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**Dating Violence Perpetration among College
Students: The Effects of Child Maltreatment
and Auditory Status**

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Dating Violence Perpetration among College Students: The Effects of Child Maltreatment and Auditory Status

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Abstract

Prior research has established that violence in dating relationships is a serious problem among college students. Child maltreatment has been linked to dating violence perpetration. Also known as the intergenerational transmission of violence, the link between violence during childhood and dating violence has traditionally focused on physical violence, and little is known about the experiences of college students who are Deaf and hard of hearing. This study examines the relationship between perpetrating dating violence (both physical and psychological) and child maltreatment among a sample of hearing, Deaf and hard of hearing college students. Findings indicate that Deaf and hard of hearing students are more likely to report perpetration of physical and psychological abuse than hearing students. Findings also indicate some support for the intergeneration transmission of violence hypothesis. Implications and directions for further research are discussed.

Keywords: auditory status, deaf, dating violence, child maltreatment, perpetration

Introduction

Dating violence is widespread in college student dating relationships, and includes physical violence, threats of violence, and psychological abuse (Barnett, Miller-Perrin, & Perrin, 2005; Tussey, Tyler, & Simmons, 2021). Despite increased attention paid to dating violence among college students, only a limited number of empirical studies have focused on abuse among college students with disabilities, particularly students that are Deaf¹ or hard of hearing (Anderson & Leigh, 2011; Mason, 2010; Porter & McQuiller Williams, 2011; 2013). A growing body of research on violence against persons that are Deaf² and hard of hearing indicate that prevalence rates of experiencing dating violence are significantly higher for Deaf and hard of hearing individuals in college samples and community populations when compared with hearing populations (Anderson & Leigh, 2011; Mastrocinque et al., 2020; 2015; Pollard, Sutter, & Cerruli, 2014; Porter & McQuiller Williams, 2011; 2013). Although these studies have done much to advance research on violence within the Deaf community, few investigations have focused specifically on perpetration and associated risk factors.

Using a survey instrument with a sample of college students in the northeastern United States, the focus of this exploratory study is to examine the extent of dating violence perpetration among a sample of hearing, Deaf, and hard of hearing men and women college students and whether these experiences vary by auditory status. The few studies that examine auditory status in the dating violence literature are often limited to the victimization experiences of women and ignore perpetration. In addition to examining whether disability is a risk factor for dating violence perpetration among college men and women, this study also examines whether risk factors in addition to disability increase the risk of partner violence perpetration. Specifically, we explore both childhood physical abuse and witnessing interparental abuse for men and women and whether these factors vary by auditory status.

Physical and Psychological Abuse in College Populations

It is estimated that more than one-third of U.S. college students report dating violence (Stappenbeck & Fromme, 2010; Tussey, Tyler, & Simmons, 2021). Rates of violence perpetration in college relationships were found to be relatively high ranging from 17% to 45% in a 17-country study of 33 universities (Straus, 2004). In another representative study involving nearly

¹In the United States, Deaf people do not see themselves as having a disability, but rather have a culture and way of communication that is denied by the dominate hearing culture (Sadusky & Obinna, 2002). The use of the capital “D” is to acknowledge the unique cultural identity of Deaf individuals. This includes a strong affiliation to the Deaf community and a shared language (American Sign Language) (Anderson, Leigh, & Samar, 2011).

16,000 college students in 21 countries (from the Far East, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, and Latin and North America), the median physical violence perpetration rate was 30% (Chan et al., 2008).

