as explanations of the behaviours of each different subtype. Thus, the inclusion of these variables as the basis for explanation mean the causal mechanisms that produce behaviour for each subtype are not clearly outlined, and practitioners are left to elaborate on these without guidance.

Deficit-Based Model

The result of including risk factors for IPV in the typology construction is that violence exhibited by the FO group can only be explained by the risk factors they *lack*. An individual is assigned to the FO category based on idea that their use of violence is limited compared with those in the other categories – perhaps this individual recorded one or two acts of minor IPV within the past year. When it comes to explaining why this FO individual commits IPV, this typology leaves very little to work with. The GVA and DB categories are described as exhibiting multiple or more severe risk factors for IPV, such as poor marital social skills, or comparatively hostile attitudes towards women. In contrast, violence perpetrated by individuals in the FO category is framed in terms of a deficit of plausible causes. If there is little evidence of psychopathology or indicators of personality disorder within this group, that begs the question of what variables *do* cause violence in these cases. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) state that violence from this group occurs during relationship conflict as the result of a combination of low-level risk factors and stress. At best this provides a vague explanation of behaviour, and at worst merely restates the variables included in the typology. A category whose criteria hinges on the risk factors that its members lack is not sufficiently detailed to elicit explanations of those behaviours. It is not clear what core features individuals allocated to this subtype are required to demonstrate, making any inferences about individuals within the group difficult.

Severity of Violence

This typology links the severity of people's violence to proximal and distal correlates of violence (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). Brasfield (2015) notes that it is unclear how a construct such as severity can be quantified. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) describe the severity of violence perpetrated by the FO, DB, and GVA groups from 'least severe' to 'most severe'. These are vague descriptions, and the

authors do not suggest how they should be interpreted, or what constitutes the most severe acts of physical or psychological violence. As a theoretical construct, it is unclear what specifically severity of violence refers to.

What's more, severity of violence can only be known if the result or consequences of the behaviour is known. In other words, severity is an *outcome* variable, and not a feature or cause of the act of violence itself (Capaldi & Owen, 2001). The severity of violence might be affected by factors unrelated to the motivation or causes behind the action. For example, an individual who is physically large and strong may cause more severe damage through use of violence compared with an individual who is not physically strong. In this case, the result of potentially identical actions may be influenced by body composition – which is unlikely to explain the use of the violence itself. Thus, from an explanatory perspective, knowledge about the severity of violence says very little about what caused that behaviour, as it is determined after the action has occurred. The rationale for including an outcome variable in a typology that theorises about the causes of IPV is not clear.

Further issues arise with the inclusion of severity of violence as a descriptive dimension by which to classify men into the FO, GVA, and DB categories (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Including severity as a dimension precludes any post-hoc multivariate testing between categories, and instead it lends to the assumption that individuals in the FO group will not commit severe acts of violence. Indeed, this may not always be the case as research shows that approximately one quarter of homicides occur in the absence of any typical high risk profile (Dixon et al., 2008). Thus, whilst severity may be an appropriate dimension for the task of risk assessment or management, it offers little toward understanding the causes of that behaviour. Post-hoc tests that can measure and depict the extent of severe violence between the established categories would also provide fruitful information for risk assessment and management. Furthermore, if an individual assigned to the FO category did

commit an act of severe violence, there is no guidance as to how this affects the typology. Should this individual now be treated as a DB or GVA individual, as their pattern of behaviour matches some of the descriptors for these categories? Doing so would likely be theoretically useless, unless this individual had also developed personality disorder or psychopathology indicators. This calls into question the argument that this typology is useful in allocating different subtypes of individuals to different treatments, with those who commit more serious offences requiring more intensive treatment (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). The possibility for individuals to migrate categories suggests that the variables chosen to represent the categories are neither robust, nor described in a cohesive manner.

Johnson's Typology

Description

Early research into IPV revealed contradictory findings as to the involvement of men and women in perpetrating IPV. Put simply, data gathered from women's shelter populations and the courts found that those who perpetrate IPV were far more likely to be men than women (e.g. Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Dobash et al., 1992), whereas general population surveys showed gender symmetry among those who engage in IPV behaviours (e.g. Straus & Gelles, 1990). Johnson (1995) claimed that two distinct types of IPV were being identified by the different sampling methodologies employed. Surveys of the general population, it was thought, captured the majority of violence that occurs in relationships, which may be perpetrated by men and women at equal rates (Johnson, 2008). On the other hand, research on groups of 'battered women' revealed a more sinister form of IPV, perpetrated almost exclusively by men (Johnson, 1995, 2008).

Expanding on this, Johnson (1995, 2006) theorised about four possible types of IPV, arguing that the broad patterns of motivating factors for each category are qualitatively different. As such, the behaviours that are engaged in are less important for classifying

individuals than the reasons why the violence occurs. A feature of this typology is the assumption that men and women engage in IPV for vastly different reasons. The first type was initially labelled 'patriarchal terrorism' (Johnson, 1995), and later revised to 'intimate terrorism' to reflect the possibility that this violence may not exclusively be perpetrated by men. Intimate terrorism is defined as IPV that is part of a general strategy of control in relationships (Johnson, 2006). This control may be evidenced by a range of behaviours including physical, emotional, or financial abuse (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). Johnson (1995, 2006, 2008) argues that this type of violence is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men, who are influenced by patriarchal ideas about their status over women. It was suggested that female victims of this type of abuse are more likely than others to seek help from women's shelters, or police intervention (Johnson, 1995), hence the prevalence of these extreme cases in researched focused on these populations.

'Situational couple violence' is the second major category of abuse in Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology. Situational couple violence represents the majority of violence that occurs in relationships, and may be perpetrated equally by men and women, and in many cases may be reciprocal (Johnson, 2006). It is argued that this violence is not motivated by a broader pattern of control, but rather results from the escalation of more common couple disputes. Victims of situational couple violence may be less likely to become agency clients as the behaviours involved are not always severe, and tend to be more contextually-rooted than intimate terrorism (Johnson, 2006).

The third and fourth types of IPV were theorised by Johnson to account for those individuals not captured by the major categories. 'Violent resistance' describes individuals – usually women – who are violent towards their partners in an attempt to resist control, and are therefore not motivated by patriarchal beliefs or control. 'Mutual violent control' refers to

the incidence of two controlling individuals in a relationship perpetrating violence against each other. Individuals in this category may be male or female.

Initially, Johnson (1995) merely observed that previous findings showed men and women engage in different kinds of IPV at different rates, and proposed the typology as a solution. The evidence for this typology was presented some years later when Johnson (2006) reanalysed data from a study conducted by Frieze (1983). This research sampled women selected from agencies such as shelters and courts, as well as women who lived in the same neighbourhoods but who had not been selected on the basis on violence in their relationship (Frieze, 1983). This latter group was purported to represent a general survey population. Measures of different types of abuse (threats, economic control, use of privilege and punishment, using children, isolation, emotional abuse, and sexual control) were administered to participants, and asked in relation to those tactics used by both the women *and* their (male) partners. A cluster analysis using each of these measures was performed (Johnson, 2006), and results suggested a two-cluster solution – one exhibiting high control, and one exhibiting low control. This was consistent with the categories of intimate terrorism, and situational couple violence.

This analysis confirmed Johnson's (2006) hypothesis that those who engage in highly controlling behaviour were overwhelmingly (97 per cent) men, whereas low control behaviours were almost equally likely to be perpetrated by men or women. Additionally, some relationship violence from the sample reflected the violent resistance or mutual violent control categories. This evidence was used as confirmation that while both men and women can and do commit violence in relationships, the more concerning behaviours are highly controlling abuse tactics perpetrated by a subset of men (Johnson 2006, 2008). Indeed, Johnson and Leone (2005) found that the physical, emotional, and psychological consequences of 'intimate terrorism' were likely to be far more severe than the consequences

of situational couple violence. It should be noted that despite the influence of Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology, more recent research has not always found clear distinctions between intimate terrorism and situational couple violence in an array of samples (Ansara & Hindin, 2009; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2005; Gulliver & Fanslow, 2015; Jasinski et al., 2014), suggesting the typology may not be the best conceptualisation of IPV.

Purpose

Regarding the first question that sets out to understand whether the typology has been constructed for a specific purpose, it is clear that the purpose of Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology was explicitly considered from the outset, and influenced the conception of its categories. The typology was created as a resolution to the 'gender debate' of IPV, in which different paradigms of research resulted in different findings as to women's role in perpetrating IPV (Gondolf, 2007; Johnson, 2008). The approach taken by Johnson aims to differentiate individuals based on the motives for behaviour, rather than the features of the behaviour – each subtype could plausibly involve similar behaviours. Thus, the typology is also geared towards explanation, and in particular explaining IPV in terms of control. The differences between the types in this typology have also been suggested as the basis upon which individuals could be assigned to treatment (Johnson, 2006; Johnson & Leone, 2005).

Whilst the purpose of the typology has been considered from the outset, consideration of how this impacts the validity of the types that were produced is lacking. One role of this typology is to provide an explanation for intimate partner violence. However, this explanation has been framed through a gendered lens. This is particularly important to understand as it relates to the second question that sets out to understand whether the categories in the typology are described in a way that serves its purpose. A typology that advocates for the co-existence of both gendered and gender-symmetry approaches to IPV, allowing the investigation of different types of violence, is certainly an elegant proposal. However,

Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology has not been without criticism. Most notably, Dutton (2006a, 2006b) points out possible methodological flaws with the typology, which mislead resulting explanations of IPV. The typology is constructed in a way that ostensibly does resolve the gender debate, however the types identified within the typology contain assumptions about the gendered nature of IPV, and the nature of control. It is also unclear how the four proposed types cohere with each other. These conceptual problems limit the scope and clarity of the typology, and ultimately its potential to explain IPV in a way that reflects reality.

