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**Intimate Partner Violence within LGBTQ+ Samples: A systematic review**

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**Abstract**

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a prominent problem within relationships (Centers for Disease Control, n.d.). As more research is conducted on IPV, it has become apparent that the prevalence of females perpetrating IPV is similar to the rates of males (Archer, 2000), which challenges the feminist theories of men's IPV that assert it is strongly related to patriarchy. This debate over sex differences in perpetration rates means LGBTQ+ populations become ignored due to contradicting many of the popular theories for IPV perpetration and victimization, creating a gap in research. Therefore, this systematic literature review was conducted in an attempt to highlight the prevalence of IPV within LGBTQ+ relationships. The main aim of this systematic literature review is to investigate the prevalence of IPV within same-sex relationships and its behavioral manifestations. Further implications for research will also be considered.

*Key words: LGBTQ+, Intimate Partner Violence, Systematic Review, Prevalence, Coercion*

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a serious societal problem (Centres for Disease Control, n.d.) that has received significant empirical research attention. The term IPV is used as it has a wider range of partner relationships within its spectrum such as dating and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Others (LGBTQ+) intimate relationships. Previously IPV has been argued to have a narrower range due to its associations with marriage violence and being an exclusively heterosexual issue (Corvo & deLara, 2009). Acts of IPV can be defined as physical, sexual, psychological, verbal or emotional harm perpetrated by a current or former partner or spouse; these behaviours can also include controlling behaviour such as coercive control (CDC, n.d.). These behaviours are going to be the focus within this review. Halpern, Young, Waller, Martin and Kupper (2004) reported prevalence rates for an LGBTQ+ samples and IPV within the USA were at around 25%, with 1 in 10 individuals reporting acts of physical violence. More contemporary research such as Carvalho, Lewis, Derlega, Winstead and Viggino (2011) found prevalence rates can be estimated ranging from 25% and 50% in gay and lesbian relationships. IPV data collected by the charity SafeLives, found that within their LGBTQ+ sample 69% of participants had experienced some form of IPV. These prevalence rates indicate that IPV is indeed a serious societal problem. The maladaptive behaviours around conflict are becoming what some IPV researchers argue as a norm within relationships (Batholomew, Regan, Oram & White, 2008a).

The statistics indicate that IPV is just as common if not more so within LGBTQ+ relationships, and yet the cases of IPV within these relationships is under-reported and sometimes ignored due to the dynamics of the relationships; for example police classing acts of physical violence within a same-sex relationship as cases of non-intimate aggression due to the nature of the relationship (Pattavina, Hirschel, Buzawa, Faggiani & Bentley, 2007).

SafeLives report that LGBTQ+ individuals are underrepresented within partner violence services for several reasons: they do not identify with the 'public views' of IPV, they do not believe the services are aimed at them, a lack of trust for those in same-sex relationships and mainstream agencies such as the criminal justice system, and fear of 'outing' themselves in order to use services. Furthermore, treatment programs for IPV perpetrators are primarily based upon the Duluth model (Pence & Paymar, 1993), which is a conceptualization of the feminist theory. This feminist theory has shaped the view of the public towards IPV and it still influences professional practice in terms of the treatment programs for IPV perpetrators (McClennan, 2005). This feminist theory argues that men adopt the role of an abuser, which is influenced by the societal gender roles that create a sense of male entitlement, which in term causes them to commit violent acts against women.

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Whilst the Duluth model has been updated to recognize individual differences in relation to IPV such as different psychological concepts and risk factors, its foundations still consists of feminist theory which states patriarchy is the cause of violence against women (Gilchrist & Kebbell, 2010). By looking at the dynamics of a same-sex relationship, it becomes apparent that patriarchy cannot play a role within a lesbian relationships (Coleman, 1994) and yet Lie, Schilit, Bush, Montague and Reyes (1991) argue that IPV is just as prevalent, if not more so, in these relationships.

The systematic literature review will cover issues such as the prevalence of psychological, physical and sexual violence within same-sex relationship. This is in order to highlight the prevalence of these issues within the LGBTQ+ community in hopes of bringing focus to this under researched area.