Both men and women have been found to perpetrate and experience abuse while in college. For example, in a review of 15 studies examining women perpetrated physical abuse and psychological abuse among college students, in 14 of the 15 studies, rates for physical abuse ranged from 11.7% to 39% and 5 of the 15 studies reported rates of 40.4% to 89.3% for psychological abuse (Williams, Ghandour, & Kub, 2008). Shook et al. (2000) found that 80.0% of college men and 83.0% of college women reported the occurrence of psychological aggression in their dating relationships over the past year. A more recent study reported psychological abuse rates among college samples of 98.0% for both men and women (Torres et al., 2012). Although rare, some studies investigate physical and psychological aggression simultaneously in college students, as we do in this study. For example, Hines and Saudino (2003) reported that 82% of men and 86% of women perpetrated psychological aggression, while 29% of men and 35% of women perpetrated physical assault. Cornelius, Shorey and Beebe (2010) obtained similar violence perpetration rates; for men 80.0% psychological and 31.0% physical, for women 83.0% psychological and 36.0% physical. In a more recent study conducted among undergraduate dating college students in Turkey, Toplu-Demirtaş and Fincham (2020) reported that 43% of women and 35% of men perpetrated physical assault, while 80% of women and 76% of men perpetrated psychological aggression. Other studies suggest that the rates of receiving and inflicting abuse are similar (Harned, 2001; Perry & Fromuth, 2005).

More limited is research focused on perpetration of abuse among Deaf and hearing college students. To date, the majority of studies have focused almost exclusively on victimization and have found that that Deaf and hard of hearing individuals experience an elevated risk of dating violence in comparison with their hearing peers (Anderson, 2010; Anderson & Leigh, 2011; Barrow, 2008; Porter & McQuiller Williams, 2011; 2013). While research exists regarding dating violence perpetration in the general population, limited research explores this issue in the deaf and hard of hearing population. One notable exception is a study using a sample of Deaf college women conducted by Anderson and Leigh (2011) who reported that 92% of the sample perpetrated psychological aggression, and 64% perpetrated physical assault within the past year. However, because this study only examined college women, very little is known about dating violence perpetration among male college students who are Deaf and hard of hearing.

Risk Factors for Dating Violence

Due to the high prevalence of dating violence among college students, it is crucial to identify risk factors for intervention and prevention. In analyzing risk factors for dating violence in the general population, numerous studies

have examined the link between experiencing child abuse and/or witnessing interparental violence in the family of origin and later partner victimization and/or perpetration, although the majority of studies focus on the outcome of physical victimization and/or perpetration, to the exclusion of psychological abuse (Cyr, McDuff, & Wright, 2006; Foshee, Benefield, Ennett, Bauman, & Suchindean, 2004; Gover, Kaukinen, & Fox, 2008; Gover, Park, Tomsich, & Jennings, 2011; Maas, Fleming, Herrenkohl, & Catalano, 2010).

Posited within social learning theories (Akers, 1998; Bandura, 1973, 1977), violence in the family of origin is one of the most commonly studied risk factors for dating violence (Cyr, McDuff, & Wright, 2006; Gover, Kaukinen, & Fox, 2008; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Hankla, & Stormberg, 2004). These studies suggest a causal relationship between prior victimization and later perpetration of violence via the intergenerational transmission of violence or “the cycle of violence,” whereby children who experience family of origin violence are more likely to learn the utility of violence and model violence in their own relationships (Widom, 1989). According to this perspective, individuals who experience family of origin abuse may be more likely to accept violence as an expected aspect of interpersonal relationships and experience an increased risk of relationship violence victimization as well.

This rationale stems from social learning theory, which posits that violence is transmitted through direct experience and observations (Bandura, 1973, 1977). In support, results indicate that for both men and women, parent-to-child physical abuse is associated with psychological and physical dating violence as both victim and perpetrator (Caetano, Ramisetty-Minkler, & Field, 2005; Foshee et al., 2004; Gomez, 2011; Jankowski, Leitenberg, Henning, & Coffey, 1999; Lavoie et al., 2002; Millett et al., 2013; O’Keefe, 2005; Simons, Lin, & Gordon, 1998; Stith et al., 2000). Similarly, witnessing interparental violence has been associated with partner perpetration of dating violence (Carr & VanDeuse, 2002; Holt & Gillespie, 2008; Murrell, Christoff, & Henning, 2007). However, some data suggest no significant relationship between family of origin variables and subsequent dating violence (Busby, Holman, & Walker, 2008; Foshee, Ennett, Bauman, Benefield, & Suchindra, 2005). While there is evidence that witnessing or experiencing parental violence is a risk factor for partner perpetration and/or victimization, not all children exposed to family of origin violence later inflict or experience violence.