Conceptual Critiques

A Gendered Phenomenon

A core critique that has been made of Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology is a methodological one. Evidence presented in support of this typology used samples of women from a general population and from women's shelters (Frieze, 1983; Johnson, 2006). Dutton (2006b) argues that it is only logical that data collected from heterosexual female victims of IPV should reveal much higher rates of intimate terrorism at the hands of men. The problem rests in the conclusions drawn from the data. Consider the following argument. If survey samples show only situational couple violence, which is perpetrated equally by men and women, and if data from women's shelters show a high prevalence of intimate terrorism perpetrated by men compared with women, then intimate terrorism must be perpetrated by men towards women. This is a non-sequitur, and the conclusion is open to alternative explanations. It is a fallacy to conclude that women do not perpetrate intimate terrorism when male victims were not sampled with regards to IPV from their female partners (Hines & Douglas, 2019). In fact, when samples of men have been surveyed about their experiences with IPV, women have been found to perpetrate intimate terrorism at a rate of over three per cent compared with around four per cent of men (La Roche, 2005), or even found as the

primary aggressors of intimate terrorism (Hines & Douglas, 2013). Additionally, power and control are not significantly bigger risk markers for male IPV perpetration than for women (Spencer et al., 2016). These results are in direct contradiction with Johnson's (2008) claim that "intimate terrorism is in fact perpetrated almost entirely by men" (p. 23).

This issue goes beyond mere methodological omission that can be rectified by studying men who have either perpetrated or been victims of IPV. The typology is oriented towards a view of IPV that is inherently gendered, assuming that even if some types of violence show gender symmetry, patriarchal societal norms do not have equal impact on men and women, meaning that the motivations behind this violence may differ. If the questions asked of IPV are framed as questions of gender, then this will colour any results – as they did in Johnson's (2006) initial analysis. More importantly, this view precludes any conceptualisation of IPV that does not include gender as key descriptor, which has downstream implications for the utility of any explanations developed.

Despite acknowledging that females who perpetrate intimate terrorism do exist, the explanation given for this category is geared towards males. If individuals engage in intimate terrorism and controlling behaviour due to a social script that men should seek power and control over women, this does not explain the behaviour of women who seek to control men through violence. Similarly, Johnson's typology is stymied when it comes to same-sex or gender non-conforming relationships. Patterns of aggressive and controlling behaviours consistent with Johnson's categories have been found in same-sex relationships at rates comparable to, or higher, than those found in heterosexual relationships (Frankland & Brown, 2014). Taking the example of two females in a relationship, Johnson (1995) offers the possible explanation that intimate terrorism may occur when the individuals involved fall into patriarchal family structures. Even this rather outdated view demonstrates the lack of depth, and the limitations within this typology (Dutton, 2006b). The focus on resolving the gender

debate has therefore constrained whose violence Johnson's typology explains, limiting the scope of its application.

Category Incoherence

The categories of Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology are seemingly differentiated by the motivations underlying different types of IPV. However, this is inconsistent across categories. The initial typology only proposed situational couple violence and intimate terrorism as distinct types of IPV, differentially motivated by control. The categories of violent resistance and mutual violent control were later fleshed out to account for those cases in which, for example, a female partner engaged in severe violence not motivated by control, or in which both partners engaged in violent and controlling behaviours (Johnson, 2006).

This piecemeal approach to constructing the typology has resulted in incoherent relationships between the categories. Mutual violent control consists of the same behaviours as intimate terrorism – it is only the actor/s that set it apart as its own category. In cases of mutual violent control, the motivation behind the behaviours are given the same explanation as a will to control a partner. While situational couple violence is presented as a qualitatively different type of IPV compared with intimate terrorism, mutual violent control does not appear to be a different category from intimate terrorism on this same basis. There is little coherence evident in how each of the four categories in this typology are linked. It is therefore unclear how explanations of behaviours should be applied to different categories, and whether some explanations may apply to more than one category. In case of the latter, this would call into question the necessity of the category in the first place.

The Conceptualisation of Control

Even if the disparities between the violence Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology proposes to explain are accepted, problems remain with the typology. The core explanatory factor in this typology is that of control. The use of control as a construct in this typology is

ill-conceptualised, unsubstantiated, and presumptive. There is growing awareness in the

literature that control, or coercive control, is neither well-defined nor a unitary construct.

Hamberger et al., (2017), in a review of the coercive control literature, concluded that control

can be conceptualised as an underlying goal of behaviour, the presence of intentionality

behind behaviour, or an outcome of behaviour – and some conceptualisations of control

include all three of these elements. Yet there is a gap between an understanding of control as

an internal motivation (Hamberger & Larsen, 2015), and understanding that control is an

outcome of behaviour – any behaviour can be considered 'controlling' if another individual's

actions are modified as a result. A full discussion of the conceptualisation of control is well

beyond the scope of this thesis. Suffice to say that assessing an individual's motivational state

may be of value in some respects, but may provide no information on whether so-called

controlling behaviours are present in a relationship (Hamberger & Larsen, 2015). The same

holds true for assessing controlling behaviours to understand an individual's motivation.

     The poor conceptualisation of control means that many of Johnson's (1995, 2006)

claims remain unsubstantiated – yet have also gone unchallenged in the wider literature.

Across the development of this typology, control is variably referred to as both specific types

of behaviours (e.g. monitoring a partner's activity) and the cause or motivation behind IPV

(Johnson, 1995, 2005, 2008; Johnson & Leone, 2005). Johnson's method of assessing control

is through assessing behavioural strategies of control proposed in the Duluth model (such as

threats, isolation, sexual control; Pence & Paymar, 1993) and using these as proxies to infer

the cause of these behaviours. The problem with this is two-fold. First, the assumption that

the behaviours seen in intimate terrorism are motivated by a need for control is just that – an

assumption. This idea was not tested in Johnson's original typology, and behavioural

strategies were conflated with underlying motivation. It is therefore premature to conclude

that control is the cause of these behaviours. Secondly, this leads to tautological explanations

of behavioural strategies i.e. the controlling behaviour was caused by control. This offers

little value in terms of understanding what control is and the role it may play in IPV, whether

that be as an outcome or a motivation. As control is a key variable in this typology, this

makes the explanation of IPV difficult.

Impoverished Explanations

A final issue exists in Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology in that where explanations do

exist, they are impoverished. Intimate terrorism is explained as being caused by control,

which originates from patriarchal societal systems (Johnson, 1995, 2006, 2008). This rhetoric

has existed since the introduction of the gendered perspective of IPV began (Dobash &

Dobash, 1979). The mechanisms by which societal norms result in violence are not

elaborated on in Johnson's typology. Researchers have theorised that patriarchal beliefs may

lower the threshold over which violence towards a partner is acceptable (Alvi et al., 2005).

However, the link between patriarchal beliefs and attitudes supportive of violence is not

straightforward (Beauchamp et al., 2012), and the presence of violence-supportive attitudes

tends to be a weak to moderate predictor of violence (Capaldi et al., 2012). If societal

explanations are to be distilled into psychological processes and behaviours, the causal

mechanisms by which this occurs should be elaborated on.

While intimate terrorism and mutual violent control are allocated the explanation of

control (Johnson, 1995, 2006), the categories of situational couple violence and violent

resistance also suffer from lack of explanatory depth. For example, explanations of situational

couple violence refer to family violence literature which argues a combination of individual

and contextual factors lead to an elevated risk of violence in situations of relationship

disagreement or conflict (Straus & Gelles, 1990). These may offer avenues to explore, but in

themselves do not offer in depth explanations of the causes of IPV. Violent resistance as a

category has been even more neglected, explained only as a resistance to control tactics, (Johnson, 2008).

Conclusions

Current typological approaches to understanding IPV do not hold up to scrutiny regarding whether they lead to meaningful explanations of behaviour. Based on legally-defined features of behaviour, neither Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) and Johnson's (1995, 2006) typologies are conceptually constructed in a way that facilitates scientific explanation. The danger with this is that typologies may become reified in the literature before further investigation can investigate any specific causal links that can be made between individual characteristics and types of violence (Capaldi & Kim, 2007). If current typologies are treated as concrete realities, rather than abstractions for the use of researchers and clinicians, there is a risk of making inferences about the causes of behaviour based on conceptually weak categories (Ward & Carter, 2019). That said, alternative approaches to understanding IPV have been suggested, outside of typological research. Notably, bodies of research suggest IPV should be understood in the context of dynamic interactions within social systems and should be considered from a functional perspective. These perspectives are important to recognise and may offer a way forward in how typologies of IPV should be constructed in the future.

A Way Forward

The Interactionist Perspective

Scholars of child development and family dynamics have long understood psychological problems and behaviour as a product of the interaction between individual predispositions and environmental context (Cicchetti & Lynch, 1993; Frude, 1991). Individuals do not exist in a vacuum. Behaviour is enacted in response to and in engagement with the physical and social environments that surround them. Bronfenbrenner (1979)

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developed a theory of nested ecological systems, which recognises the different levels of systems that exist in relation to individuals. The microsystem describes the characteristics of the immediate context in which behaviour occurs, such as the family unit. The exosystem refers to wider formal and informal social systems such as the work, school, or peer groups environment. The macrosystem is the broadest level of influence and encompasses wider social structures that influence cultural beliefs and values. It is the interaction and overlap between these systems that provides the contexts and triggers for individual behaviour (Neal & Neal, 2013).

