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A NATIONAL STUDY ON THE PREVALENCE OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG MEN IN LITHUANIA

Marius Viltrakis
Mykolas Romeris University
Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Ateities St. 20, LT-08303 Vilnius, Lithuania
Corresponding Author, email address: m_viltrakis@mruni.eu
https://orcid.org/0009-0001-6132-4274

Milli Melodia Marika Leinonen
Lithuanian University of Health Sciences
Faculty of Public Health
A. Mickevičiaus St. 9, LT-44307 Kaunas, Lithuania
Email address: milli.melodia.marika.leinonen@stud.lsmu.lt
https://orcid.org/0009-0001-0892-8669

Aleksandr Segal
Mykolas Romeris University
Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Ateities St. 20, LT-08303 Vilnius, Lithuania
Email address: a.segal@mruni.eu
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6490-2498

Aistė Bakaitytė-Bagdonė
Mykolas Romeris University
Faculty of Human and Social Studies
Ateities St. 20, LT-08303 Vilnius, Lithuania
Email address: abakaityt@mruni.eu
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7937-933X

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Abstract

Introduction: Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a pervasive public health concern, yet male victimization remains significantly underexamined both globally and in Lithuania. Existing research has predominantly focused on female victims, leaving substantial gaps in understanding the prevalence, forms, and correlates of IPV among men. This study addresses this gap by providing the first nationally representative assessment of IPV against men in Lithuania by analyzing lifetime and past-year prevalence across psychological, economic, physical, and sexual domains.

Method: Data were drawn from an OMNIBUS survey of 742 adult men. IPV indicators were used to assess lifetime and past-year exposure. Multivariate logistic regression analyses were conducted to identify and differentiate predictors of experienced IPV. Variables included age, relationship status, and childhood exposure to violence.

Results: Findings indicate that half of the Lithuanian men surveyed have experienced at least one form of IPV in their lifetime, with psychological and economic violence being most prevalent. Nearly one quarter reported experiencing IPV in the past year. Men aged 30-39 who were divorced or living separately from their partner, and those with a history of childhood abuse, had a higher probability of experiencing IPV in the past year. Additionally, a descriptive comparison with a representative female sample suggests that psychological and economic IPV are gender neutral in prevalence.

Conclusion: This study demonstrates that IPV against men in Lithuania is widespread, which challenges gender-exclusive narratives of certain types of IPV.

Keywords: *intimate partner violence, IPV, prevalence, male victimization.*

Introduction

IPV and Male Victimization

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant public health issue and a widely acknowledged breach of fundamental human rights (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2026; World Health Organization, 2021). It is prevalent globally (White et al., 2023; WHO, 2021; WHO, 2025) and affects all socio-economic, religious, and cultural groups (WHO, 2012). The World Health Organization (WHO) (2012) conceptualizes IPV as any abusive behavior by a current or former intimate partner that causes physical, psychological, sexual, or economic harm. Most studies extensively focus on male-to-female perpetrated IPV, as abuse from an intimate partner is recognized as the most common form of violence against women (WHO, 2021). In contrast, male IPV victimization is relatively under-researched, resulting in a limited understanding of its prevalence (Li, 2026). It has been found that men do experience sexual, physical, and psychological IPV, but the

patterns of IPV that represent serious sexual and physical violence are predominantly experienced by women (Ansara & Hindin, 2010).

IPV is commonly regarded as a gendered phenomenon (Li, 2026), in which men are often the primary perpetrators, rather than victims (Li, 2026; Taylor et al., 2021). However, research consistently shows that men do in fact experience multiple forms of partner abuse (Afifi et al., 2008; Carbone-López et al., 2006; Cho et al., 2026; Gubi & Wandera, 2022; Li, 2026; Odemba et al., 2025; Rehman et al., 2023; Taylor et al., 2021; Więcek-Durańska, 2025) but are less likely to report or seek help compared to women due to additional help-seeking barriers (Cho et al., 2026; Taylor et al., 2021). These include psychological barriers, stigma or societal expectations, fear of negative consequences, lack of available services, adverse experiences in past help-seeking, interpersonal barriers, and financial dependence (Taylor et al., 2021). Due to the aforementioned reasons, as well as other factors, male IPV is significantly underreported (Christopher et al., 2022; Halim et al., 2025) or is reported only when the abuse is associated with more adverse health outcomes for men (Carbone-López et al., 2006; Cho et al., 2026).