Methods

Data Collection

Data was collected from nearly 700 students, randomly selected, who were attending classes at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in upstate New York, USA. RIT houses the National Institute for the Deaf and thus the university has a larger than normal percentage of Deaf and hard of hearing

students attending classes. Approval was granted from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Care was taken to ensure students understood their participation was voluntary and they could desist at any time during the survey administration and were not to retake the survey had they taken it previously. American Sign Language interpreters were available for clarification should that be required.

Measures

The dependent variables for analysis are dummy variables created from a variety of questions pertaining to physical violence and psychological abuse. Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, and Sugarman's (1996) Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS2) was used to measure dating violence by "a partner" over the previous school year. Respondents were free to identify their partner without consideration of same sex or heterosexual relationship and could denote a range from spouse, significant other, date, and so on. An eleven item designed to elicit reports of behaviors related to physical abuse were employed: specifically respondents were asked if they perpetrated the following: thrown something that could hurt, twisted arm or hair, used a gun or knife, beat up, burned or scalded on purpose, kicked, slapped, punched or hit with hand or object, choked, slammed against wall, and grabbed. Similarly, eight items assessed psychological abuse perpetration: insulted or swore, called fat or ugly, destroyed something belonging to you on purpose, shouted or yelled, stomped out of house or yard, accused of being a lousy lover, did something out of spite, and threatened to hit or throw something. For all items responses were rated on a 5-point scale (*never, once, twice, 3 to 5 times, and 6 or more times*). The CTS-2 scale has been found via previous studies with Deaf and hard of hearing college students to exhibit strong validity between the psychological and physical abuse scales (Anderson & Leigh, 2010). Additionally, interpreters conversant in American Sign Language were available during survey administration to assist with any needed clarification.

The child maltreatment index was created from eight items from the Parent-Child Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, Hamby, Finkelhor, Moore, & Desmond, 1998) to indicate whether a respondent experienced physical abuse at the hands of a parent, caregiver, or guardian. The child maltreatment index consisted of the following: prior to the age of 18 years, had one witnessed parents or guardians abusing a fist or kicked you hard, grabbed you by the neck, beat you, or hit you with something (not a spanking), or burned or scalded you on purpose. Again, all items were measured on a 5-point scale ranging from never to six or more times. Auditory status, gender, race/ethnicity, and age were included in the analysis. Gender was either male, female, or other. Auditory status was measured with respondents choosing hearing, Deaf, or hard of hearing. Race or ethnicity had several categories: White not Hispanic, Black not Hispanic, Hispanic or Latino, Asian American or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native (Caetano, Schafer, & Curandi, 2001; Gover, Kaukinen, & Fox, 2008; Rouse, 1988).

Data Analysis

All data analyses were conducted using SPSS 21. Given the sparse responses across categories, all variables were dichotomized with a 0 for no or none and 1 for yes or some. Binomial regression analyses were run with all variables for childhood maltreatment, adult victimization and adult perpetration of psychological and physical abuse. In addition, binomial regression analyses were calculated for Deaf and hard of hearing disaggregated with victimization and perpetration of psychological and physical abuse. All regression analyses were run with variables in a hierarchical position and with the Wald backward stepwise selection method.

Childhood maltreatment variables were analyzed separately as well as aggregated and analyzed in an index denoting whether the respondents had reported experiencing victimization as a child coded as 0 for none and 1 for some. Gender was coded with men as 0 and women as 1. The category “other” only had one respondent who selected it and so it was omitted from the analysis due to such a low number. Age was coded as a 0 for ages 18 to 20 years and 1 for ages 21 and above. Race and ethnicity was coded White 0 and 1 for racial or ethnic minorities. Auditory status was coded 0 for hearing, 1 for Deaf and hard of hearing when those two status’ were aggregated; when they were disaggregated Deaf was coded 0 and hard of hearing 1.