## **Method**

### *Search strategy*

Elsevier, PubMed Central, Directory of Open Access Journals, BioMed Central, SpringerLink, PLoS, BMJ Journals, JSTOR Archival Journals databases were all used along with Google Scholar in order to search the following terms in different combinations in order to collect the relevant studies: 'intimate partner violence', 'same-sex relationships', 'domestic violence', 'homosexual relationships', 'prevalence', 'LGBT'.

The initial search resulted in 5,713 studies, which could be potentially relevant to the current literature review. In order to narrow down the vast number of results, the current search covered the following years within the search: 2000 - 2015. After reviewing the titles and abstracts of the articles and refining the search terms in order to obtain optimal results in terms of relevance, all but 27 of the results were excluded. Of those 27, ten were selected for the current literature review. After reviewing the reference lists of the selected ten articles, a further 2 were found to be eligible for the review and were added. This meant that the total number of articles used within the review became 12. The figure below shows visual representation of the search strategy.

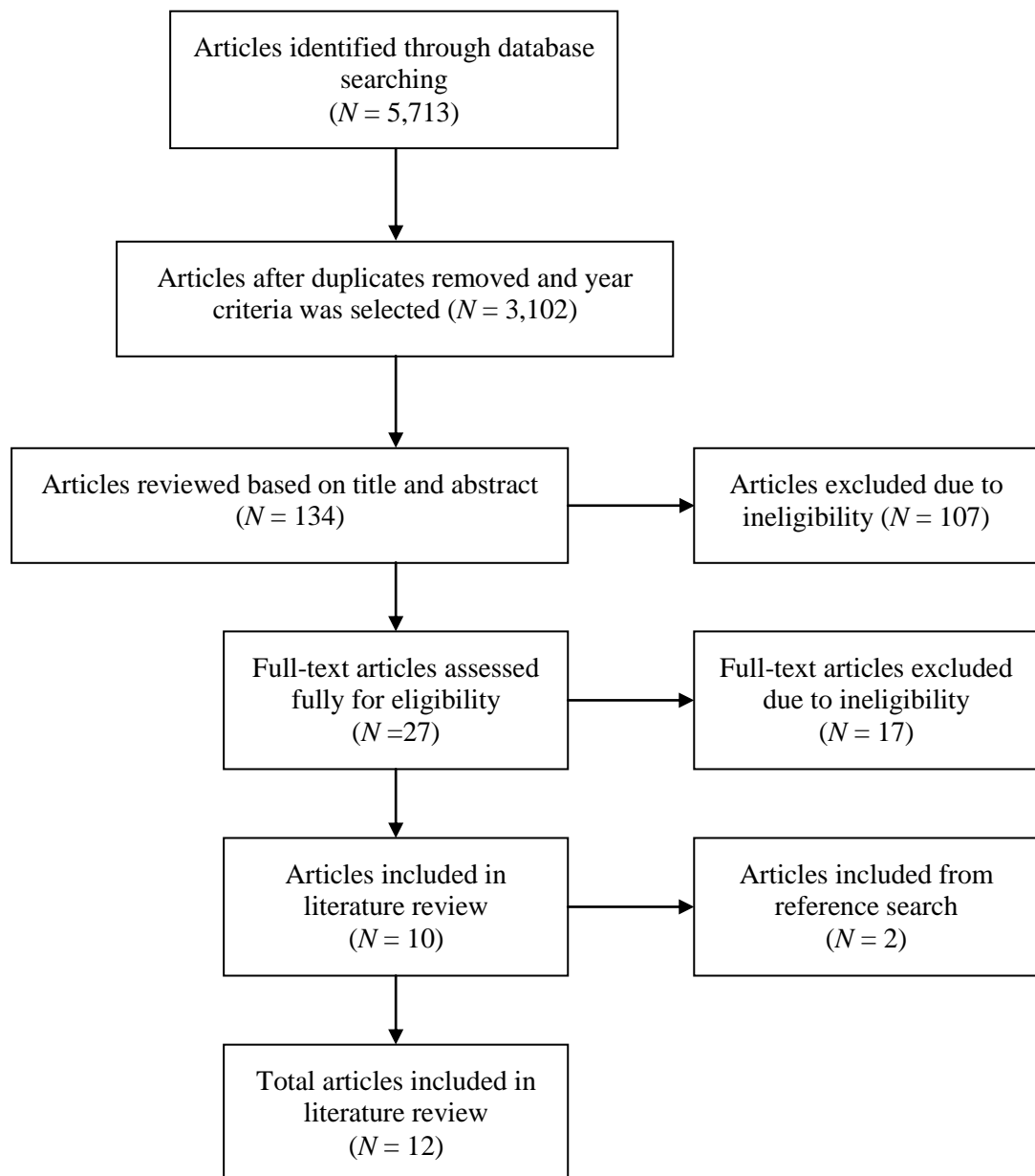


Figure 1:

