

Unemployment and Domestic Violence

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Crime Survey Users Conference
December 6th 2013

Received Wisdom

Unemployment is a key determinant of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) towards women.

Previous research in the Economic Literature (US)

Men losing control in response to negative triggers

Card and Dahl show that unexpected losses in American Football matches by the home team results in an 8% increase in police reports.

- ▶ Losing a job could be such a negative emotional cue

Relative economic position within a partnership

Aizer found as women's relative wages increase (i.e. wage gap between male and female partner decreases) that there is a *significant decrease* in female hospitalisations from abuse.

- ▶ If labour market conditions improve (worsen) then abuse will decrease (increase)
- ▶ Aizer includes total unemployment at the county level, but finds no effect.

The potentially contrasting roles of **male** versus **female** unemployment have not been considered in any empirical work

Why could *gender-specific* unemployment matter?

Partnerships confer economic advantage (pecuniary & non pecuniary benefits)

A woman deciding to continue or end a relationship 'compares' the value from being in a couple to the value from being single:

If gain from relationship exceeds being single, then she will remain in the partnership.

Unemployment is a key determinant of the 'value' of each state:

- ▶ If a woman's risk of unemployment increases, then she may become economically dependent on her partner, and could find it hard to end the relationship even if he is abusive.
- ▶ If a man's risk of unemployment increases, then he may become economically dependent on his partner, and so will want to ensure the relationship continues (potentially modifying his behaviour)

Empirical Prediction

- ▶ Higher male unemployment risk and lower wages for males are associated with a lower risk of domestic violence.
- ▶ Higher female unemployment risk and lower female wages are associated with a higher risk of domestic violence.

Crime Survey Data

Individual level data

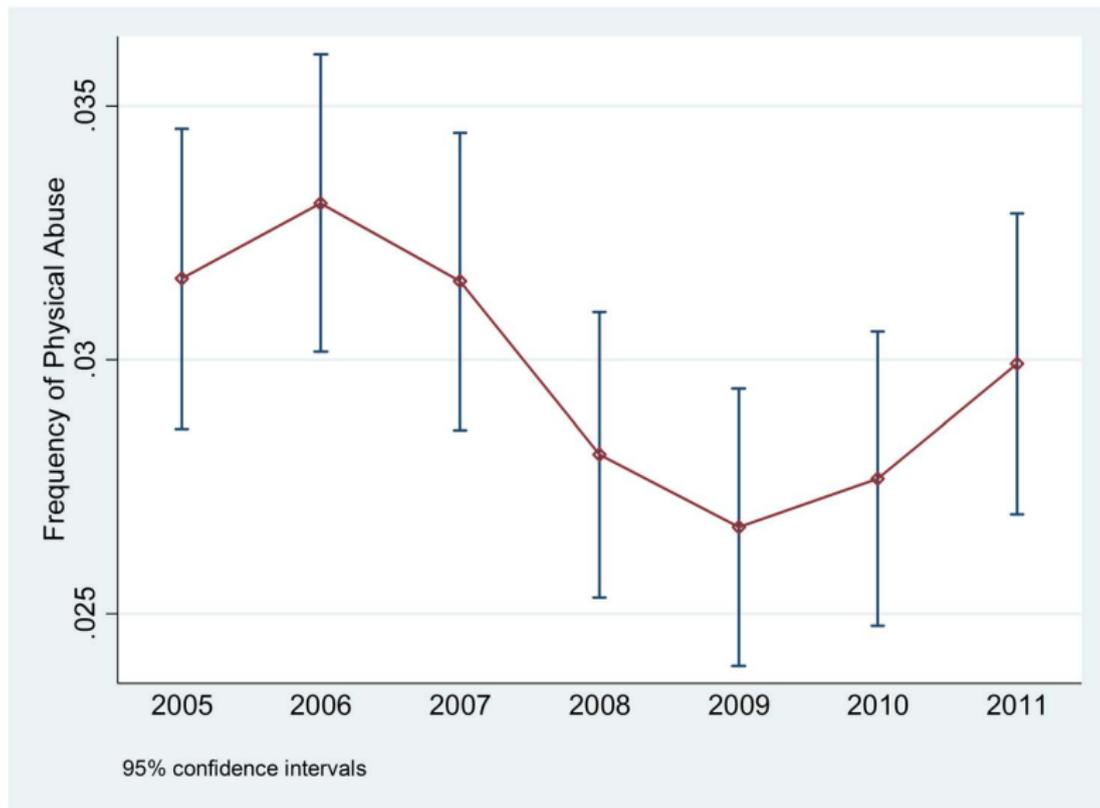
- ▶ Annually repeated cross-sectional survey: contains DV module answered by individuals resident in England and Wales; from 2004-05 to 2010-11.
- ▶ Sample: Females aged 16-59, who were all asked to complete the violence module (86,877 women)
- ▶ Report incidence in the past 12 months of a number of categories of abuse.
- ▶ Geographic information on individual's "Police Force Area" (42 PFAs)