Within the Lithuanian context, IPV remains a scarcely researched issue. To our knowledge, only one national study on IPV prevalence exists, and it focuses on male perpetration and female victimization (Žukauskienė et al., 2021). There are no comprehensive studies that focus on male victimization. The European Institute for Gender Equality (2026) provides administrative IPV prevalence data, also focusing mainly on female victimization. The institute categorizes victims as either "female" or "remaining," indicating that males or other-gendered individuals represent 11% of IPV and 23% of domestic violence victims in 2022 (when the survey was taken).

This lack of research regarding male victimization aligns with the wider global trend where partner violence against men is insufficiently addressed and researched compared to female victimization. The limited understanding in existing research highlights the need for more comprehensive empirical analysis on the prevalence of male IPV. In response to this gap, the current study aims to determine the prevalence of male victimization in the context of intimate partner violence in Lithuania.

Prevalence of IPV Against Men

Studies that have analyzed the prevalence of IPV against men, though scarce, still exist. A survey of 6,767 men in the U.S. showed a lifetime prevalence of 4.4% for sexual, 13.7% for physical, and 22.3% for psychological IPV, while the 12-month prevalence was 0.3%, 0.8%, and 2.5%, respectively (Zhang Kudon et al., 2026). A study in Kenya showed that 4% of married men experienced sexual IPV, while 7% and 21% experienced physical and psychological IPV, respectively (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2015). Another study found that in Germany, the lifetime prevalence was 5.4%, 29.8%, and 39.8%, while the 12-month prevalence was 3.4%, 13.8%, and 23.6% of men having experienced sexual, physical, and psychological IPV, respectively (Schemmel et al., 2025). All studies show sexual

IPV as the least prevalent, then physical, and lastly psychological as the most prevalent.

Even though the number of studies that focus on men as victims of IPV is not as extensive as with women, scientists have made a few attempts to pool available data and analyze the general prevalence of IPV against men. A meta-analysis of 30 studies from different countries (58,357 participants in total) showed a prevalence of 7% for sexual, 20% for physical, and 44% for psychological IPV (Rehman et al., 2023).

Sexual violence against men is frequently omitted from usual surveys or underreported due to social stigma. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey data show that about one in 14 men has been "made to penetrate" someone during their lifetime, and one in 38 men has experienced completed or attempted rape (Smith et al., 2018). The same study results showed that 97% of men who experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner reported having only female perpetrators. Generally, studies have found that sexual IPV frequencies have the largest difference between men and women, for example, there's a lifetime prevalence of 5.5% of men and 18.6% of women in Germany (Jud et al., 2023); 16.9% of men and 45.1% of women experienced some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetimes in the U.S. (Zhang Kudon et al., 2026).

Though it is not measured as often as physical, psychological, and sexual IPV, economic IPV is also a well-documented type of IPV, though understudied in male samples. In the context of economic IPV, studies show a 23.8% prevalence of economic violence in a specific region of Kenya (Odemba et al., 2025), 29.85% ± 7.85 in Canada (White & Fjellner, 2022), lifetime prevalences of 7.46% in Germany (Jud et al., 2023), 7.1% in Australia (Kutin et al., 2017), and 11.5% of economic abuse in New Zealand (Mellar et al., 2023). No other studies reporting economic IPV in male samples have been found.