Results

Men were the majority of respondents (n=385, 56.1%) and White respondents were over 80% (n=563) with Black respondents next in numbers with only 7.7% (n=53) followed by Asian/Pacific Islanders (n=37, 5.4%), Hispanic/Latino (n=23, 3.4%) and American Indian/Alaskan Native (n=10, 1.5%). The majority of respondents reported their auditory status as hearing (n=465, 67.8%), with hard of hearing next (n=122, 17.8%), Deaf with 99 respondents (14.4%) (Table 1).

Table 1. *Demographics N = 686*

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Men	385	56.1
Women	301	43.9
Race/Ethnicity		
White	563	82.1
Black	53	7.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	37	5.4
Hispanic/Latino	23	3.4
American Indian/Alaskan Native	10	1.5
Auditory Status		
Hearing	465	67.8

Hard of Hearing	122	17.8
Deaf	99	14.4
Age		
18-20 years	373	54.4
21 and up	313	45.6
Year in School		
1 st and 2 nd	301	44.1
3 rd and 4 th	319	46.5
5 th	66	09.4

A cross-tabulation of auditory status with gender and race/ethnicity reveals that the majority of respondents were men, hearing, and white. Within auditory status men and women were fairly evenly spaced across hearing, hard of hearing, and Deaf. More respondents who identified as a racial or ethnic minority chose hard of hearing as their auditory status. Respondents who identified as White chose hearing or Deaf as their auditory status more than hard of hearing (Table 2).

Table 2. Cross Tabulation of Auditory Status, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity N=686

Variables	Hearing n/% ³	Hard of Hearing n/%	Deaf n/%	Total
Gender				
Men	263/56.6	65/53.3	57/57.6	
Women	202/43.4	57/46.7	42/42.4	
Total	465	122	99	686
Race/Ethnicity				
White	392/84.3	89/73.0	82/82.8	
Black	35/7.5	11/9.0	7/7.1	
Asian/Pacific Islander	22/4.7	10/8.2	5/5.1	
Hispanic/Latino	10/2.2	9/7.4	4/4.0	
American Indian/Alaskan Native	6/1.3	3/2.5	1/1.0	
Total	465	122	99	686

A cross tabulation of the experience of child maltreatment by gender, race/ethnicity, and auditory status revealed significant chi-squares for gender (chi square = 0.025) and auditory status (chi square = 0.000) but not for race or ethnicity (Table 3).

In a binomial regression analysis exploring the effects of having suffered several forms of child maltreatment and the subsequent perpetration of psychological abuse as an adult, the only variable to achieve a statistical significant association with being a perpetrator of physical abuse as an adult was auditory status. While none of the childhood maltreatment variables

³All Percentages are given as within auditory status.

achieved a statistically significant association with being a perpetrator of psychological abuse as an adult, Deaf or hard of hearing respondents were twice as likely to report being perpetrators of psychological abuse as an adult (Table 4). It would appear that auditory status is the most important factor in being a perpetrator of psychological abuse as adult despite experiencing maltreatment as a child.

Table 3. *Cross Tabulation of Child Maltreatment with Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Auditory Status N=686*

Variables	Child Maltreatment n/%⁴	Chi Sq.
Gender		0.025*
Men		
No	237/53.0	
Yes	148/61.9	
Total	385	
Women		
No	210/47.0	
Yes	91/38/1	
Total	301	
Race/Ethnicity		0.975
White		
No	367/82.1	
Yes	196/82.0	
Total	563	
Racial or Ethnic Minority		
No	80/17.9	
Yes	43/18.0	
Total	123	
Auditory Status		0.000**
Hearing		
No	325/72.7	
Yes	140/58.6%	
Total	465	
Hard of Hearing		
No	78/17.4	
Yes	44/18.4%	
Total	122	
Deaf		
No	44/9.8	
Yes	55/23.0%	
Total	99	

*p≤ 0.05, **p≤ 0.000

⁴Percentages are given as within maltreatment.