Dutton (2006c) applied the nested ecological systems approach to IPV to describe the ways in which an individual's environment might elicit relationship aggression. They argue that a patriarchal societal ideology may form the macrosystem in which IPV may occur. Exosystemic features such as employment stress, and the absence of social support systems, as well as an immediate microsystem consisting of relationship power imbalance or communication difficulty, may combine to create a setting in which violence may occur. A fourth level, labelled the ontogenic level, refers to the characteristics and cognitive-emotional appraisals that an individual might bring to bear in a transactional exchange within a social context (Cicchetti & Lynch, 1993; Dutton, 2006c). This accounts for the fact that two different people raised in the same environment may confront relationship difficulty with different tactics, including nonviolence.

There is convergence on the idea that interpersonal violence cannot be studied solely through identifying characteristics of individuals. Capaldi et al. (2005) proposed a dynamic developmental systems approach in which risk for IPV is understood in terms of the developmental histories of both partners. Whether that risk results in relationship violence is influenced by proximal contexts, such as substance use, and escalation of conflict by one or both partners. In a similar fashion, Bell and Naugle (2008) developed a contextual framework

for investigating variables related to episodes of IPV. They drew on empirical findings and theories of behaviour to determine factors that likely contribute to IPV. These include antecedents such as the individual's learning and developmental history, behavioural skills, core beliefs, and situational factors such as emotional distress or substance use. They emphasise the importance of behavioural contingencies – the consequences and environmental feedback of violence, such as a reduction in personal distress, or partner compliance, may increase the likelihood of a repeat event. The advantage of these multifactorial perspectives is that they acknowledge the complexity of interactions that occur in the lead up to, and during an event of IPV. This also allows for the inclusion of new findings about factors that may be important in cases of IPV.

The interactionist perspective of IPV argues for considering factors operating within multiple systems in any framework for studying IPV. Any complete explanation of IPV will need to allow contextual factors to be explored. This is not to say the pursuit of individual typologies is pointless. While ecological models provide a framework from which to explore individual and contextual risk factors for IPV, they do not necessarily offer specific explanations of how different factors interact to produce behaviour. Approaches that allow for causal explanations of individual instances of IPV are still in need of development.

Functional Assessment

Current typologies of IPV describe the structural features of behaviour, or the acts of violence themselves (e.g. Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Even Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology, which aims to describe the motivations for violence, does so by describing different types of behaviours, such as economic control. However, applying these typologies to practice is challenging. Individuals may not remain in the same category over time (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2003), and there tends to be a lack of development on treatment applications (Capaldi & Kim, 2007; Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2004). In practice,

explanations for behaviour tend to be guided by a clinician's use of functional analysis and case formulation (Craig & Rettenberger, 2018; Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2020; Ireland et al., 2009).

Functional approaches take the position that individuals enact behaviours because they are advantageous or serve a purpose in an environment (Ireland et al., 2009). Functional analysis is a method of psychological assessment that seeks to understand the underlying goals or motivations of behaviours, and has been applied to the formulation of offending-related behaviours (Sturmey, 2020). By determining the function of behaviour and the context in which it was elicited, clinicians can form an individualised explanation for behaviour. A large body of evidence supports the stance that functional assessments are useful for understanding a range of problematic behaviours (Hanley, 2012). Crucially, the function or motivations underlying behaviour can act as a core treatment target in these cases (Ireland et al., 2009). This may include equipping individuals with the resources or alternative strategies that serve the same function without resulting in harmful psychological, physical, social, or legal consequences.

Functional assessment is usually implemented through a collaborative process between practitioner and client, in which a detailed developmental and learning history is taken (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2020). This process is guided by clinical interviewing procedures that allow that antecedents and consequence of behaviour to be delineated. Applied to IPV, functional assessment is congruent with the interactionist perspective, as it allows exploration of the specific contexts or environmental factors in which violence may or may not occur (Ireland et al., 2009). Important to note is that aside from the method of how functional assessment is achieved, there are no guidelines that practitioners can refer to in determining the plausible goals that violent behaviour may serve. This places the onus on practitioners to remain up to date with current research and best practice for assessment of

IPV. While this does not undermine the value of functional assessment, there is scope to streamline the process of assessment by equipping clinicians with a heuristic tool to guide the discovery of behavioural functions.

Summary

The theoretical and conceptual development of IPV has been hindered by debate over whether IPV is a gendered phenomenon. This is evident in Johnson's (1995, 2006) typology, which was developed as a resolution to the feminist and gender inclusive perspectives on IPV. Despite this, there has been suggestion that a psychological approach to IPV may be more relevant, with Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) developing a model of how different types of people who have perpetrated IPV may result based on their backgrounds characteristics.

Problems that dog the classification of crime in general, as discussed in chapter two of this thesis, are not avoided by looking at specific typologies of IPV. Analysis of both Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) and Johnson's (1995, 2006) typologies has demonstrated that without consideration of purpose and scope, classifying people who have perpetrated IPV into groups results in confusing and incoherent categories. It is difficult to draw concrete inferences about the categories in either of these typologies – a cornerstone of classification. There is a clear discrepancy between the purpose of these key typologies – namely, to provide targets for explaining IPV – and the lack of theoretical work done to ensure this eventuates. While classifications such as these have the potential to guide theoretical developments in the field of IPV, this has largely been overlooked. Currently, conceptualisations of people who perpetrate IPV do not satisfy the basic requirements that have been outlined for a classification that aims to guide explanation, and thus may be inappropriately targeted to form causal explanations.

It is apparent that the schism generated by the gender debate of IPV, a lack of consideration for the purpose and scope of classification, and more broadly a commitment to treating offending behaviours as qualitatively different from other non-harmful behaviours, have obscured alternative conceptualisations of violence. IPV, as a category of human behaviour, has the potential to be explained from multiple perspectives, yet current classifications have focused on the structure of these specific offending behaviours. More recent research in IPV and general aggression suggests a perspective that views violence as both functional and interactive. In other words, violent behaviour is enacted in service of specific goals in particular contexts. The need for individualised assessments which result in explanations of violence that can be useful in treatment presents an opportunity to re-evaluate the role of classification with regard to IPV. Chapter four will attempt to reconcile the functional perspective of violence with the task of classification by presenting an alternative framework for classifying offending behaviours. If the scope of a classification focuses on explanation, it may be possible to create a typology of IPV with clear clinical utility.

Chapter Four: A Functional Typology

A common point of discussion throughout this thesis is that the only distinguishing factor between 'criminal' and 'non-criminal' behaviour is the value imparted on it by society. This chapter argues that within current classifications of crime, the unit of classification – criminal behaviour – is inappropriately targeted. Constructing an all-encompassing explanatory classification of crime is futile when the wide range of behaviours that 'crime' encompasses is considered. Even within one specific category such as IPV, behaviour can be expressed through various means, including physical aggression, verbal threats, or even over the internet. It may be more useful to view criminal behaviours outside of a legal framework and assess whether they are adaptive, or non-adaptive for an individual. Shifting the lens of classification to focus on the different *functions or goals*, rather than *structural features*, of behaviour may be necessary if the aim of classifying is to understand why individuals engage in actions that are on the surface non-adaptive, and lead to serious negative consequences, such as incarceration. Before introducing a specific framework for classifying offending behaviours (Ward & Carter, 2019), it is important to first elaborate on functional and goal-directed behaviour to justify this as an avenue for further exploration.

Behaviour can be understood as an interaction between an organism and its environment. It is an organised response that facilitates the achievement of evolutionarily-derived tasks (Del Giudice, 2018). While humans are capable of responding in innumerable ways, these tend to be oriented towards the general functions of survival and inclusive fitness. In this sense behaviour is *adaptive* for individuals. Actions are guided toward the achievement of adaptive goals in specific situations. For example, if an individual's life is presented with a life-threatening situation, an associated goal may be to escape the threat by running away. Goals may be governed by the capacities and values of the individual as well as the normative context in which behaviour is enacted (Emmons, 1999; Heffernan & Ward,

2019). Behaviour can therefore be understood in terms of the benefits it affords an individual, and the environmental or internal resources by which it is constrained (Aunger & Curtis, 2015). Whether goals are conscious or unconscious, individuals are guided by motivations oriented towards adaptive outcomes. If humans are goal-directed beings, theoretical models, classifications, and explanations should reflect this understanding.

The remainder of this chapter will discuss how a goal-directed perspective may be applied to offending behaviour in a classification that is clear in both purpose and category selection. First, the Functional Offending Behaviours Classification Framework (Ward & Carter, 2019), which suggests using motivations for behaviour as the unit of classification, will be outlined. This will then be discussed with reference to its application to IPV. A preliminary Motivational Systems Typology will be introduced, making use of an exemplar to demonstrate how this may lead to improved understandings of behaviour.

The Functional Offending Behaviours Classification Framework

Ward and Carter (2019) propose a classification framework that removes the lens of crime from the task of classifying offending behaviour, allowing this to be understood as adaptive or functional in relation to the environment. Behaviour is rarely non-functional, whether or not it is associated with criminal offending. Incorporating this goal-directed view of behaviour, they posit that behaviour should be classified not according to its structural features, but according to motivational systems that underpin and organise individual goals (Del Giudice, 2018; Emmons, 1999).