*Flow Chart indicating the search strategy implemented to select articles for review.*

#### *Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria*

Publications published between 2000 and 2015 that researched the prevalence of IPV within an LGBTQ+ relationship were eligible to be selected for this literature review. In relation to the different types of study design, systematic reviews and meta-analyses were to be included. Furthermore, quantitative and mixed methods all fulfilled the inclusion criteria set out for this review. The studies also had to have been conducted on participants who had

been in/were currently in a relationship for a minimum of one month. Participants within these studies had to identify themselves on the LGBTQ+ spectrum.

### *Analytic Strategy*

In order to record the key features of the study such as the methodological components such as: design, sample, measures, method, results obtained, were selected out of the publications and entered into a review table in order to review the information provided within the articles. This information was then used in order to gain perspective of IPV within an LGBTQ+ sample.

### **Results**

The table below summarizes the information obtained from the literature in relation to the prevalence of IPV within same-sex relationships.

Table 1:

*Characteristics of Studies Examining IPV within an LGBTQ+ Sample*

Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
Bartholomew, Regan, White & Oram (2008a)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Male; identified as Gay/Bisexual; had experience within a same-sex relationship	284 males	CTS; Psychological Maltreatment of Women Inventory	<p><b>Victim of emotional abuse</b></p> <p>Shouted at (n=102) ; Ignored (n=121); Called names (n=58); Criticized (n=47); Limited Activities (n=38); Controlled (n=28); Acted Jealous (n=91); Insulted (n=83); Destroyed property (n=8); Threatened to hurt partner (n=12); Threatened to hurt self (n=14); Any emotional act (n=181)</p> <p><b>Perpetrator of emotional abuse</b></p> <p>Yelled (n=100); Shut out (n=117); Called names (n=50); Put down (n=34); Limited activated (n=14); Controlled (n=24); Acted suspicious (n=72); Swore at (n=84); Destroyed property (n=5); Threatened to hurt self (n=4); Any emotional act (n=181)</p> <p><b>Physical abuse</b></p> <p>41% reported being a recipient of at</p>	<p><b>Strengths:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A lot of different aspects of emotional abuse were covered within the study</li> <li>- Also covered perpetration by the participants</li> <li>- Random sampling</li> <li>- A lot of different aspects of emotional abuse were covered within the study</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:-</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Response rate was only moderate</li> <li>- Lack of generalizability to other populations such as the lesbian population as the study only focusses on male participants</li> <li>- Small subsample of men</li> <li>- Close-ended survey</li> </ul>

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
						least one act of physical abuse; 35% reported acting violently towards a partner at least once in the past.; 12% reported receipt and perpetration of physical abuse within the past year 10% reported receipt and 11% perpetration with their current partner	questions - Choice of instrument being an inventory designed for women
Turell (2000)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Mixed gender; identified as LGBTQ+; had experience within a same-sex relationship; lived in the Houston area	499 participants (M=227, F=265, MtF=7)	Measures used unknown – questions on emotional, physical and sexual abuse in past and present relationships	<b>Emotional Abuse :-</b> Monetary abuse - 40%; Coercive abuse - 51% ; Shaming abuse - 70%; Threatening behaviours - 52%; <b>Other types of emotional abuse</b> 20% reported being stalked; 83% had experienced a form of emotional abuse Physical abuse- 50%; Sexually abuse - 12% 9% had had their children used as a tool for manipulation however there is no sample percentage for parents Women had higher percentages in	<b>Strengths</b> - Ethnically diverse - Includes bisexual and transgender individuals. - Researches many patterns in abuse - Greater generalizability due to gender split and ethnically diverse the study was - Researches many patterns in abuse  <b>Weaknesses</b> - Measurement issues due