Table 4. Binomial Regression: The Effects of Suffering Child Maltreatment on Subsequent Adult Perpetration of Psychological Abuse N = 686

Variables		B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I.for EXP(B)	
							Lower	Upper
	Child Witness Mom Being Hit by Dad	0.329	0.339	0.946	0.331	1.390	0.716	2.699
	Child Witness Dad Being Hit by Mom	-0.149	0.427	0.122	0.727	0.861	0.373	1.988
	Child victim of being Knocked Down or Having Something Thrown at Them by a Parent or Guardian	0.422	0.420	1.007	0.316	1.524	0.669	3.472
	Child Victim of Having been Hit or Kicked by Parent or Guardian	-0.364	0.266	1.869	0.172	0.695	0.413	1.171
	Child Grabbed by Neck or Choked by Parent or Guardian	-0.379	0.634	0.357	0.550	0.685	0.198	2.370
	Child Beat Up by Parent or Guardian	1.048	0.775	1.827	0.176	2.852	0.624	13.031
	Child Hit with an Object by Parent or Guardian (not a spanking)	0.427	0.355	1.449	.229	1.533	0.765	3.075
	Child Was Deliberately Burned or Scalded by Parent or Guardian	0.106	1.151	0.008	0.927	1.111	0.116	10.604
	Gender	-0.106	0.163	1.185	0.276	0.837	0.808	1.621
	Race/Ethnicity	0.150	0.201	0.521	0.471	1.161	0.773	1.744
	Auditory Status	0.688	0.200	11.836	0.001*	1.989	1.344	2.944
	Constant	0.792	0.100	62.526	0.000	2.207		

*P < 0.001

Two variables achieved a statistically significant association with having been knocked down or having something thrown at them as a child by a parent/guardian and reporting being a perpetrator of physical abuse as an adult. Respondents who reported such childhood maltreatment were more likely to report having been a perpetrator of physical abuse as an adult. Auditory status was an important factor, as well. Deaf or hard of hearing respondents were nearly one and a half times more likely to report being perpetrators of physical abuse as an adult (Table 5).

Table 5. Binomial Regression: The Effects of Suffering Child Maltreatment on Subsequent Adult Perpetration of Physical Abuse N = 686

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
						Lower	Upper
Child Witness Mom Being Hit by Dad	-0.229	0.282	0.663	0.416	0.795	0.458	1.381
Child Witness Dad Being Hit by Mom	0.183	0.385	0.225	0.635	1.201	0.564	2.555
Child victim of being Knocked Down or Having Something Thrown at Them by a Parent or Guardian	0.793	0.332	5.716	0.017	2.211	1.154	4.237
Child Victim of Having been Hit or Kicked by Parent or Guardian	-0.402	0.270	2.212	0.137	0.669	0.394	1.136
Child Grabbed by Neck or Choked by Parent or Guardian	0.331	0.560	0.348	0.555	1.392	0.464	4.172
Child Beat Up by Parent or Guardian	-0.541	0.508	1.138	0.286	0.582	0.215	1.574
Child Hit with an Object by Parent or Guardian (not a spanking)	0.302	0.275	1.209	0.272	1.353	0.789	2.319
Child Was Deliberately Burned or Scalded by Parent or Guardian	0.325	0.866	0.141	0.708	1.384	0.253	7.557
Gender	-0.161	0.162	0.996	0.318	0.851	0.620	1.168
Race/Ethnicity	0.008	0.231	0.001	0.971	1.008	0.641	1.586
Auditory Status	0.360	0.170	4.500	0.034*	1.434	1.028	2.000
Child victim of being Knocked Down or Having Something Thrown at Them by a Parent or Guardian	0.757	0.318	5.675	0.017*	2.132	1.144	3.975
Constant	-0.665	0.099	45.565	0.000	0.514		

*P ≤ 0.05

A binomial regression of child maltreatment and psychological perpetration of abuse as an adult using the child maltreatment index found a statistically significant association with subsequent perpetration of psychological abuse as an adult and auditory status. Respondents who were Deaf or hard of hearing were over one and a half times as likely to report having been an adult perpetrator psychological abuse ($p \leq 0.01$, $\text{Exp(B)}1.532$) (Table 6).