Motivational systems are psychological mechanisms that set and prioritise specific goals, and coordinate a range of cognitive, behavioural, or physiological responses in service of goals (Del Giudice, 2018). They also monitor the parameters of what constitutes goal success or failure. This is consistent with an evolutionary approach that seeks to derive systems that are common across a species – underlying motivational systems account for the

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wide variety of specific goals and behaviours that are apparent within individuals in different contexts, and among individuals from different cultures (Emmons, 1999). Inherent in a motivational systems perspective is the view that behaviour may be adaptive for an individual regardless of social judgement or consequences. Adaptive in this sense refers to the functional consequences of a behaviour being advantageous in terms of achieving evolutionarily-derived goals, rather than whether that behaviour is deemed socially desirable or undesirable (Del Giudice, 2018). If behaviour can be understood as goal-directed, then motivational systems may serve as a more useful unit for classifying behaviour. This functional approach provides a way to analyse the patterns of responses an individual may engage in, in service of one or more motivational systems.

The FOBCF (Ward & Carter, 2019) explicates two tiers of analysis. The first is the allocation of target behaviours (offending or non-offending) to one or more motivational systems. Specific motivational systems and their related goals or tasks have been suggested by Del Giudice (2018), and clarified by Ward and Carter (2019). For example, a fear and security motivational system may function to enable the goal of detecting and avoiding threats. A bodily regulation motivational system may motivate people to attend to physical and survival needs. Other motivational systems may involve the pursuit and maintenance of intimate relationships (such as a mating and pair bonding system), the support and care that comes with platonic or familial relationships (the attachment and caregiving system), or social recognition (status system; Ward & Carter, 2019). Each system is centred around context-specific tasks that may lead to a gain in cognitive, social, emotional, or material resources, which increase an individual's ability to thrive. These tasks are structured by the prevailing social norms. For example, the actions of two people may be organised by the status motivational system, yet in different contexts this could manifest as maintaining a high rank in an organisation, obtaining material resources, or having multiple sexual partners.

Classifying behaviours according to motivational systems frames the problem in a way that allows for their further analysis.

The second tier of analysis put forward by the FOBCF (Ward & Carter, 2019) is to determine whether behaviour is functional in terms of satisfying underlying motivations and associated goals, and why illegal behaviour results from these processes. A series of questions are posed by Ward and Carter (2019) to aid clarification of this, including establishing whether the mechanisms that produce behaviour are dysfunctional (e.g. through brain injury) or functional, and why harmful behaviour may be produced (e.g. through learning history). In simple terms, this tier of analysis aims to understand how a person's competencies, skills, and environmental resources relates to their ability to achieve the tasks set by motivational systems. This step goes beyond mere classification, into the explanation of behaviour. The FOBCF approach therefore clearly outlines the relationship between these two theoretical endeavours.

Rather than classify offending behaviours according to their structural similarities and differences, exploring underlying motivations may allow for targeted explanations of both offending behaviour, and related non-offending problems (Ward and Carter, 2019). Individuals have access to a suite of responses in the service of a motivational task, and the FOBCF views offending behaviour as one strategy that may be used to achieve this. This framework may therefore be useful in accounting for a range of problems an individual may present with, as they may be associated with the same motivational system. Conversely, similarities between the behaviours of different people may be motivated by different systems. This approach to classification may therefore be useful in overcoming the previously highlighted problems with current crime classification, and allow for individual explanations of behaviour to be elucidated. The FOBCF provides direction for the development of a clinically useful typology for IPV. The approach will henceforth be referred

to as the Motivational Systems Typology, to reflect the suggestion that behaviour be classified according to motivations and associated goals.

A Motivational Systems Typology of Intimate Partner Violence

A Motivational Systems Typology for IPV may be useful in overcoming the problems faced by current typologies. In developing this typology, it is important to consider from the beginning the conceptual issues that limit the utility of typologies, namely establishing a clear purpose and a coherent description of categories. The explicit purpose of constructing a Motivational Systems Typology is to facilitate explanatory formulations of IPV behaviours. Rather than seeking to identify subtypes based on behavioural features, which give little guidance on the causes of heterogeneous behaviours, the approach offered by the FOBCF (Ward & Carter, 2019) provides a way of using classification to guide explanation. Thus, the scope of this typology will be to guide functional assessment, and aid in the identification of intervention targets. Framing functional assessment around sets of specific psychological motivations may be a useful approach for practitioners who come into contact with those who have perpetrated IPV.

Furthermore, if the aim is to identify specific problems that individuals experience, rather determine what subtype of behaviour they are engaged in, this approach may circumvent some common typology issues such as overlap between categories. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) and Johnson's (1995, 2006) typologies of IPV run into the difficulty of individuals who fit into multiple categories, limiting the conclusions that can be made about each 'type' of perpetrator. If an individual displays a range of behaviours and risk factors associated with different groups, a typology constructed in this way is rendered almost unusable. A Motivational Systems Typology is not limited by rigid categories in the same way, as multiple behaviours may be enacted in the service of the same goal. In a similar vein, different motivations may be more salient at different points in an individual's life.

Individuals or behaviour are therefore not limited to being allocated to one stable category, as in other classification systems. The systems suggested by Ward and Carter (2019) are also preliminary, and there may be other systems that have yet to be labelled, or more appropriate labels for existing categories. In this way, the categories in the Motivational Systems Typology could be numerous, if distinct motivations for behaviour are found.

Category flexibility is one aspect of a Motivational Systems Typology that ensures categories, and the relationships between them, are described clearly and coherently. Another responsibility set by this criterion is the description of what each motivational system is, the goals or tasks associated with it, the emotional responses it may trigger, and the possible behavioural strategies that may be employed in its service. Ward and Carter (2019) have begun to describe different motivational systems as well as the offending and non-offending behaviours that may result. Motivational systems are essentially a theory of *behaviour in general*, however there may be some systems that are more likely to be associated with certain *offending behaviours*, such as IPV. Specifically, mating and pair bonding, and attachment and caregiving are obvious candidates for systems that motivate and organise IPV behaviours, due to the intimate nature of the relationships involved. Given the proliferation of the idea that people engage in IPV as a way of maintaining power (Pence & Paymar, 1993), the status system may also be worth exploring in relation to IPV. The precise nature of the systems involved in IPV cannot be elaborated on in depth without further research. This preliminary stage aims to set out how a Motivational Systems Typology may be useful, and what it may look like in practice, leaving scope for development.

However, in the interests of clarifying what a 'clear description' of a motivational system looks like, it should be noted that an 'aggression' system has also been put forward (Del Giudice, 2018; Ward & Carter, 2019). The function of this system is proposed to be responding to threats or proactively overcoming obstacles. Although this would appear to be

a clear candidate for motivating many behaviours deemed criminal, it may be problematic to include this as a motivational system. Aggression is commonly related to a feeling of anger, yet behaviours themselves are also labelled as 'aggressive'. Including an aggression system in this typology would be inconsistent with the other proposed categories, conflating an action with a motivation for behaviour. Thus, the aggression system should be omitted from this typology. This kind of conceptual consideration will prove important in developing categories for an accessible and user-friendly typology.

While the full extent of the motivational systems have not themselves been fully developed at this stage, what should be clear is that individuals within each category still have the potential to vary in terms of their behaviour. Even if two individuals are motivated by the same system, their different learning histories, capacities, and skills, will determine the strategies they use to achieve goals, and whether this is successful. In cases such as this, in which there are multiple ways to fit into a category, prototypes – or idealised members – of each category can be constructed (Kutschenko, 2011). This provides a way of describing categories while avoiding the laborious task of listing every possible combination of features an individual may exhibit. Much as a Labrador might be considered a common or prototype breed of the category 'dog', constructing exemplar cases for each motivational system will shed light on the kinds of goals individuals may be engaged in, as well as the kinds of strategies that may be employed. This may aid inferences about the people whose actions are allocated to certain motivational systems. No clear 'criteria' outlining consistent features of those in each category of this typology can be established due to the possible variance between individuals motivated by similar systems. The construction of exemplars will therefore be a key step in ensuring the motivational system categories remain coherent and clearly described.

An Aetiological Model

A conceptual model will be useful in guiding the construction of exemplars for how IPV behaviours may be classified and explained using the Motivational Systems Typology. The model proposed is based on Ward and Beech's (2004) aetiological model of risk. This original model was constructed to guide the integration of stable and acute DRFs into theories of sexual offending. The aetiological model allowed clinicians and researchers to theorise about how developmental factors, contextual triggering events, and psychological dispositions interact to increase risk of offending. This is a useful framework that allows the visualisation of the relevant aetiological variables that contribute to risk. However, since the development of this model, issues have been raised as to the validity of using DRFs to account for aetiology of behaviour (Ward & Fortune, 2016). In the current context of the Motivational Systems Typology, this model can be adapted, with motivational systems and the behaviours used to achieve goals replacing risk factors.
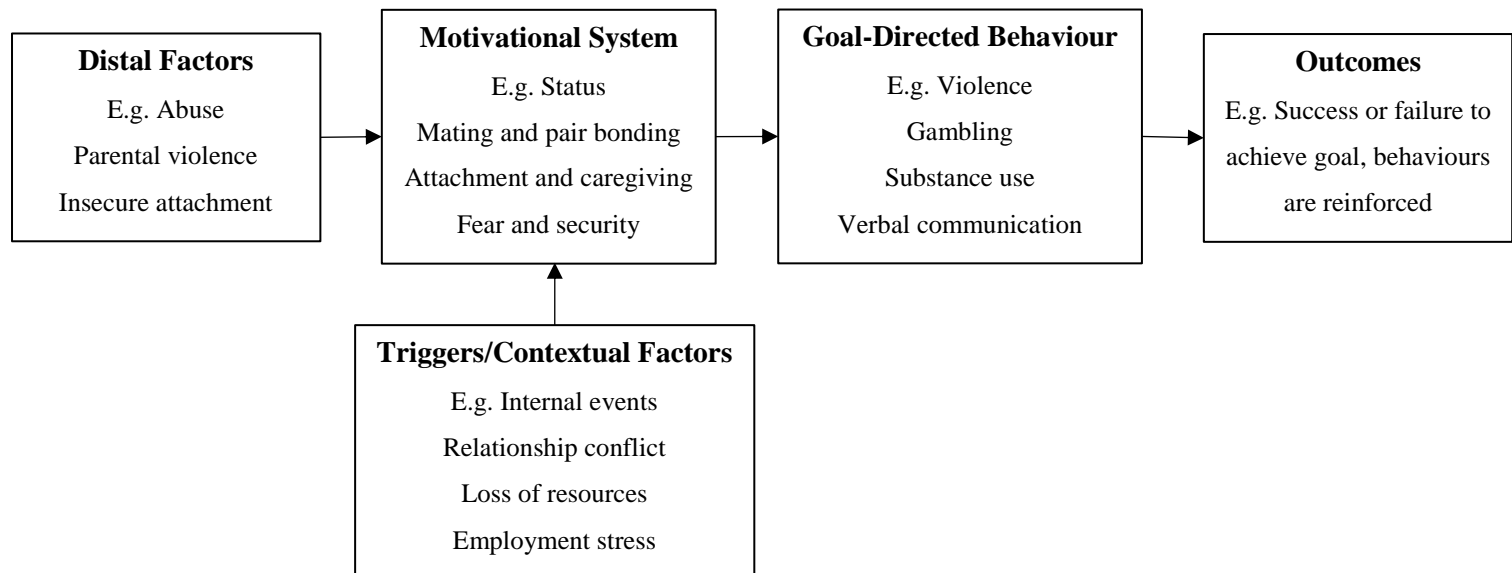