Categories of Abuse

Table: Variable Definitions

Behavior	Physical abuse	Non-phy. abuse	Any abuse
Prevented from fair share of h-hold money		X	X
Stopped from seeing friends and relatives		X	X
Repeatedly belittled you		X	X
Frightened you, by threatening to hurt you		X	X
Pushed you, held you down or slapped you	X		X
Kicked, bit, or hit you	X		X
Choked or tried to strangle you	X		X
Threatened you with a weapon	X		X
Used a weapon against you	X		X
Used other force against you	X		X

Partner physical abuse (on women) in past 12 months



Question format: 2004-2011

Question - PV2

And which, if any, of these things has a PARTNER done to you in the LAST 12 MONTHS, that is, since the first of April 2012?

- Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- Repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless
- Frightened you, by threatening to hurt you or someone close to you
- Pushed you, held you down or slapped you
- Kicked, bit, or hit you with a fist or something else, or threw something at you
- Choked or tried to strangle you**
- Threatened you with a weapon, for example a stick or a knife
- Threatened to kill you
- Used a weapon against you, for example a stick or a knife
- Used some other kind of force against you
- None of these
- Don't know/can't remember
- Don't wish to answer

CONTINUE

BACK

Question format: trialled in 2011

Question - NIPV2

And has a **partner or ex-partner** done any of these things to you in the **last 12 months**?

- Prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- Stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- Repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless