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
						terms of physical, coercive, threatening, shame and using children as tools.	the operationalization of the abuse variables - Retrospective
Telesco (2003)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Female; identified as Lesbian, Gay, Queer. Had a been in relationship with another women for at least 6 months	105 females	Bem Sex Role Inventory Scale; Abusive Behaviour Inventory	34% of the sample reported high levels of overall abuse; 34% reported high levels of psychological abuse; 37% reported high levels of physical abuse; 75% of the sample reported over 1 incident of violent behaviour within the relationship; 17% admit to being a perpetrator of acts of violence within their current relationship <b>The most reported psychological form of abuse were:</b> Angry stares (71%); Name calling (55%); Ended the discussion and made the decision without asking the partner (50%); Jealousy (41%); Put partner down (36%); Kept partner from doing what she wanted	<b>Strengths</b> - Diverse sample was used - Different aspects of emotional IPV was accounted for  <b>Weaknesses</b> - Small sample size - Survey was long which could stop participants from filling out the whole thing - The study only focused on females, which means there is a lack of generalizability to male LGBTQ+ individuals

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						(21%)	
Carvalho, Lewis, Derlega, Winstead & Viggiano (2011)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Mixed gender; LGBTQ+ Individual; had been in a same-sex relationship	581 (gender split unknown)	Outness Inventory; Internalised Homophobia Scale; Stigma-Consciousness Questionnaire	There was no difference in the numbers of gay men and lesbians who reported IPV; All perpetrators of IPV were also victims of IPV; Approximately one-quarter reported IPV victimization and almost 10% reported IPV perpetration; Overall, 138 participants (24.2%) endorsed being victims of same-sex IPV, and 51 (9.4%) reported that they had been perpetrators; 67 lesbians (25%) and 71 (23%) gay men reported that they had been victims of same-sex IPV; Twenty-five lesbians (9.3%) and 26 gay men (8.3%) reported they had perpetrated same-sex IPV.	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diverse sample was used</li> <li>- Different aspects of emotional IPV was accounted for</li> <li>- Large amount of data collected in an attempt to discover the stressors which could indicate where IPV could occur.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small sample size</li> <li>- Survey was long which could stop participants from filling out the whole thing</li> <li>- Unable to infer causal relationships</li> </ul>
Freedner, Freed, Yang & Austin (2002)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Mixed gender; LGB Adolescent; aged between 13 and 22; had been in a same-	521 (M=171, F=350)	Lifetime experience of dating violence questions	<b>Males :-</b> 71 G/B experienced abuse; 42 had experienced abuse in terms of control; 33 had experienced abuse	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First study to examine threats of ‘outing’ as a type of abuse amongst the LGB</li> </ul>

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
			sex relationship		(adapted from Massachusetts Youth Risk Behaviour Survey, Victimization; Dating relationships survey; CTS	in terms of emotional abuse; 16 had been scared for their safety; 21 had experienced physical abuse; 19 had experienced sexual abuse; 13 had been threatened to be 'outed'  <b>Females :-</b> 130 G/B females experienced abuse; 78 had experienced abuse in terms of control; 69 had experienced abuse in terms of emotional abuse; 42 had been scared for their safety; 44 had experienced physical abuse; 57 had experienced sexual abuse; 19 had been threatened to be 'outed'  Bisexual males were more than five times more likely and bisexual females more than four times more likely than either gay male or lesbian adolescents to report being threatened with outing by a partner.	population  - The amount of different types of IPV being measured within LGB relationships  <b>Weaknesses :-</b> - The results may not be generalizable due to the sample as the majority were Caucasian females  <b>Strengths</b> - The detailed analysis of the results in terms of being a
Frankland & Brown (2014)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Mixed gender; identified as LGBTQ+, over 18	184 participants (M=79,	CTS2; CBS	<b>CTS2 -</b> A third of respondents (32.6 %) and partners (36.4 %) engaging in any	