Figure 1. *A Conceptual Model of the Motivational Systems Typology.*

The adapted conceptual model, with examples of the factors that may be included at each stage, is represented in Figure 1. The purpose of this model is to structure the second tier of analysis outlined by the FOBCF (Ward & Carter, 2019), more closely linking classification with aetiological explanation. The model contains sections for distal factors, triggering or contextual factors, motivational systems, goal-directed behaviours, and outcomes. Each of these sections, and the relationships between them, will now be outlined.

Distal Factors

Distal factors may include early life experiences such as attachment style and exposure to abuse, access to adequate resources, and any developmental problems. The impact of distal factors is two-fold. First, learning about behaviours – and the resulting contingencies – informs the development competencies and strategies that may be employed to manage problems and work towards tasks. For example, exposure to parental verbal conflict in childhood may be related to individuals engaging in verbal aggression later in life (Oramas et al., 2017). If in childhood a person witnesses that interpersonal violence can have functional consequences, such as elimination of a perceived threat, this may generalise to similar situations. Other distal factors that have been hypothesised to relate to IPV include experiences of abuse, and insecure attachment style (e.g. Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000; Stewart et al., 2013). In this way, distal and developmental risk factors may set the parameters of what behaviours are considered adaptive to the individual.

A second function of distal risk factors and early life experiences is that they may regulate the threshold at which certain motivational systems are activated. Particularly salient events in an individual's life may mean that the related motivational system or systems and the tasks and emotional reactions involved are more easily triggered, either by recalling the event, or in contexts in which tasks are organised by those same systems. In relation to violent behaviour, consider an individual who has had been bullied in the past. Goals in this

context may be organised around security and personal safety, or perhaps around loss of status and humiliation. In future, this individual may be more sensitive to instances in which these systems are perceived to be under threat and be more likely to engage in problem solving behaviours compared with an individual who has never been bullied. Distal factors therefore have a crucial relationship with the contexts in which particular motivational systems are triggered, as well as the strategies used to solve goal-related problems.

Triggers or Contextual Factors

The hierarchy by which motivational systems are prioritised is in part determined by contextual factors or triggering events. Triggers may consist of internal events – such as recollection of prior distressing events – or external factors such as interpersonal interactions. Relationship conflict, or being threatened by a partner may bring the goals of particular motivational system to the fore. In the latter case, the goals associated with the fear and security system may take priority over goals associated with fulfilling bodily regulation needs, such as accessing food. Other factors such as employment stress and loss of resources may trigger different goals related to status or acquisition (Ward & Carter, 2019).

Motivational Systems

Motivational systems include those outlined by Del Giudice (2018), and Ward and Carter (2019), such as fear and security, bodily regulation, mating and pair bonding, status, and attachment and caregiving. Once a motivational system is activated or threatened, emotional responses play a role informing internal representations of the problem (Del Giudice, 2018). For example, a negative emotional response may coordinate attempts to achieve relevant goals, such as the maintenance of a relationship. On the other hand, emotions that have a positive valence may indicate success in dealing with a problem, leading to the down-regulation of that motivational system in favour of other priorities. Motivational systems play a key role in organising sets of responses in service of context-relevant tasks.

Goal-Directed Behaviours

Cognitions and skills are integrated to inform a set of responses, strategies, or behaviours designed to achieve goals. Multiple strategies, including violence and beliefs around the situations in which violence is acceptable, may be simultaneously deployed in service of a goal. Goal-directed behaviours are informed by developmental and distal factors. Those that are adaptive may be referred to as 'competencies' – if they do not result in any harmful consequences. For example, an individual may use verbal communication skills to defuse a situation of relationship conflict. While offending behaviours may be successful in achieving desired outcomes in some circumstances, they usually also result in negative consequences, either for the individual or those around them. Non-offending strategies may also cause problems for the individual. For example, individuals may engage in risky gambling behaviour, motivated by an acquisition system (Ward & Carter, 2019). This has the potential to fulfil a motivation towards acquiring resources, yet is perhaps more likely to result in loss of those resources, so is not necessarily an adaptive behaviour. For tasks to be achieved successfully, individuals require relevant behavioural and psychological skills and capacities (Ward & Carter, 2019).

Outcomes

The use of specific behaviours as strategies for achieving goals is partially contingent upon whether they have been used to successfully achieve goals in the past. This learnt behaviour may come from social learning in early life, or previous use of the strategy. Importantly, the outcome of a coordinated set of responses determines whether they may be deemed 'successful' or not by the individual. If, for example, the act of running away from a threat ensures an individual's safety and distance from danger, this may be associated with a decrease in negatively valenced emotions and an increase in positively valenced emotions. The corresponding fear and security system is also likely to be down-regulated in favour of

other priorities. This outcome may also increase the likelihood of that individual running away again in the future. Conversely, if running away fails to mitigate a perceived threat, this may lead to the intensification of negative emotional responses, such as panic. Failure to achieve goals or deal with motivational threats may result in more long-term negative emotional responses, such as anxiety or low self-esteem.

The integration of these five sections outlines how behaviour may be explained from a motivational systems perspective. While the primary aim of introducing the Motivational Systems Typology is to present an alternative system to IPV *classification*, showing how this may lead to behavioural *explanations* is a crucial step if it is to be useful in practice. To demonstrate what an exemplar for the typology may look like, the system of mating and pair bonding will be described in the context of IPV using a hypothetical case example. Each section of the model will be considered.

Exemplar: Mating and Pair Bonding

Izzie is a 25-year-old female who has been in a romantic relationship with Jacob, also 25, for 12 months. Both are Pākehā and grew up in Aotearoa-New Zealand. Izzie has been referred for assessment regarding her use of violence towards Jacob. Their relationship has been characterised by frequent bouts of conflict. A typical argument might begin with Izzie accusing Jacob of cheating on her, due to his staying out late with female friends. This usually escalates into both parties yelling. In the past Izzie has thrown objects at Jacob, and slapped and shoved him during arguments. During the most recent conflict, Jacob threatened to leave the relationship, and started to pack an overnight bag. Izzie then pushed him into the doorframe as he tried to leave the room, resulting in Jacob cutting his head and requiring stitches. On this occasion, a neighbour heard the yelling and called the police, resulting in Izzie presenting for psychological assessment.

The Motivational Systems Typology may be used to guide assessment and formulation of this case. During a psychological assessment, functional analysis may take place alongside gathering information about a client's social and developmental history, to gather a full picture of why certain behaviours have occurred (Morrison, 2016; Ready & Veague, 2014). A functional assessment in this case can be used to determine the contexts in which the target behaviour (verbal abuse and violence) occurs, and what goals Izzie is engaged in when she uses violence. Given that the IPV here occurs exclusively in situations of relationship conflict, in which Izzie feels the stability of the relationship is threatened, her behaviour can be linked to the mating and pair bonding system. The assessment should also shed light on what Izzie views as a 'successful' relationship – what goals she might hold in relation to this system. Informed by the prevailing norms of the society and family system Izzie grew up in, possible goals include maintaining a stable monogamous relationship, and receiving displays of affection and commitment from a partner. Once her behaviour has been categorised into the mating and pair bonding category, explanations can begin to be constructed as to why she has used violence in service of this motivation.

Before looking at the strategies used to achieve these goals and their success at doing so, Izzie's background should be considered, particularly her background concerning other important relationships. Izzie grew up in a turbulent family environment, and has a history of relationship rejection. She was exposed to many instances of parental conflict. When she was 10 years old, her parents divorced. Izzie would often witness her parents arguing about child support and custody arrangements. She has also been cheated on by previous romantic partners. These experiences have resulted in Izzie learning that verbal and physical abuse is an appropriate response to relationship conflict, and that fighting over relationship issues is a way to show care about the relationship. She is also particularly sensitive to situations

involving partners being unfaithful. A combination of these developmental factors may lead to increased salience of threats to the mating and pair bonding system for Izzie.