There is also a point to be made for overlapping IPV experiences. Men who report experiencing one type of IPV also affirm having experienced other types of IPV. Schokkenbroek and Hardyns (2022) found that most men (45.8%) reported being subjected to more than one form of IPV. Of these possible forms of multiplied IPV victimization experiences, one study found that, among men in Germany who experienced IPV in their lifetimes, the highest overlap was 9.78% between psychological and physical IPV (Jud et al., 2023). Another study by Cho and colleagues (2026) found in a nationally representative sample that the highest comorbidities were between psychological and controlling abuse (43.7%) and psychological and physical violence (25%).

In the context of Lithuania and neighboring countries, there is little to no concrete data on men as victims of IPV. Data from 2021 Eurostat show that of men in the Latvian population, 17.1% experience psychological IPV (similar rates are provided in the official statistics portal of Lativa in 2022), in the Lithuanian population it is 19.2%, Estonian 31.7% and Finnish 42.0%, while physical IPV, including threats and sexual IPV, was 3.4%, 2.4%, 9.2%, and 17.8% in the respective countries (Eurostat, 2025). These low results could be a product of cultural differences, but there is also a need for further data and prevalence studies to have a more nuanced understanding of the situation with Lithuanian men as IPV victims.

Looking at other countries that have similar or adjacent cultural backgrounds to Lithuania, a study in Poland of 320 men showed that 34% have experienced psychological IPV, 1% physical IPV, and 0.5% sexual IPV from their current partner (Więcek-Durańska, 2025).

To further the understanding of the prevalence of IPV against men in Lithuania, it was decided to examine the relationship between socio-demographic factors (i.e., age, income, geographical location, relationship status, and childhood abuse) and IPV. Studies regarding male victimization and age have been mixed. One study in Canada showed that the likelihood of experiencing psychological violence decreased with age (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018), while Jud and colleagues (2023) found lifetime prevalence rates to be the highest in men aged 60-69. As for economic violence, some research shows that men who have higher incomes have a decreased probability of experiencing physical and psychological IPV (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018; Gubi & Wandera, 2022). Another study showed that poverty and unemployment were associated with a higher risk of experiencing IPV (Jud et al., 2023). Geographically, low-income urban areas (Rehman et al., 2023) as well as rural areas have been associated with increased male victimization (Albright et al., 2024). Concerning relationship status, a study by Dim & Elabor-Idemudia (2018) found that men in common-law unions were more likely to experience psychological IPV than men who were married. Lastly, being victimized in childhood is another factor that is often researched in association with IPV. Studies have shown that experiencing or witnessing domestic violence in childhood is associated with an increased risk of becoming a victim of IPV in adulthood among males as well (Afifi et al., 2008; Berger & Krahé, 2025; Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018; Rehman et al., 2023).

Methods

Participants and Procedures

The participants of the current cross-sectional study were 845 men from a national representative OMNIBUS survey. This survey was a part of a larger research project where data for men and women were collected. The sampling strategy ensured that the age and geographic residency of men were representative of the population. The data were collected through in-person interviews by a survey research firm in Lithuania in the spring of 2018. The interviewers were trained in the administration of a questionnaire before visiting households. The households were selected through random route sampling, which was intended to create an equal probability of a household being selected. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 91 (M_{age} = 46.97; SD_{age} = 18.03). Of the participants, 61 (7.2%) men were omitted from the sample, as they indicated that they had never had an intimate partner (M_{age} = 23.48; SD_{age} = 19), and 42 (4.97%) men refused to answer the part of the questionnaire about intimate partner violence. Thus, the final sample consisted of 742 men

(M_{age} = 49.29; SD_{age} = 16.89). Demographic variables are presented in Table 1. The IPV-related sample characteristics are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Sample characteristics