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
			years old; had experience in a same-sex relationship	F=105)		physical aggression; There were no significant differences between male and female respondents (or their partners) in either the prevalence rates <b>CBS –</b> Forms of dominance and emotional control were the most commonly reported; Respondents reported engaging in an average of 2.7 (SD =3.2) different types of controlling behaviours, with their partners employing an average of 3.3 (SD =3.7)	victim of IPV and a perpetrator of it - Using a convenience sample is a quick way to gain participants - A lot of data was collected for a comparison between Respondent and Partner  <b>Weaknesses</b> - Lack of generalizability in terms of socio-demographic background - Results of convenience samples are hard to replicate
Messinger (2011)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Mixed gender; LGBTQ+ individual; over 18 years old; U.S citizen; Had been in a same-sex relationship at some point	144 LGBTQ+ participants (M=65, F=79)	National Violence Against Women Survey	Physical and sexual victimisation was more apparent within females than males; All forms of IPV victimization were far greater for GLB than heterosexual respondents; Bisexual respondents were not only more likely to be victimized than heterosexuals but also than those who were gay or lesbian; Gay men	<b>Strengths</b> - A comparative study in which heterosexual and LGB individuals were compared based upon IPV victimisation - Large overall sample for comparison purposes - Many different types of

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
						were more likely than gay women to experience all forms of IPV with the exception of sexual IPV; Bisexual women were more likely than bisexual men to experience all forms of IPV other than verbal IPV	<p>IPV were used within the questionnaire</p> <p>- Many different types of IPV were used within the questionnaire</p> <p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <p>- Small ratio in terms of the comparison of LGB and heterosexual individuals</p> <p>- Lack of generalizability due to demographics</p>
Edwards & Sylaska (2013)	Quantitative	Questionnaire	Mixed gender; identified as LGBTQ+, at least 18 years old; currently involved in a same-sex relationship	391 participants (Male (48.8%) Female (43.5%) Genderqueer (4.6%) Trans (2.1%) Male/Woman (2.1%))	CTS2; Internalized homonegativity subscale from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Identity Scale; Outness Inventory; Stigma Scale	Physical partner violence was the most commonly reported type of perpetration (19.9 %); Followed by psychological (12.5 %) sexual perpetration of partner violence (10.5 %); Nearly one-third (29.7 %) of the sample reported engaging in any type of partner violence perpetration.; 57.1 % of the sample reported no same-sex partner violence victimization or	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <p>- Different aspects of minority stress where measured in an attempt to explain perpetration of IPV</p> <p>- Larger sample than most LGBTQ studies on IPV</p> <p>- Diverse socio-demographic participants</p> <p>- Diverse sample of sexual identities</p>

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
				Other (1%) Actual figures unknown		perpetration; 13.3 % of the sample reported same-sex partner violence victimization only; 7.3% reported perpetration of same-sex partner violence only; 22.3 % reported both same-sex partner violence victimization and perpetration.	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limited sample due to the fact the sample comprised of young adults</li> <li>- Participants were required to be in a relationship to take part within the study</li> <li>- Did not include measures to explain the relationship between minority stress and same-sex partner violence.</li> </ul>
Halpern, Young, Waller, Martin & Kupper (2004)	Mixed Methods	Questionnaire In home interview	Mixed gender; LGBTQ+ Adolescents aged between 12-21; Had only same-sex intimate relationships within the past 18 months	117 Adolescents (M = 52, F=65)	5 questions from the CTS-R	One-quarter of respondents reported experiencing ‘Any Violence’ in a same-sex relationship occurring in the 18 months before the interview. Figures are higher among females; The majority of violent behaviours were psychological; Different patterns within the results as females were more likely to disclose being sworn at or insulted, whereas males were more likely to report receiving threats; 11% of	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mixed methods was used to narrow down suspect pool to help get the best possible participants for the research.</li> <li>- A large amount of data was collected from the second retrospective questionnaire</li> <li>- The participants were drawn from a nationally representative sample of</li> </ul>

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
						<p>adolescents reported being the victims of physical violence; A larger percentage of males reported being pushed when compared to females, but the percentage of females reporting having something thrown at them was about five times higher than among males; Regarding victimization patterns, 13% of respondents reported only psychological victimization, and 11% reported only physical victimization or both.</p>	<p>adolescents, rather than being selected from a sample constructed on the basis of sexual orientation or same-sex experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Violence reports refer to specific partnerships that occurred within a specified time period, and for whom the sex of the partners is known.</li> <li>- The analysis within the data used a behavioural criterion to define sexual orientation</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The questionnaires were retrospective which may have affected the answers of the participants being measured</li> <li>- There was only five items used to measure</li> </ul>