During the most recent conflict between Izzie and Jacob, Jacob indicating his desire to leave the relationship acted as an external trigger to Izzie's goals around mating and pair bonding. This triggered an emotional response of anger and panic, and the primary task for Izzie became to mitigate the threat posed to the system and prevent the breakdown of her relationship. The dyadic nature of the interaction therefore influenced the sequence of events, and outcome of the conflict.

Finally, the behaviours Izzie deploys to deal with the threats to her relationship, and whether the outcomes are successful, can be examined. Given Izzie's history of witnessing and being involved in relationship conflict, violence is one strategy Izzie has learned can be successful in maintaining a relationship. In instances where Izzie has been verbally abusive or physically violent towards Jacob in the past, this has resulted in him becoming temporarily more attentive to her needs in the relationship. This renders the use of violence as a functional or adaptive behaviour for Izzie, albeit an undesirable one that has resulted in negative legal and physical consequences.

Izzie also experiences other, non-offending problems in her attempts to mitigate relationship threats and negative emotional responses. For example, she regularly confiscates and checks Jacob's phone without his consent to ensure he does not message other women. This strategy successfully manages her worry about him being unfaithful – yet is an invasion of Jacob's privacy and is thus an unacceptable behaviour. She also experiences anxiety and low self-esteem due to overall relationship dissatisfaction, particularly when she is unable to prevent him going out without her. She regularly drinks alcohol as another strategy to quell negative feelings in the absence of other competencies by which to manage her goals.

The motivational systems approach allows problem behaviours to be considered in the context in which they occur, and alongside other strategies, rather than explained in isolation. The functionality of these strategies should be considered when making intervention decisions for the individual. In this case, intervention may focus on providing opportunities for Izzie to learn about healthy communication and conflict resolution strategies, and equipping her with competencies to deal with relationship threats without resorting to violence. This exemplar, though simplistic, demonstrates both how behaviour may be classified according to motivational systems, and how this may be useful in constructing psychologically informed explanations of IPV. This is a preliminary example of how the typology may guide explanations, and other such cases should be constructed and refined for each motivational system in the context of IPV.

Summary

Human behaviour is goal-directed. This is an essential principle to understand in the development of explanatory frameworks of behaviour, and interventions to change problem behaviours. Classification can play a role here. If behaviours can be classified according to their function, rather than their structure, this will facilitate the construction of explanatory theories. Ward and Carter's (2019) FOBCF, which elaborates on this idea, outlines a viable way forward for the classification of crime. Motivational systems, which organise the goals which behaviour is enacted in service of, may form the basis for categories in a new classification framework.

This framework may have particular use in redirecting the focus of typologies of IPV. A typology based around the motivational systems that guide behaviour has the potential to help structure the functional assessment of behaviour for those presenting at forensic services. Elaborating on the goals individuals are engaged in may guide clinicians towards meaningful conclusions about the purpose of IPV behaviours. Such goals could relate to

general systems such as mating and pair bonding, maintaining status, acquisition, and fear and security. The goals of different motivational systems may interact within an individual to process complex behavioural processes. Importantly, the capacities and resources of an individual determine the kinds of goal-directed behavioural strategies that might be used in attempts to achieve goals. One such strategy may be interpersonal violence. A Motivational Systems Typology of IPV is proposed to help clarify how the role of motivational systems in producing behaviour.

A conceptual model makes clear how the Motivational Systems Typology makes clear how this typology could be used in the task of explanation. This model allows distal and contextual factors to be integrated into explanations of how motivational systems work to produce behaviours. Importantly, the model allows for consideration of the range of strategies an individual may employ in service of goals – classification and any subsequent explanation is not limited to certain types of behaviours. This allows the function of both IPV behaviours, and other non-offending problems, to be considered.

The advantages of such an approach are numerous, as it addresses problems outlined with classification and general, and more specifically problems with current typologies of IPV. The Motivational Systems Typology has a clear purpose and defined scope from the outset, which sets up the justification for using motivational systems as the unit of classification. To aid with clear description of categories, an approach of constructing exemplar cases of each category has been suggested. If categories can be coherently described and linked together, then inferences can begin to be made about the characteristics of individuals who are motivated by different systems are likely to display, or hypothesise about clusters of problems that tend to co-occur. However, this task will likely require further research before any conclusions can be made.

The Motivational Systems Typology is essentially based around a theory of behaviour. A preliminary model applying this to the study of IPV has been introduced, demonstrating an understanding that IPV is both functional and a product of the dynamic interaction between an individual and their environment. While the categories that constitute the typology will require further investigation, the theoretical development of this approach to classification has clear clinical implications, and more broadly implications for the classification of crime in general.

Chapter Five: Clinical and Theoretical Implications

Implications for Intimate Partner Violence

Clinically speaking, the development of a Motivational Systems Typology may result in a tool that can be used by practitioners to guide functional assessments that focus on the goals and tasks engaged in by individuals who have perpetrated IPV behaviours. This tool would have value as a flexible heuristic, suggesting specific motivational systems that organise individual goals, with the potential for different motivational systems to influence an individual's behaviour in different contexts. The Motivational Systems Typology, applied to cases of IPV, may have implications for treatment programmes allocated to people who engage in IPV, and for the development of theories of IPV.

One-Size-Fits-All Treatment

The standard Duluth model (Pence & Paymar, 1993) of treatment for people who have perpetrated IPV presupposes that all of these individuals engage in IPV for the same reasons – the power and control of women. This is a one-size-fits-all approach to treatment. However, this approach has been subject to criticism (Cantos & O'Leary, 2014; Holtzworth-Munroe, 2001), with weak treatment effect sizes cited as evidence that a less general approach is needed. In short, the Duluth model fails to account for the heterogeneity of people who perpetrate IPV, including the fact that women can also engage in these behaviours (Cantos & O'Leary, 2014). Research regarding typologies of IPV has suggested that by understanding the heterogeneity of those who aggress against a partner, these individuals can be assigned to treatment programmes that best suit their individual needs (Holtzworth-Munroe & Meehan, 2004). While this is logical and in theory opens the door to a broader range of cognitive-behavioural interventions, there is limited evidence that subtypes of people who have perpetrated IPV can be matched to treatment (Stewart et al., 2013). The nature of intimate relationships is dynamic, and thus the presence of violence, and the

severity and type of violence in a relationship may differ over time. Existing typologies may not reveal stable subtypes of individuals due to their reliance on classifying specific behaviours, and therefore are difficult to translate into treatment policy (Stewart et al., 2013). The clinical utility of the subtypes found by Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000) has been assessed, and findings indicate that practitioners rarely use the subtypes to guide treatment in practice (Weber & Bouman, 2017). While assigning individuals to treatment on a case by case basis is preferable to a one-size-fits-all approach, existing typologies may not be useful in achieving this.

The Motivational Systems Typology is consistent with the growing consensus that individuals who perpetrate IPV may not all have the same treatment needs. However, the typology also goes beyond this, and may be useful in helping practitioners assign different treatment options. To employ a 'treatment-by-subtype' approach, typologies need to help identify specific clinical targets to address through interventions, beyond DRFs that may or may not be consistent between individuals in each subtype. Rather than apply broad and vague labels to whole groups in a population, the Motivational Systems Typology may be useful in highlighting the unique needs of each individual. A motivational systems approach aims to identify the potentially more stable underlying functions of behaviour, paving the way for individualised case formulations that can be used to assign psychologically informed treatment.

Theories of Intimate Partner Violence

The Motivational Systems Typology may serve as a conduit between classification and the construction of theories about IPV. The dominant theory of IPV is that of gendered theory, in which men behave violently towards women as a result of societal influences (e.g. Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Analysis of the validity of this theory is important. Evaluation of gendered theory in relation to IPV has found that it is over-general, and unable to account for

the variation observed in IPV behaviours and in the people who perpetrate them (Graham-Kevan, 2007). If patriarchal societies support men's aggression towards women, this fails to account for women who perpetrate IPV, for the large amount of men who are never violent towards their intimate partners, and for violence in societies in which women do not experience systemic disempowerment (Archer, 2006). This monolithic theory should not obfuscate the development of other explanations for IPV. As well as macro-level, societal explanations for IPV, theories of IPV should be aimed at family and community systems, as well as individual experiences that result in IPV behaviour. Gendered theory may present one strain of a macro-level theory of IPV within a nested ecological system (e.g. Bell & Naugle, 2008; Capaldi et al., 2005; Dutton, 2006; Saunders, 2004).

The proposed Motivational Systems Typology presents an avenue for exploring individual and relationship-level explanations of IPV. The concept of motivational systems is a relatively recent development (Del Giudice, 2018), and the categories will need to be developed further if they are to be useful for the systematic classification of individuals. To aid this process, existing typologies of IPV may be drawn upon. The FO, GVA, and DB subtypes proposed in Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) Typology may reflect differences in the behavioural strategies used by individuals whose behaviours are oriented by particular motivational systems. The accompanying developmental model may therefore be of use in identifying the problems that are most associated with threats to specific motivational systems. For example, those classified into the DB group have been found to be more likely to exhibit problems with interpersonal jealousy (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 2000). Indeed, jealousy is viewed as a promising avenue for addressing IPV concerns (Stewart et al., 2013). It may be that behaviours motivated by threats to the systems governing mating and pair bonding, or status-related goals are likely to be accompanied by feelings of jealousy. Valuable insight into the characteristics of those who engage in IPV may be gained by

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reviewing extant typologies, which may be incorporated into the categories proposed in the Motivational Systems Typology. While current typologies of IPV may lack the conceptual robustness to offer explanatory pathways on their own, they still offer information about clusters of phenomena which may be useful in developing individual-level theories of IPV and those who engage in aggressive behaviours.