Characteristics	***n* (%)**	**Characteristics**	***n* (%)**
Education		Age	
Primary (up to grade 4)	10 (1.3)	18-29	119 (16)
Lower secondary (up to grade 10)	55 (7.4)	30-39	113 (15.2)
Secondary	123 (16.6)	40-49	138 (18.6)
Tertiary	553 (74.6)	50-59	143 (19.3)
No response	1 (0.1)	60+	229 (30.9)
Subjective income		Place of residence	
Financial difficulty	35 (4.7)	City (> 50,000 residents)	448 (60.4)
Making ends meet	505 (68.1)	Town (2,000-50,000 res.)	60 (8.1)
Financial comfort	185 (24.9)	Village (< 2,000 res.)	234 (31.5)
No response	17 (2.3)		
Violent experience in childhood		Relationship status	
Yes	94 (12.7)	Married/living together	520 (70.1)
No	614 (82.7)	Divorced/living separately	89 (12)
No response	34 (4.6)	Single/dating/ widower	132 (17.8)
		No response	1 (0.1)

Table 2. Description of intimate partner violence experienced by the men in the sample

IPV-related variable	**n (%)**
Relationship status with the perpetrator	
Living with the perpetrator	219 (29.5)
Currently in the divorce process	102 (13.7)
No response	421 (56.2)

Time after the last violent incident	
Over the last 7 days	16 (2.2)
Over the last month	40 (5.4)
Over the last half year	41 (5.5)
Over the last year	83 (11.4)
More than a year ago	77 (10.4)
More than 5 years ago	36 (4.9)
More than 10 years ago	66 (8.9)
Never had experience with IPV	375 (50.5)
No response	8 (1.1)

Measures

To assess different forms of IPV, we used a 21-item checklist developed by Žukauskienė et al. (2021). The checklist measures four types of violence, namely psychological violence (eight items, e.g., "Tried to restrict contact with your family or friends"), physical violence (five items, e.g., "Pushed, grabbed or shoved you"), economic violence (five items, e.g., "Restricted you to have personal money"), and sexual violence (three items, e.g., "Partner physically forces you to have sex"). Participants were asked to rate how often they experienced such partner behavior on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (never happened to me) to 5 (happens to me every day). Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subscales ranged from 0.77 to 0.87.

The socio-demographic variables of age, education, relationship status, area of residency, subjective income, and violent experience in childhood were each measured by a single item. In addition, single items were used for measuring whether the participants were currently in an abusive relationship and the time after the last incident of violence.

Statistical Procedures

To evaluate the prevalence of the different types of violence, first, the responses of the IPV checklist were dichotomized as follows: 0 – has not experienced such behavior, and 1 – has experienced such behavior at least once. A combined IPV score indicates at least one type of violence experienced; multiple violence indicates at least two types of violence experienced. Binary indicators were created separately for different types of violence (psychological, economic, physical, sexual, multiple violence, and combined score) as well as for violence experienced during the last year, violence experienced more than a year ago,

and violence experienced regardless of timing (i.e., at least once in a lifetime). In addition, IPV prevalence was calculated and expressed as percentages for each indicator.

To identify which demographic characteristics are most important in predicting the probability of IPV, multivariate logistic regression was employed. As an outcome, dichotomous IPV exposure variables (experienced vs. not experienced at least one psychological, economic, physical, sexual, and combined IPV incident within the last year) were used. The multivariate regression analyses with the likelihood ratio test were carried out in two steps. In the first step, as the predictors, all socio-demographic characteristics (gender, education, relationship status, subjective income, area of residency, and violence experienced in childhood) were included. In the second step, only significant predictors were left in the analysis. Demographic characteristics were used as unchanged predictors, except for subjective income, which was transformed from a 5-category to a 3-category scale. This was necessary because one category had no cases in one of the outcome groups, causing complete separation in the logistic regression model. Theoretically adjacent categories reflecting similar financial situations were merged: Category 1 ("We don't have enough money for food") was labeled as "Financial difficulty"; Categories 2 ("We have enough money for food but not for anything else") and 3 ("We have money for food, clothes, and some savings") were combined into "Making ends meet"; Categories 4 ("We can afford some expensive purchases") and 5 ("We can afford anything we like") were combined into "Financial comfort."

Results

IPV Prevalence in General Sample

Results of the IPV prevalence (Table 3) revealed that half of the men had experienced some type of IPV at least once in their lifetime. Of those men, a bit more than half had experienced IPV over the last year, and another half had experienced IPV more than a year ago. Results of the specific type of IPV prevalence reveal that the most prevalent is psychological, and the least prevalent is sexual violence. One-third of men had experienced multiple types of violence in their lifetime.

