

Nunes, K. L., Hatton, C. E., Brazil, K. J., Kam, C., & Forth, A. E. (2025, June 12-14). Do violent attitudes moderate the relationship between psychopathic traits and violent behaviour? In K. L. Nunes (Chair), *Exploring the roles of violent attitudes, self-control, psychopathic and other personality traits in aggressive behaviour* [Symposium]. Canadian Psychological Association Convention, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada.

Do Violent Attitudes Moderate the Relationship Between Psychopathic Traits and Violent Behaviour?

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Violent Attitudes

- How negatively or positively one views violence
- Theory and evidence suggest that violent attitudes are relevant for the explanation and prediction of violent behaviour



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Psychopathic Traits

- Personality traits and behaviours including manipulation, impulsivity, antisocial and predatory behaviours, shallow affect, a callous disregard of others, and a lack of empathy and remorse
- Theory and evidence suggest that psychopathic traits are relevant for the explanation and prediction of violent behaviour



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Present Study

- Are more violent attitudes associated with more psychopathic traits?
- Do violent attitudes and psychopathic traits independently relate to aggressive/violent behaviour?
- Are more psychopathic traits more strongly associated with more aggressive/violent behaviour for participants with more violent attitudes than for those with less violent attitudes?



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Method

- 4 pre-registered studies
- Online panels of men in Canada and USA who met inclusion criteria (attention, data quality, and language)



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Violent Attitudes

- Evaluation of Violence Questionnaire (EVQ)
- Violent Attitudes scale of the Measures of Criminal Attitudes and Associates (MCAA-V)



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Psychopathic Traits

- Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy (LSRP) scale
- LSRP-Expanded version (LSRP-E)
- Self-Report Psychopathy-Short Form (SRP-SF) scale



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Aggressive/Violent Behaviour


- Forms and Functions of Aggressive Behavior Scale (FFABS)
 - **Re**active Physical Aggression (RPA) subscale
 - **Pro**active Physical Aggression (PPA) subscale
- Violent behaviour questions (VBQ)
- Violent Behavior Vignette Questionnaire (VBVQ)



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Measures


	Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4
N	311	501	274	407
Violent attitudes	EVQ, MCAA-V	EVQ, MCAA-V	EVQ, MCAA-V	EVQ, MCAA-V
Psychopathic traits	LSRP/E	LSRP/E	SRP-SF	SRP-SF
Aggressive/ violent behaviour	RPA, PPA, VBQ	VBVQ	RPA, PPA, VBQ	VBVQ



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Correlations?


- More violent attitudes were consistently associated with more psychopathic traits (12/12 correlations)
 - $r = .51$ to $.82$



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Study 1 Correlations


	LSRP	LSRP-E	RPA	PPA	VBQ
Violent attitudes					
EVQ	.64	.66	.74	.71	.59
MCAA-V	.60	.60	.66	.61	.57
Psychopathic traits					
LSRP			.55	.73	.65
LSRP-E			.56	.75	.67



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Independently Associated?

- Violent attitudes and psychopathic traits were independently associated with aggressive/violent behaviour (20/24 analyses)



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Study 1: VBQ	B (SE)	BCa 95% CI	p	sr ²	R ²	p
Step 1					.45	<.001
LSRP-E	0.42 (0.03)	[0.37, 0.47]	<.001	.45		
Step 2					.49	<.001
LSRP-E	0.31 (0.04)	[0.24, 0.38]	<.001	.13		
EVQ	0.11 (0.02)	[0.06, 0.16]	<.001	.04		

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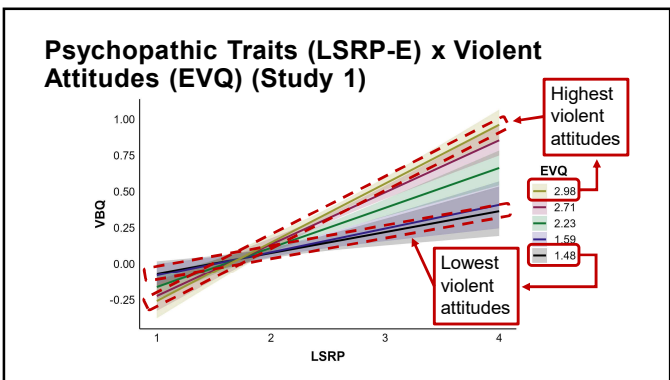
Moderation?

- Violent attitudes often significantly moderated the relationship between psychopathic traits and aggressive/violent behaviour
- Generally, more psychopathic traits were more strongly related to more aggressive/violent behaviour for men with more violent attitudes than those with less violent attitudes (16/24 analyses)

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EVQ	0.11 (0.02)	[0.06, 0.16]	<.001	.04		
Step 3					.55	<.001
LSRP-E	-0.12 (0.07)	[-0.26, 0.03]	.096	.00		
EVQ	-0.30 (0.06)	[-0.42, -0.18]	<.001	.03		
LSRP-E x EVQ	0.17 (0.02)	[0.13, 0.22]	<.001	.06		

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Results Suggest That...

- More violent attitudes are associated with more psychopathic traits
- Violent attitudes and psychopathic traits provide unique information relevant to aggression/violence
- Psychopathic traits may be more likely to manifest in aggressive/violent behaviour when attitudes are more supportive of violence than when they are less supportive of violence

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Limitations

- Limited measures and samples
- Cross-sectional, observational

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Future Directions

- Extend to other measures/variables and populations (e.g., other genders, criminal justice)
- Longitudinal, randomized experiments

Thank You

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