Implications for Rehabilitation

Adopting the Motivational Systems approach in practice also has implications for the rehabilitation frameworks that form the basis of treatment. While treatment refers to the application of psychological principles to the process of behaviour change in clinical settings, rehabilitation refers to the overarching framework that specifies the values, aims, principles, and aetiological assumptions of treatment (Ward et al., 2007). The motivational systems approach to classifying individuals may be integrated with extant rehabilitation frameworks and link the aims of rehabilitation with treatment practices and outcomes.

The Risk-Need-Responsivity Model

The RNR model (Bonta & Andrews, 2017) is by and large the main framework guiding psychological interventions in the justice system both internationally and in Aotearoa-New Zealand. This approach is one of risk management, in which the aim is to reduce the likelihood of individuals reoffending by reducing the number or strength of DRFs, or *criminogenic needs* that are associated with their index offence. The difficulties with conflating DRFs with causal constructs have been briefly outlined in chapter two, including their lack of specificity by which to explain behaviour. Furthermore, the assumptions about human functioning inherent within the RNR model have been subject to scrutiny. Specifically, the RNR fails to take into account the agency of individuals in shaping and understanding their own behaviours, and assumes that categories of crime – which are entirely normative – pose valid targets for explaining human functioning (Dent et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, as the dominant rehabilitation framework within correctional psychology, practitioners must work with the parameters set out by the RNR model. The broad aims of risk reduction via targeting the causes of crime, and tailoring treatment to individual responsivity factors are entirely valid. Viewing behaviour as goal-directed, and taking a motivational systems approach to the classification and explanation of behaviour may complement these aims by more clearly explicating the causes of behaviour.

Structuring classification around the goals and motivations of behaviour can provide a framework for exploring the causes of behaviour in a way that does not rely on thin categories of DRFs, as described by the exemplar in chapter four. This approach could also be useful in tailoring treatment to individual cases, therefore incorporating responsivity factors. For example, a preoccupation with achieving a stable relationship is not an inherently criminogenic need. However, in the case of Izzie, introduced in chapter four, the offending behaviour is structured around the goal of maintaining a relationship. Thus this goal may be identified as a contributing cause to her offending behaviour. Non-offending problems that also result from the pursuit of goals may also be identified through this strategy, and addressing these problems may increase motivation for, and ability to engage in treatment (Ward & Brown, 2004). For example, if an individual experiences problems with alcohol that co-occur with IPV behaviours, then treatment for addiction and relapse prevention strategies may form a part of any intervention alongside intervention for violent behaviours. In cases where drug or alcohol use is not a strategy to achieve goals or cope with failure to succeed, this intervention may not be required. In this way, classifying behaviours according to their relevant motivational system and the goals that influence behaviours means that causes of behaviour can be elucidated, and improve the responsiveness of interventions to addressing the specific needs of individuals, improving ethical service delivery.

The Good Lives Model

The Good Lives Model (GLM; Ward et al., 2007; Ward & Maruna, 2007) has been proposed as a complementary framework of rehabilitation to the RNR model (Bonta & Andrews, 2017). The GLM takes a humanistic approach to functioning, and acknowledges that individuals have their own beliefs, values, and goals for a good, satisfying life (Ward et al., 2007). The model specifies that alongside managing risk, rehabilitation should seek to improve psychological wellbeing and equip individuals with the capacities to achieve personally meaningful lives (Ward & Brown, 2004). Central to this framework is the assumption that behaviour is goal-directed. People behave in ways that allow them to achieve primary human goods – valued aspects of human functioning and living that are sought for their own sake (Chu et al., 2014). Goods include striving for community, knowledge, agency, or creativity. If primary human goods can be identified in treatment, individuals can be equipped with the means to achieve these goals through legitimate means.

The RNR model (Bonta & Andrews, 2017) specifies the reduction of risk as a core value, but a focus on individual's deficits and the ways in which they are failing to live a socially sanctioned life is demoralising to both clients and practitioners (Stewart et al., 2013). The GLM (Ward et al., 2007), on the other hand, is a strengths-based approach, as individuals are evaluated according to the capacities they possess, with the aim to strengthen those capacities that may be lacking. Focusing on both strengths and weaknesses of individuals means the goals of behaviour in general can be assessed, outside of the criminal context. This enables practitioners to focus on both offending and non-offending problems, as well as any instances in which an individual is able to achieve goals through prosocial means. The Motivational Systems Typology aligns with the assumptions about human functioning specified in the GLM. While the purpose of the typology is to allocate individuals to categories based on their offending behaviour, this does not preclude the examination of

behaviours that do not result in offending. In fact, to gain a well-rounded picture of how an individual functions day to day, it would be beneficial to understand the systems at play when their behaviour does not result in harmful outcomes. The Motivational Systems Typology adopts a focus on the capacities that an individual possesses, which lays the foundation for any resulting intervention to be strengths-based.

The motivational systems outlined in this thesis may form the basis by which primary human goods may be studied. In the context of correctional rehabilitation, primary human goods are treatment-focused constructs, outlining the goals humans may engage with in pursuit of a good life. The specific tasks involved in achieving these are enveloped in social norms – while individuals will differ in their conceptions of what it means to live a meaningful life, the degree to which primary human goods are valued is undoubtedly shaped by societal expectations and standards. Motivational systems are also goal focused, and thus consistent with the view that there are core needs and values that humans seek to achieve. However, the Motivational Systems Typology is primarily aimed at guiding explanation rather than framing treatment. A motivational systems approach recognises that behaviour can be adaptive even if it results in social disapproval – behaviours can be simultaneously adaptive and illegitimate, and this is made explicit right from when behaviours are first classified. While specific goals can certainly be shaped by the prevailing norms of society, in the case of motivational systems it is the individual who evaluates goal success or failure, chooses which goals to pursue in which situations, and whether behaviour fulfils the function of servicing a motivational system. Thus, exploring motivational systems and associated goals allows individual conceptualisations of a good life to be considered on the terms of the *individual*, rather than by the norms of *society* (Dent et al., 2020). This exploration of human functioning paves the way to consider what this looks like in social norm-driven contexts, facilitating the discovery of the primary human goods individuals strive for.

The GLM (Ward et al., 2007; Ward & Maruna, 2007) explains behaviour in a way that is more holistic than reducing individuals to clusters of risk factors, and allows for the goals of behaviour to be explicated. If behaviour can be categorised using the Motivational Systems Typology, this will facilitate the identification of clinical targets to work on in treatment, such as the capacities to achieve goals via prosocial means. Use of the Motivational Systems Typology may ensure the tools used for assessing explanatory targets are consistent with the aims of the overarching rehabilitation framework set out by the GLM. In this view, the values and goals of the individual are placed at the centre of rehabilitation, setting the stage for more meaningful outcomes and behavioural change.

Implications for Classification

The further development of the Motivational Systems Typology will serve as an example of key theoretical considerations in typology construction. The theoretical importance of classification has largely been overlooked across scientific domains, and particularly in psychology (Bailey, 1994; Ward, 2019). While preliminary, the current iteration of the Motivational Systems Typology highlights the importance of theoretically grounded classification, including a clearly outlined purpose and scope, and suggestions for how the different proposed categories may relate to each other. The aim of the Motivational Systems Typology is centred around the explanation of IPV and other offending behaviours, and the deliberate use of motivational systems as the unit of classification serves to facilitate this purpose.

This thesis has discussed typologies of IPV with reference to two different units of classification. Current typological approaches to IPV are built around a classification in which 'crime' is the overarching category (or unit of classification) by which behaviour is categorised. This lends itself to classifications that distinguish individuals based on the structural features of their behaviour, such as its severity, or whether a behaviour is violent or

sexual in nature, or drug related. More specifically, influential typologies of people who perpetrate IPV categorise individuals based on the contexts in which violence occurs, the outcomes of violence, as well as whether or not the behaviour fits the description of being 'controlling' (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Johnson, 1995, 2006). While this strategy of classification is no doubt useful for understanding the range of behaviours that constitute different types of crime, an alternative classification has been proposed here, shifting the unit of classification from 'crime' to 'motivational systems' that underpin behaviour. While this is still a classification that can be used to understand behaviour, the focus of categories is shifted from behaviour structure to behaviour function.

The unit of classification has implications for the conclusions that can be drawn from classifications of offending behaviours. Using *criminal* behaviour as the basis for classification limits the potential for causal explanations of these behaviours to be uncovered. Crime is a socially and legally defined category, and not a natural feature of the world – what constitutes a criminal act differs depending on context, time, and place. More than this, the behaviours that constitute criminal actions, even within narrower categories such as IPV, are varied and not underpinned by a single unitary phenomenon. Classifying IPV based on the structural features of behaviour leaves the causes of behaviour unknown because an act of physical violence may result from a number of different things, such as feelings of anger, desire to determine others' actions, or in response to a physical threat. Classifying behaviours according to underlying motivations avoids this problem, as the processes that coordinate behavioural responses such as violence may be broadly consistent across humans, and thus constitute natural kinds. Motivational systems as a unit of classification may therefore be more suited to identifying causal, scientific explanations of behaviour. This understanding of behaviour should be integrated into existing knowledge of offending behaviours, allowing a richer understanding of both the structure and function of IPV.