Table 3. Proportion (%) of men who had experienced IPV

	At least once in a lifetime	Past year	Never	Past year	Over 1 year ago	Never
	In total sample, *N* = 742			In the sample of abused men, *N* = 376		
Psychological violence	49.7	24.1	50.3	48.6	50.3	1.1
Economic violence	28.7	12.5	71.3	25.3	32.6	42.1
Physical violence	12.1	5.3	87.9	10.6	14.4	75
Sexual violence	6.1	2.4	93.9	4.9	7.6	87.5
Multiple violence	30.5	13.9	69.5	28	33.4	38.6
Combined IPV	50.4	24.1	24.6	50.6	49.4	N/A

Association Between IPV Victimization and Socio-demographic Characteristics

A binary logistic regression was performed to assess the association between socio-demographic characteristics and IPV victimization during the last 12 months (0 = no victimization, 1 = victimization). The final model was significant ($\chi^2(7) = 54.73$, $p < .001$), explaining between 7.5% (Cox & Snell $R^2 = .075$) and 11.2% (Nagelkerke $R^2 = .112$) of the variance in IPV victimization over the last 12 months. The final results of the multivariate logistic regression analysis for IPV overall are presented in Table 4. Men aged 30-39 had significantly higher odds of IPV victimization compared to men younger than 30 years. Regarding relationship status, men who were divorced or living separately had significantly higher odds of victimization compared to those who were married or living with their partner. Men who had experienced violence in childhood also had significantly higher odds of overall IPV victimization. Subjective income and area of residency were not significantly associated with overall IPV victimization.

Table 4. Relationship between IPV victimization during the last 12 months and demographic variables

	Total IPV	
	Odds ratio	**(95% CI)**
Age		
18-29	1	Ref.
30-39	2.43	(1.35, 4.38)*
40-49	1.09	(0.59, 2.01)
50-59	1.56	(0.92, 2.62)
60+	1.52	(0.92, 2.63)
Relationship status		
Married/living together	1	Ref.
Divorced/living separately	2.96	(1.59, 5.50)*
Single/dating/widow	1.37	(0.58, 3.22)
Subjective income		
Financial difficulty		
Making ends meet		
Financial comfort		
Area of residency		
Village (< 2,000 residents)		
Town (2,000-50,000 residents)		
City (> 50,000 residents)		
Violent experience in childhood	3.69	(2.31, 5.88)*

*$p < .05$

Associations Between Different Types of IPV Victimization and Socio-demographic Characteristics

Binary logistic regressions were performed to assess the association between socio-demographic characteristics and different types of IPV victimization during the last 12 months (0 = no victimization, 1 = victimization). The final results of all the models are presented in Table 5. For psychological violence, the final model was significant ($\chi^2(7) = 55.82$, $p < .001$), explaining between 7.7% (Cox & Snell $R^2 = .077$) and 11.4% (Nagelkerke $R^2 = .114$) of the variance in psychological IPV victimization over the last 12 months. The

pattern of results closely mirrored those for overall IPV: men aged 30-39 who were divorced or living separately, and those with a history of childhood violence exposure, all showed significantly higher odds of psychological victimization. Subjective income and area of residency were again non-significant.

For economic IPV victimization, the final model was significant ($\chi^2(3) = 47.59$, $p < .001$), explaining between 6.6% (Cox & Snell $R^2 = .066$) and 12.3% (Nagelkerke $R^2 = .123$) of the variance in economic IPV victimization over the last 12 months. Men who were divorced or living separately had significantly higher odds of economic victimization compared to those who were married or living together. Men who had experienced violence in childhood also had significantly higher odds of economic victimization. Age, subjective income, and area of residency were not significantly associated with economic IPV victimization.