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
							victimization - There was a gap in the types of abuse the participants may have received; this is due to how rare these severe types of violence are within this age population.
Bartholomew, Regan, Oram & White (2008)	Mixed Methods	Telephone Survey Questionnaires In-person Interviews	Male; Gay/Bisexual/Queer; Had a same-sex intimate relationship	186 gay men	CTS; Violence in family of origin; Substance Use; The Relationship Scales Questionnaire; Internalized Homophobia Scale	At some time in the past, 38% of men reported having perpetrated at least one act of violence, and 44% reported having been the recipient of at least one act of partner violence. Almost all men reported having perpetrated (97%) and received (95%) at least one act of psychological abuse	<b>Strengths</b> - Contrasted heterosexual and homosexual IPV - The recruitment of a diverse sample of gay and bisexual men, using random sampling - Representative of self-identified gay men living in the West End of Vancouver (known for having a large gay community (25% of men))  <b>Weaknesses</b> - The results may not be

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
							generalizable due to the sample - Small sample size - Retrospective self-report questionnaire - Reporting biases - Possibility of underreporting being a perpetrator of partner violence
Santaya & Walters (2011)	Mixed Methods	Questionnaire In-person Interview	Male Couples; Identified as Gay; Was in a committed relationship; Cuban	35 gay male couples	Alcohol Consumption; Measures of violence and abuse; Social and Communication skill inventory; Multi-modal personality measure for personality regulation	64 participants reported psychological abuse; 34 men reported physical abuse; 18 men reported being sexually victimised by their partner All couples expressed some level of abuse but not all couples had experienced the same form of IPV	<p><b>Strengths :-</b></p> - Used a mixed methods design to gain more insight into the issues surrounding this topic - Uses both members of a couple to gain information
						<p><b>Qualitative Results</b></p> 3 themes identified within the interviews- Gendered socialisation; Expression of power with love; Economic	<p><b>Weaknesses :-</b></p> - Lacks generalizability - Retrospective - Small sample size - Answers could have been

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Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
Loveland & Raghavan (2014)	Mixed Methods	Questionnaire Semi-structured Interviews	Male; been in a same-sex relationship within the past 12 months; over 18	136 men	Relationship Behaviour Rating Scale	stress 48%; n = 65 reported incidents of near-lethal violence by a partner; of these 65 participants, many men reported multiple times of partner violence in which they believed that they would be killed and/or that they would be badly hurt; 87.7% (n =57) and of these men thought that they might be badly hurt during a fight, while 70.8% (n =46) thought that they might be killed; 34% were physically forced to have sex with their partner during the fight, 23% were injured and needed medical care, and 49% of participants had a weapon used against them during the fight Of the 48% who reported fearing for their lives/fearing serious injury, 72% (n = 47) listed events during which they were at risk of life-threatening injury/directly threatened with their lives.	distorted  <b>Strengths</b> - Ethnically diverse sample used - Used both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews - Large age range - Detailed information on near lethal violence was gathered  <b>Weaknesses</b> - Sensitive topic was used therefore participants may have given socially desirable answers - High-risk sample that limits the ability to generalize to other same-sex couples - Lack of generalizability due to this high risk sample

Reference	Method	Design	Sample	N	Measures Used	Prevalence Statistics	Critical Analysis
						The majority reported main reason they feared for their lives/being hurt was due to a weapon (36.2.8%), physical force (23.4%), size/strength of partner (6.4%), and verbal/direct threat to kill (6.4%)	

*Note.* M = Male; F = Female; CTS = Conflict Tactics Scale; CTS2 = Conflict Tactics Scale Revised; CBS = Controlling Behaviour Scale

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## **Reported Victimization**