Yes

No

Don't know/can't remember

Don't wish to answer

CONTINUE

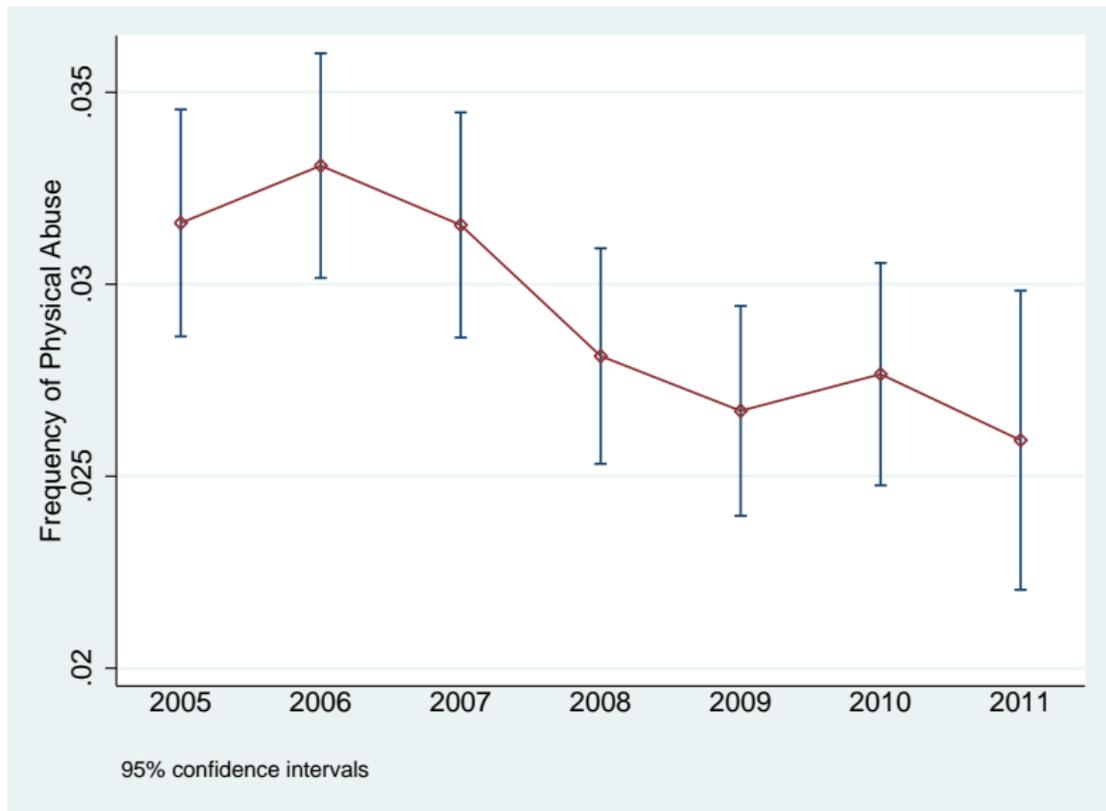
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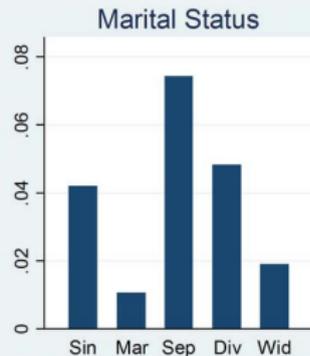
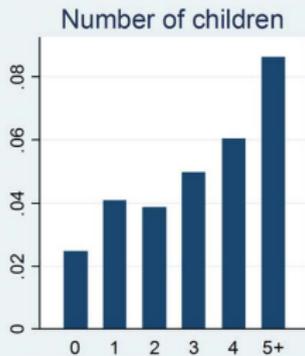
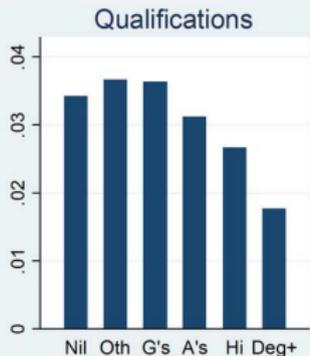
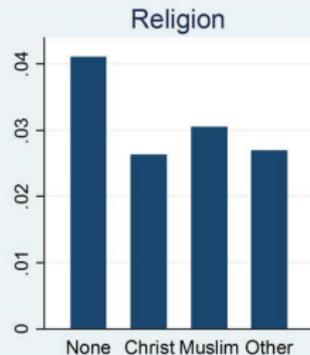
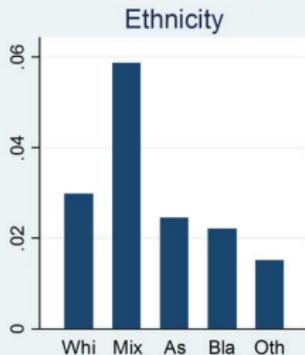
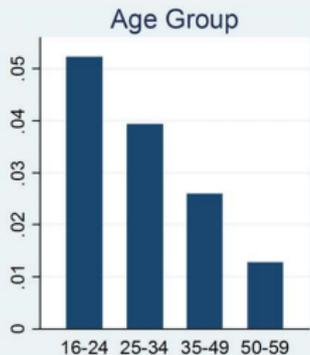