For physical and sexual IPV, the final models were both significant ($\chi^2(1) = 9.11$, $p < .01$ and $\chi^2(1) = 4.90$, $p < .05$, respectively). The physical victimization model explained between 1.3% and 3.8% of the variance (Cox & Snell $R^2 = .013$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = .038$), and the sexual victimization model explained between 0.7% and 3.3% (Cox & Snell $R^2 = .007$; Nagelkerke $R^2 = .033$). In both models, exposure to violence during childhood was the only significant predictor, with all other socio-demographic variables non-significant.

Table 5. Socioeconomic status (SES) factors associated with different forms of IPV during the last 12 months; odds ratios and confidence intervals of the univariate and multivariate logistic regression model

	Psychological IPV	**Economical IPV**	**Physical IPV**	**Sexual IPV**
	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)	OR (95% CI)
Age				
18-29	1			
30-39	2.36 (1.30, 4.27)*			
40-49	1.08 (0.59, 2.01)			
50-59	1.55 (0.92, 2.61)			
60+	1.54 (0.91, 2.62)			

Type of partner relationship				
Married/living together	1	1		
Divorced/living separately	3.12 (1.67, 5.89)*	2.58 (1.19, 5.61)*		
Single/dating/widow	1.45 (0.61, 3.43)	1.17 (0.40, 3.45)		
Subjective income				
Financial difficulty				
Making ends meet				
Financial comfort				
Area of residency				
Village (< 2,000 residents)				
Town (2,000-50,000 residents)				
City (> 50,000 residents)				
Violent experience in childhood	3.72 (2.33, 5.93)*	5.35 (3.21, 8.94)*	3.31 (1.61, 6.82)*	3.42 (1.25, 9.35)*

*$p < .05$

Discussion

In this article, the study conducted in Lithuania aimed to investigate the lifetime prevalence of different forms of IPV – and in the past 12 months, in adult men. Furthermore, the relation between socio-demographic characteristics of IPV victims and their IPV experience was assessed. Results of this study showed that the prevalence of men who experience any type of IPV in Lithuania is fairly high (50.4% and 24.1% in a lifetime and in the last year, respectively). From the different socio-demographic variables, age, relationship status, and violence experienced in childhood were found to be associated with different types of IPV.

Intimate Partner Violence Prevalence in the General Sample

The analysis of the lifetime prevalence of IPV in Lithuania showed that one in two men has experienced at least one type of IPV in the span of their life. These results are similar to the ones found a few years ago in Germany of the lifetime prevalence of overall IPV, but excluding economic IPV (50.8%) (Jud et al., 2023). However, past year results (24.1%) are different from recent research on the past year prevalence of partner violence among men in Uganda (44%) (Gubi & Wandera, 2022).

When examining different types of IPV, approximately one in two men in Lithuania has experienced psychological violence in their lifetime (49.7%) and one in four in the past year (24.1%). This prevalence is high compared to other countries, such as the U.S. (22.3%) (Zhang Kudon et al., 2026), Canada (10.1%) (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018), Kenya (21%) (KNBS, 2015), and Poland (34%) (Więcek-Durańska, 2025). The lifetime prevalence in Lithuania is closer to the pooled prevalence reported in a meta-analysis, which found a 44% lifetime prevalence of psychological IPV among male victims (Rehman et al., 2023). Germany is one of the few countries where some studies reported similar or slightly lower rates (39.8%) (Schemmel et al., 2025), while another study reported a prevalence of 48% (Jud et al., 2023). Notably, both the lifetime and past year prevalence rates in this study are higher than those reported in the annual Eurostat report for Lithuania (19.2%) (Eurostat, 2025).

In Lithuania, the lifetime prevalence of physical IPV among men is 12.1%, while the past year prevalence is 5.3%. When comparing lifetime prevalence rates internationally, some countries, such as the U.S. (13.7%) (Zhang Kudon et al., 2026) and Germany (29.8%) (Schemmel et al., 2025), report higher levels, while others, such as Kenya (7%) (KNBS, 2015), show lower rates. Past-year prevalence rates in several European contexts also exceed those found in this study; for example, six major European cities reported a rate of 19.8% (Costa et al., 2016), and Germany reported 13.8% (Schemmel et al., 2025). In contrast, the U.S. reported a substantially lower past-year prevalence of 0.8% (Zhang Kudon et al., 2026).