The second chapter of this thesis outlined the argument for pluralism in classification, as no single classification system is equipped to respond to the myriad ways of understanding phenomena. The two different approaches to classification outlined serve to demonstrate the notion of epistemic hubs (Kutschenko, 2011). The FOBCF (Ward & Carter, 2019), and more specifically the Motivational Systems Typology may sit alongside understandings of different crime types, with both serving as references of knowledge with different orientations to understanding IPV and other offending behaviours. Recall that different classification systems are differentially suited to solving different problems. If questions are asked about the characteristics of people who perpetrate IPV, or the types of behaviours the IPV involves, one might turn to Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994), or Johnson's (1995, 2006) typologies to make sense of the problem. However, if the problem is centred around identifying the reasons why an individual engages in IPV, or identifying meaningful clinical targets, these typologies are less helpful on account of relying on poorly conceptualised DRFs or incoherent categories. The Motivational Systems Typology offers a conceptualisation of behaviour divorced from the notion of crime, and thus has a different purpose to other typologies of IPV.

The notion of epistemic hubs allows a theoretical elephant in the room to be addressed. One of the themes of this thesis has been that classifying different types of criminal behaviour is not the most useful strategy for then explaining those behaviours. Yet the proposed Motivational Systems Typology is framed as being specifically targeted at IPV – a category of crime. Although this appears to be a contradiction, the two approaches are not mutually exclusive. The intention here is not to dismantle the notion of crime types – an understanding of what constitutes criminal behaviour is foundational in the structure of the legal system and approaches to crime prevention. Categories of crime are pervasive across scientific and legal bodies, and this is not to be dismissed. On the other hand, a motivational

systems approach may prove to be a useful tool to link classification to explanation. This approach is not limited to one subset of behaviours, and instead a variety of offending and non-offending behaviour may be studied through this lens. Applying the Motivational Systems Typology to specific categories of offending behaviours, such as IPV, demonstrates how two different approaches understanding behaviour may work in synchrony. Indeed, the FOBCF and Motivational Systems Typology may be applied to other kinds of offending behaviours (Ward & Carter, 2019). Combining the two approaches is a pragmatic middle ground, allowing for more precise explanations of behaviour within a justice system where individuals are referred to clinicians on account of the specific types of crime in which they have engaged. Not only is this an approach of classification pluralism, but the co-existence of different ways of understanding behaviour is one of epistemic pluralism, which may ultimately lead to enriched and more complete explanations of phenomena.

Summary

The aim of this chapter is to place the motivational systems approach to classifying behaviour into the context of IPV research, frameworks of rehabilitation, and the aims of classification more broadly. The advantages of using motivational systems as a unit of classification is that it offers a structure from which to explain behaviour, clearly linking the two theoretical tasks of classifying and explaining phenomena. In terms of IPV treatments, this may also offer a solution to the one-size-fits-all approach, in that clusters of problems experienced by individuals may be addressed on a case by case basis. A Motivational Systems Typology of IPV may also lead to new insights in theory development, particularly for individual-level explanations.

Although the Motivational Systems Typology is not explicitly aimed at suggesting specific interventions or treatment processes, this system of classification is congruent with the overarching rehabilitation frameworks in correctional psychology, particularly the GLM

(Ward et al., 2007). Where currently typologies of IPV lose power when tasked with translating subtypes into rehabilitation, the assumptions about the nature of human functioning within the Motivational Systems Typology are consistent with those in the GLM. Investigating the goals that individuals enact behaviour in service of puts psychological wellbeing and agency at the forefront of assessment. This primes the use of the GLM to inform rehabilitation, as individual's capacities to achieve goals may serve as treatment targets. A motivational systems approach to classifying behaviours has the potential to generate new understandings of IPV specifically, but also of offending behaviours in general, under a framework that is ethical, humane, and person-centred.

Chapter Six: Conclusions

Summary

Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have grappled with how best to engage with individuals who aggress against an intimate partner. While ideologically driven explanations for IPV have been important for highlighting and increasing interest in IPV research, a commitment to viewing IPV as a gendered phenomenon may have slowed the emergence of person-specific, psychologically informed explanations for these behaviours to inform effective interventions. The central argument of this thesis is that conceptual and theoretical development is necessary to inform explanations and effective interventions for IPV, with a focus on classification in explanation. The dual threads of understanding classification, and examining IPV in its own right, have been woven together throughout this thesis, to produce a preliminary typology of IPV – a novel approach that holds promise for improving the assessment, formulation, and treatment of IPV.

In directing the study of phenomena, classification is necessarily flexible, being relative to the needs of users. The variety of tasks that classification systems can be adapted to achieve means that the purpose of a typology should be explicit to the user and inform how it is constructed. Following on from this, the constructs studied within typologies should be organised into coherent categories that can be used for specific purposes. It is reductive to assume that it is sufficient to employ only one system of classifying phenomena, particularly when, as with offending behaviours, those phenomena represent an intersection of social norms and psychological systems.

The weaknesses of such a singular approach are evident when current approaches to classifying IPV are critically analysed from a theoretical perspective. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) and Johnson (1995, 2006) have introduced two dominant typologies which are explicitly oriented towards explaining IPV behaviours, albeit from different perspectives.

However, conceptual problems inherent to the categories and assumptions of these typologies limit their potential to guide rich causal explanations of IPV and subsequently to identify valid treatment targets, suggesting alternative classification strategies need to be explored. A solution to this problem lies in adopting a pluralistic account of classification.

Contemporary theories of behaviour have begun to explicate the different motivations and goals that influence an individual's actions (e.g. Del Giudice, 2018; Ward & Carter, 2019). Indeed, this approach is supported by the wider interpersonal violence literature, in which it is increasingly recognised that individuals engage in violence for a variety of reasons, necessitating individualised case formulations to identify the causes of an individual's behaviours (Craig & Rettenberger, 2018; Ireland et al., 2009). Drawing on this literature a typology classifying the motivations for behaviour is proposed. The Motivational Systems Typology proposes that IPV behaviours be considered in terms of the functions they serve, and whether this behaviour is adaptive. If motivational systems such as mating and pair bonding, status, or acquisition can be identified, individual behaviours can be understood not only in terms of their features, but in terms of what the behaviours mean for individuals. The conceptual framework presented acknowledges the relationship between distal developmental factors, motivational systems, contextual triggers, behaviours, and outcomes, with a view to explaining harmful behaviours and identify avenues for intervention.

The motivational systems approach to classifying behaviour has the potential to be applied to the assessment of individuals who engage in IPV by facilitating individualised explanations for behaviour. While it is an advantage that this aim has been considered from the outset, there are limits to the utility of this approach. For example, statistical risk prediction remains an important goal of the criminal justice system, to minimise the risk of harm to those in the community. As yet, there is no clear path from which statistical risk prediction can result from the motivational systems typology – the constructs and categories

within this typology are not geared towards predicting risk. The strength of the motivational systems approach lies in understanding the underlying reasons for harmful behaviours, but this also serves as a limitation, in that it is not an all-encompassing approach. Ultimately, this illustrates the need for multiple broad systems of classification to exist, each offering a unique perspective that can be integrated into a complete understanding of behaviour.

Future Research Directions

The potential of the Motivational Systems Typology as a means for exploring alternative classifications and informing the assessment and intervention decisions for people who have engaged in IPV has been discussed in chapter five. However, if this approach is to be developed into a clinically useful tool, then specific motivational systems, as well as their relationship with different goals and characteristics, need to be elaborated on. Chapter four presented examples of motivational systems that may conceivably be related to IPV behaviours, such as mating and pair bonding, and theorised how IPV behaviour may result from this system being triggered. While a useful demonstration of the nature of the typology, exemplars for other motivational systems, such as the status, or attachment and caregiving systems should also be developed. This may be done by drawing on existing literature outlining the characteristics that are consistently associated with IPV, such as jealousy, or attitudes supportive of violence (Stewart et al., 2013). Guided by this literature, it may be possible to develop theories relating to how motivations interact with these factors to generate the capacity for individuals to act aggressively.

Further to this, while motivational systems have been theorised, practical research is required to elaborate on the range of motivational systems that underlie behaviour. A qualitative approach could be employed to achieve this aim, consisting of interviews with men and women who have engaged in IPV. An interview schedule, such as that used in the GLM rehabilitation framework to aid in assessment of primary human goods (Willis & Ward,

2011), may be useful in the assessment of underlying motivations for individual's behaviour, as 'motivational systems' may be difficult to ask about directly due to their abstract nature. Once a clear set of motivational systems are identified, with exemplars developed for each, statistical validation of the typology may be appropriate. The categories of this typology can therefore be adapted and revised in accordance with observable data. A clear advantage of this approach is that it is not predicated on the assumption that men and women engage in different types of violent behaviours or are motivated by different factors.

Concluding Remarks

The scientific process necessarily involves conceptual and theoretical development which inform observation and experimentation. Classification is a crucial task in this process, as the description of groups of phenomena allows features of the natural and social worlds to be explained. This thesis has demonstrated the impact that classification has on how phenomena such as IPV are understood and explained, and how a change in approach might encourage more meaningful psychological explanations. The focus on different types of crime has misled how offending behaviours are explained, leading to a proliferation of ideologically driven theory and, subsequently, explanatory targets that are conceptually thin. A fair and humane justice system should aim to not only punish those who offend but rehabilitate them by providing them with the resources needed to desist from offending. With regard to people who engage in IPV, this aim is incongruent with current approaches that do not facilitate the construction of strong explanations of behaviour. Current perspectives suggest that criminal behaviour is a unique phenomenon that is aetiologically distinct from socially sanctioned behaviours, and this limits overall knowledge of the causes of offending behaviour. The suggested Motivational Systems Typology broadens these approaches to understandin*g* the *functions of human behaviour* in general, as well as encouraging psychological explanations of behaviour. That is to say, it is also functional in the sense that

it may be better equipped to serve the function of explanation compared to existing

typologies. This is conducive to a justice system that seeks to reduce harmful behaviour, and

also considers the needs and goals of the individuals towards which it has a duty of care.

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