Partner physical abuse (on women) in past 12 months

Omitting new format questions



Incidence of Physical Abuse by Demographic Characteristics



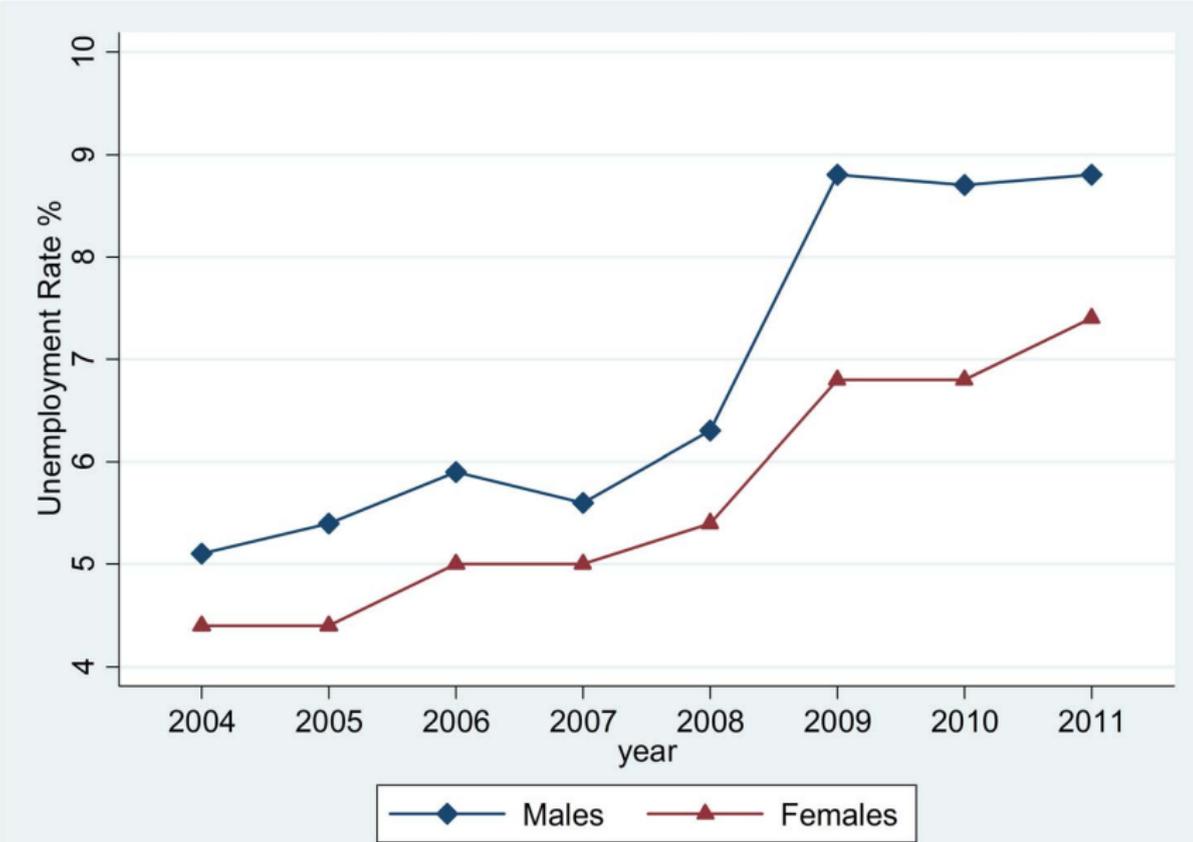
Labour Market Data

Area level data

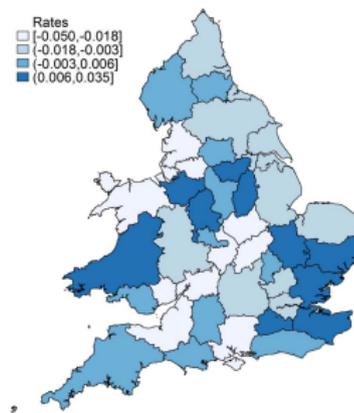
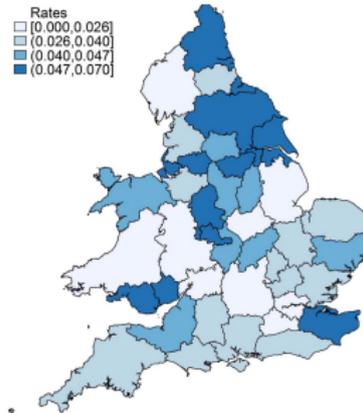
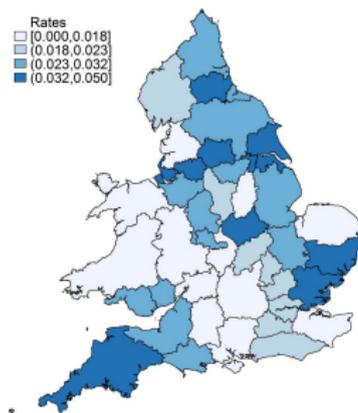
Individual level crime survey data measures *past* experience of abuse, but *current* labour market status