### *Emotional Abuse*

Within the study conducted by Freedner et al. (2002), the authors found that within their relatively large sample of 521 adolescent LGBTQ+ participants, 42 males and 78 females had experienced controlling behaviour within their relationship. An increasingly popular form of coercive control within a same-sex relationship is in the form of 'outing' in which a partner threatens the victim with revealing their sexual orientation and relationship to family, friends and peers who are not aware of their sexuality. It was found that 13 males and 19 females reported this type of controlling behavior, this, as with other forms of control, can have negative effects on aspects of their lives such as their mental health but they can also be threatened with homelessness and banishment from their family. Also, 33 males and 69 females reported emotional abuse. Furthermore, bisexual males were 5 times more likely than lesbians and gay males to be victims of controlling behaviour in the form of 'outing' and bisexual females were found to be 4 times more likely to be threatened with 'outing'.

Turell (2000) performed an in-depth descriptive analysis of same-sex relationship violence from a large diverse sample. The sample reported a range of sexual and gender orientations and was also ethnically diverse. Forty percent of the sample reported monetary abuse, 51% reported coercive abuse which indicates that coercive control is a large part of abuse within a LGBTQ+ relationship. Over 52% of the sample reported being a victim of threatening behaviour and 20% of the sample reported being stalked. Overall, in terms of emotional abuse, 83% of the sample had experienced some form of these behaviours.

Within Frankland and Brown's (2014) study, their research featuring coercive control within same-sex IPV found that forms of dominance and emotional control were most commonly reported using the Controlling Behaviour Scale (CBS-R; Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2005). Respondents reported an average of 2.7 acts in engaging within different types of controlling behaviors, with their partners scoring slightly higher with 3.3.

### *Physical Abuse*

Freedner et al. (2004) found that 21 males and 44 females reported being a victim of physical violence within a relationship. When the researchers controlled the age variable, they found lesbians were more likely to be afraid of their safety when compared to heterosexual females within a relationship. Within Turell's (2000) analysis, it was found that for physical abuse, 50% of the sample reported being a victim of some form of this type of abuse. This study also revealed that 12% of the respondents reported being a victim of

sexually abusive behaviour and 9% reported having had their children used as a tool of manipulation

### *Other Statistics*

Research conducted by Carvalho et al. (2011) found there was no difference in reported levels of IPV when comparing gay men and lesbians. Within a sample of 581 gay men and lesbians, approximately 25% reported IPV victimization. It was found within Turell's (2000) research that women scored higher percentages in terms of physical, coercive, shame and using children as tools. Ethnic differences also emerged regarding physical abuse and coercion. Furthermore, differences between age groups were apparent in relation to coercion, shame and using children as tools in order to manipulate and control the victim, this can increase the risk of services such as social services being involved if police become involved.

Messinger (2011) conducted a comparative study in which LGB individuals and heterosexuals were compared based upon IPV victimization. It was found in both heterosexuals and LGB individuals that physical and sexual victimization was more apparent within females than their male counterparts. Also, all forms of IPV victimization were significantly greater for LGB than heterosexual respondents. Furthermore, bisexual respondents were more likely to be victimized than heterosexual and lesbian women and gay men. With the exception of sexual IPV, gay men were found to experience all forms of IPV more than gay women.

### **Reported Perpetration**

Carvalho et al.'s (2011) research also found that 8% of the participants who reported being victims of IPV that they, themselves were perpetrators of these behaviours. Furthermore, 25 lesbians and 26 gay men reported being solely a perpetrator of IPV against their partner or spouse.

Research by Bartholomew et al. (2008b) found similar levels of gay male participants reporting being both a victim and perpetrator of IPV within their relationships. Within this study, participants reported high rates of both emotional and physical abuse. Furthermore, it was found that there were strong associations between the participants reporting their own and their partner's abuse perpetration suggesting bidirectional violence within the relationships. Bartholomew et al.'s (2008b) study was solely conducted on gay and bisexual

males and therefore, there was no comparison of being a perpetrator and victim of IPV within lesbian and bisexual women.

Edwards and Sylaska (2013) found that almost one-third of their sample reported perpetrating a form of IPV, within almost 20% reporting perpetrating an act of physical violence. Furthermore, research conducted Stanley et al. (2006) found that within 44% of their sample; both partners were physically violent towards each other. Research conducted by Telesco (2003) however, found that 17% of its sample of 105 lesbian women reported being both victims and perpetrators of IPV indicating that within LGBTQ+ relationships bidirectional violence is a common occurrence.