Table 6. *Binomial Regression of Child Maltreatment and Psychological Perpetration of Abuse as an Adult N=686*

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
						Lower	Upper
Child Maltreatment Index	-0.068	0.169	0.164	0.686	0.934	0.671	1.300
Gender	-0.186	0.160	1.348	0.246	0.830	0.607	1.136
Race/Ethnicity	0.152	0.205	0.550	0.458	1.164	0.779	1.739
Auditory Status	0.427	0.167	6.550	0.010*	1.532	1.105	2.124
Constant	-0.636	0.097	42.525	0.000	0.530		

* $p \leq .01$

A binomial regression of child maltreatment and physical perpetration of abuse as an adult using the child maltreatment index found a statistically significant association with subsequent perpetration of physical abuse as an adult with auditory status ($p \leq 0.001$; $\text{Exp(B)}1.989$). Deaf or hard of hearing respondents were nearly twice as likely to report having perpetrated physical abuse as an adult (Table 7).

Table 7. *Binomial Regression of Child Maltreatment and Physical Perpetration of Abuse as an Adult N=686*

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
						Lower	Upper
Child Maltreatment Index	0.280	0.189	2.193	0.139	1.323	0.913	1.916
Gender	0.126	0.176	0.512	0.474	1.134	0.803	1.602
Race/Ethnicity	-0.003	0.230	0.000	0.991	0.997	0.636	1.565
Auditory Status	0.688	0.200	11.836	0.001*	1.989	1.344	2.944
Constant	0.792	0.100	62.526	0.000			

* $p \leq 0.001$

Discussion

The first purpose of this study was to examine the extent of dating violence perpetration among a sample of men and women college students and whether these experiences varied by auditory status. Overall, the rate of psychological abuse in the current study was very high. More than 72% of the

sample reported perpetrating psychological abuse. This is comparable with prevalence rates of dating violence perpetration reported by college students as reported in previous studies (Cornelius, Shorey, & Beebe, 2010; Hines & Saudino, 2003; Toplu-Demirtaş, & Fincham, 2020). The prevalence of physical violence in the current study (37%) is also consistent with prevalence rates in previous studies (Cornelius, Shorey, & Beebe, 2010; Hines & Saudino, 2003).

This study also found that Deaf and hard of hearing students were significantly more likely to perpetrate psychological abuse and physical violence than hearing students. While studies examining auditory status and partner violence often ignore perpetration, these findings highlight the importance for education among groups about their varying risks for different types of abuse. Students who are Deaf or hard of hearing, for example, may be exposed to “disability-specific forms of violence” by partners, such as destruction of communication devices (Powers et al., 2009, p. 1041), isolation manifested by checking the victim’s communication devices, or may include an abuser “insulting the victim by calling her [or him] ‘hearing’ or making fun of her [or his] ASL [American Sign Language] skills” (Anderson, Leigh, & Samar, 2011, p. 204). Along these lines, researchers have suggested that power and control dynamics may manifest differently in the deaf community and increase the risk of abuse. As Mastrocinque et al. (2020, p. 4) provide:

It is a novel perspective to apply [the power and control] model to the deaf population, given unique issues such as circumstances where partners’ communication abilities differ (e.g., where one partner is hearing or hard-of-hearing and the other is deaf, especially when the deaf partner does not have clearly intelligible speech; relationships where one partner is fluent in sign language or written English and the other is not). Such situations can create power and control dynamics that may be unique to how IPV manifests or is addressed in the deaf population. Which partner can utilize a voice telephone and who interacts most effectively with first responders are common examples of these types of situations. The ease with which first responders and IPV service providers can communicate with hearing, hard-of-hearing, or deaf persons with intelligible speech or clear writing can easily lead to bias and/or inequities in gathering information from a deaf partner with poorer hearing, speech, or literacy abilities.