- ▶ Match with data on “local” labour market conditions from the Annual Population Survey (matching the 12 month period to which the response refers).
- ▶ Unemployment rate by age-group (16-24, 25-35, 35-49, 50-64) and gender
- ▶ Geography: Aggregated up to match Police Force Area (42 PFAs) in BCS
- ▶ Further area level controls:
 - ▶ Real hourly wages
 - ▶ Crime-related controls
 - ▶ Internal migration
 - ▶ Alcohol & substance abuse

Unemployment rates by gender in England and Wales



Area level variation in abuse and unemployment levels



Change over the sample period (2004-2011) in:

Female unemployment, Male unemployment, Physical Abuse

Unemployment and Physical Abuse

Specification	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Unemployment in own-age group	-0.031 (0.018)					0.008 (0.019)
Female unemployment in own-age group		0.098** (0.027)	0.094** (0.027)	0.103** (0.028)	0.095** (0.027)	
Male unemployment in own-age group		-0.091** (0.021)	-0.098** (0.022)	-0.082** (0.027)	-0.090** (0.021)	
Female unemployment in other age groups			-0.013 (0.065)			
Male unemployment in other age groups			-0.048 (0.054)			
Female real wage in own-age group				0.005 (0.009)		
Male real wage in own-age group				-0.001 (0.006)		
Unemployment rate gap (F-M) in own age group						0.095** (0.022)
Area & time fixed effects	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Demographic controls	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Area-specific linear time trends	no	no	no	no	yes	no
Observations	86877	86731	86731	86731	86731	86731

Further Specifications

Specification	(3)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
<i>(a) Physical Abuse</i>							
Female unemployment in own-age group	0.098** (0.027)	0.097** (0.027)	0.103** (0.028)	0.088** (0.027)	0.098** (0.027)	0.107** (0.028)	0.093** (0.026)
Male unemployment in own-age group	-0.091** (0.021)	-0.089** (0.021)	-0.108** (0.021)	-0.087** (0.025)	-0.090** (0.021)	-0.071** (0.026)	-0.109** (0.021)
<i>(b) Non-Physical Abuse</i>							
Female unemployment in own-age group	0.103** (0.037)	0.101** (0.038)	0.106** (0.038)	0.091* (0.039)	0.104** (0.037)	0.109** (0.039)	0.092* (0.037)
Male unemployment in own-age group	-0.082** (0.030)	-0.081** (0.030)	-0.091** (0.031)	-0.078* (0.034)	-0.083** (0.030)	-0.073* (0.037)	-0.104** (0.030)
Local area crime-related controls	no	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Local area drugs and alcohol	no	no	yes	no	no	no	no
Local area qualifications distribution	no	no	no	yes	no	no	no
Selective migration	no	no	no	no	yes	no	no
Unemployment in neighboring areas	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no
Health and marital status	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes
Observations	86731	86731	80011	86731	86731	86731	86674

Physical abuse

Magnitude of Effects

1% point increase in female unemployment is associated with a 0.098% point *increase* in likelihood of respondent being a victim of physical abuse

1% point increase in male unemployment is associated with a 0.091% point *decrease* in likelihood of respondent being a victim of physical abuse

Over sample period (2004-2011) male unemployment rose by 3.7% pts, female unemployment by 3.0% pts

The analysis implies:

- ▶ The 3.0% pt increase in female unemployment caused a *increase* in the incidence of domestic abuse of 9.1% - 10.3%
- ▶ The 3.7% pt increase in male unemployment caused a *decline* in the incidence of domestic abuse of 10.1% - 12.1%

Conclusions

- ▶ Although unemployment is commonly perceived to be an important factor of domestic abuse, previous research has found that its impact is not significant.
- ▶ Our research focuses on unemployment disaggregated by age and gender. We do find that unemployment has a significant impact, but in a way that is different from conventional wisdom.
- ▶ We find a *negative* link between unemployment among males and a woman's risk of being abused and a *positive* link between unemployment among females and a woman's risk of being abused.
- ▶ The intuition of the results is that latent abusive males “behave” when facing labour market risk, as they are more economically dependent on their partners so would like the partnership to continue.

Thank you for your attention

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