

Women more likely to be aggressive than men in relationships

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Women are more likely to be verbally and physically aggressive towards their partners than men suggests a new study presented as part of a symposium on intimate partner violence (IPV).

The symposium 'Developments in Intimate Partner Violence Research and Practice' is presented today, Wednesday 25 June, at the British Psychological Society's Division of Forensic Psychology annual conference in Glasgow.

Dr Elizabeth Bates from the University of Cumbria and colleagues from the University of Central Lancashire gave a total of 1104 students (706 [women](#) and 398 [men](#)) questionnaires about their [physical aggression](#) and controlling behaviour, to partners and to same-sex others (including friends).

Analysis showed that women were more likely to be physically aggressive to their partners than men and that men were more likely to be physically aggressive to their same-sex others.

Furthermore, women engaged in significantly higher levels of controlling behaviour than men, which significantly predicted physical aggression in both sexes.

Dr Elizabeth Bates explained: "This was an interesting finding. Previous studies have sought to explain male violence towards women as rising from patriarchal values, which motivate men to seek to control women's

behaviour, using violence if necessary.

"This study found that women demonstrated a desire to control their [partners](#) and were more likely to use physical aggression than men. This suggests that IPV may not be motivated by patriarchal values and needs to be studied within the context of other forms of aggression, which has potential implications for interventions."

Provided by British Psychological Society

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