Although our analysis does not indicate why Deaf and hard of hearing students are more likely to perpetuate physical partner abuse and psychological partner abuse than hearing students, recent studies have found that it is common for Deaf persons to manifest deficits in healthy relationship education due of access to information via radio, television, and limited English literacy (Mastrocinque et al., 2020; Pollard et al., 2009). Similarly, it has been suggested that Deaf and hard of hearing students in particular have “historically lacked access to comprehensive health and sex information” (Anderson & Kobek Pezzarossi, 2012, p. 4) and, given limited information from their parents and teachers, often “rely on their peers to obtain health- and-sex related information” (Anderson & Kobek Pezzarossi, 2012, p. 4, citing Fitz-Gerald and Fitz-Gerald, 1985). The reliance on peers for health-and-sex-

related information suggests the need for targeted education approaches that focus on healthy relationships for Deaf and hard of hearing students.

The second purpose of this study was to examine whether risk factors, in addition to disability, increase the risk of dating violence perpetration. Consistent with previous research in hearing samples (Caetano, Ramisetty-Minkler, & Field, 2005; Gomez, 2011), respondents who experienced physical abuse by a parent or guardian were more likely to report perpetrating physical abuse as an adult. However, findings indicate that there was no statistically significant association with having suffered maltreatment as a child and subsequent adult perpetration of psychological abuse. Surprisingly, findings did not indicate that auditory status was statistically significant and different for Deaf and hard of hearing students experiencing child maltreatment and subsequent adult perpetration of dating violence. However, auditory status alone was statistically significantly associated with adult perpetration of dating violence. The current findings are unexpected given the expansive research on the role of witnessing violence in the family of origin and child maltreatment on subsequent perpetration (Carr & VanDeuse, 2002; Holt & Gillespie, 2008; Murrell, Christoff, & Henning, 2007; Foshee et al., 2004; Millett et al., 2013). This suggests the need to investigate risk factors beyond those relied upon with predominately hearing college samples to understand the dynamics of dating violence perpetration among Deaf and hard of hearing college students.

The experiences of child maltreatment and dating violence among college students have important policy implications within higher education. Our findings indicate that experiencing childhood physical abuse increased the likelihood of adult physical abuse perpetration. While having been a victim of child maltreatment was not statistically associated with auditory status and with being an adult perpetrator of abuse, auditory status alone was statistically significantly associated with being an adult perpetrator. These findings point to the need for college and universities to provide culturally sensitive interventions and prevention efforts that address abuse in intimate relationships as well as students' childhood experiences with abuse.

Although the current study extends our understanding of the correlates of dating violence perpetration, findings should be viewed with caution in light of several limitations. First, data were obtained by self-report. Thus, the possibility of deliberate response distortion must be considered. Second, present findings may not generalize beyond the particular sample. We note our sample consisted of a small number of college men and women from a mid-sized university in the Northern United States who may differ from other groups in their experiences of psychological and physical abuse. The study does, however, provide evidence for future comparisons. Third, the cross-sectional design of this investigation does not allow causal inferences to be made as the temporal order of variables. Future research is also needed concerning specific episodes of psychological and physical abuse to learn more about the dynamics of such abuse.

Finally, substantiation of the present findings, which indicate that dating violence and child maltreatment occurs with frequency for all students, regardless

of auditory status and gender, is crucial for the dissemination of educational information. The findings presented here reiterate the need for a continued focus on risk factors for dating violence, both in terms of perpetration and to address and prevent further instances of dating violence.

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