Frankland and Brown (2014) also found psychological aggression was highest within relationships with mutually violent control. Johnson's (2006) typology states that mutually violent control is when both individuals within the relationship use acts of violence in order to gain and maintain control within the relationship. Furthermore, physical violence was also reported highest within the mutually violent control as where reports of physical injury and sexual coercion (Frankland & Brown, 2014).

### **Discussion**

The findings of this current review indicate that acts of IPV are a common occurrence within same-sex relationships with many of the studies finding the presence of emotional abuse, control and physical abuse. These findings suggest that forms of emotional and physical abusive behaviours within same-sex relationships are just as prevalent, if not more so than in heterosexual relationships. These studies help highlight IPV within LGBTQ+ relationships indicating more help is needed for both perpetrators and victims. One of the most common theories explaining IPV within dyadic heterosexual relationships is the feminist theory, but this theory cannot be successfully applied to the dynamics of a same-sex relationship. Feminist theory states that IPV is committed by males in order to control and dominate women and therefore, this cannot be used to explain female only dyadic relationships and male only dyadic relationships.

#### *Implications for policy and practice*

With the findings showing how prevalent IPV is within an LGBTQ+ sample, this suggests more needs to be done in order to help the perpetrators change their maladaptive behaviours and to help victims of these behaviours. Highlighting the prevalence of IPV in LGBTQ+ groups can help increase funding for charities who are dedicated to helping victims

of IPV within same-sex relationships, it could also help form more charities of this type as there are so few. More focus on this area could also fund ways to help perpetrators such as treatment programs and interventions. Current practice and perpetrator programmes are largely influenced by the Duluth Model (Pence & Paymar, 1993), a psychoeducational programme with the aim of educating men about their patriarchal desire to control women. Several reviews and critical commentaries have highlighted that this model is inappropriate as it does not have its foundations in evidence based practice (e.g. Dixon, Archer & Graham-Kevan, 2012; Bates, Graham-Kevan, Bolam & Thornton, in press) and it furthermore cannot be appropriate for perpetrators in same-sex relationships. There is a call instead to move beyond gendered analysis and feminist models and explore existing programs used for generally violent offenders and to explore the possibility of adapting these to be used with perpetrators who are domestically violent (Graham-Kevan, 2007).

#### *Implications for further research*

The current review provides evidence that IPV is common within an LGBTQ+ relationship. Conducting further research on this topic in areas such as coercive control, which is becoming more common, would help inform both policy and practice. The growing criticisms of the feminist model, coupled with research that indicates the parity in men's and women's perpetration of coercive control (e.g. Bates, Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2014), indicate there is a need for future research to more clearly understand the role of control in IPV perpetration. Bates et al. (2014) found control was predictive of IPV but also of perpetration of other general violence which indicates that rather than having its roots in patriarchy, it is more symptomatic of a generally coercive interpersonal style (Corvo & deLara, 2009). Further study is required here to be able to implement these findings within current perpetrator interventions. From this research, intervention programs could be adapted in order to be suitable to same-sex relationships and the criminal justice system could gain a greater understanding into the dynamics of LGBTQ+ relationships in order to make the system become fairer towards same-sex relationships.

#### **Conclusion**

Overall, the findings of this literature review indicate how prevalent IPV is within the LGBTQ+ relationships (e.g. Freedner et al., 2002; Turell, 2000; Bartholomew et al., 2008b). More focus is needed on LGBTQ+ relationships, as the research into this type of sample is still small in comparison to the vast research available on heterosexual IPV. Research

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conducted into controlling behaviour within same-sex relationships needs to be expanded to include behaviors such as ‘outing’ in order to ascertain the severity of these behaviors within relationships and how to help change maladaptive behaviors within relationships in order to maintain healthier intimate relationships. Ultimately, IPV within LGBTQ+ samples is an area that needs to be researched more as theories such as the feminist theory cannot be successfully applied to the nature of same-sex relationships. The risk factors of IPV need to be researched more upon an LGBTQ+ sample in order to gain further understanding into the causes and antecedents of IPV within this group.

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