The lifetime prevalence of sexual IPV in Lithuania found in the current study (6.1%) was a little bit higher than in Germany (5.5%) (Jud et al., 2023) but lower than the prevalence in the U.S. (16.9%) (Zhang Kudon et al., 2026). The results also align with those of a recent meta-analysis, which reported a pooled lifetime prevalence of 7% (Rehman et al., 2023). The lifetime prevalence rates observed in this study were higher than the combined prevalence of physical and sexual IPV, including threats, reported for the Lithuanian population in the annual Eurostat report (2.4%) (Eurostat, 2025).

Finally, the prevalence of economic IPV found in the current study is similar to the prevalence found in a region of Kenya (23.8%) (Odemba et al., 2025) and Canada (29.85% ± 7.85) (White & Fjellner, 2022). However, it is higher than the lifetime prevalence reported in Germany (7.46%) (Jud et al., 2023), Australia (7.1%) (Kutin et al., 2017), and New Zealand (11.5%) (Mellar et al., 2023).

Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Socio-demographic Factors

In an effort to assess recent and contextually relevant risk factors, we will refer to past-year IPV rates as opposed to lifetime prevalences when evaluating the role of socio-demographic factors in victimization. The findings indicate that men in their early midlife (aged 30-39) have an increased risk of experiencing both psychological IPV and overall IPV. These results partially align with Wörmann and colleagues (2021), who found the mean age of the peak of male victimization is 40.6. However, this contrasts with more recent research suggesting that victimization peaks later in life, between 60 and 69 (Jud et al., 2023), although that same study also reported that exposure to multiple IPV decreases among older men. Such discrepancies may reflect country-specific cultural and/or demographic characteristics. For example, in Lithuania, nearly half of older adults live in one-person households (OECD, 2024), which may influence both exposure to IPV and the likelihood of reporting it (Dias & Fraga, 2024). Notably, the current findings did not reveal a linear progression or regression in IPV with age, suggesting that age-related risk may be shaped by more complex contextual factors.

Relationship status emerged as an important factor in association with IPV victimization. According to our findings, men who were divorced or living separately were at higher odds of experiencing psychological violence as well as overall IPV compared to those who were currently married or cohabitating. These findings contradict previous research showing that men who are not married but are cohabiting or in common-law partnerships may be at greater risk of IPV (Giordano et al., 2023; Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018). However, this association may merely reflect a consequence of IPV, rather than its cause. Referring to the fact that men who experienced IPV may have moved away from or divorced their partner as a result of the abuse. Supporting this interpretation, research from Sweden has suggested that not being married or in a stable relationship may itself be associated with a higher risk of physical and/or sexual IPV (Lövestad & Krantz, 2012).

Regarding violence experienced in childhood, it was found that all forms of IPV were associated with the experience of violence in childhood. This coincides with other studies that found similar results in the U.S. (Afifi et al., 2008), Germany (Berger & Krahé, 2025), Canada (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018), and in a pooled prevalence meta-analysis (Rehman et al., 2023). This possibly also coincides with the theory that men who experience violence in their childhood, through family, see it as a norm and are more accepting of it in their future relationships (Taylor et al., 2021).

Comparison of IPV Prevalence Among Lithuanian Men and Women

A descriptive comparison of IPV between men and women in Lithuania reveals both possible similarities and clear gender-based differences. Among men, the lifetime prevalence of any IPV is 50.4%, which is very similar to the 51.2% lifetime prevalence reported

among women (Žukauskienė et al., 2021). Psychological IPV is the most common form for both genders, with almost identical lifetime rates (49.7% for men and 50.1% for women), suggesting that psychological abuse may not be gender differentiated. Economic IPV also shows comparable prevalence across genders (28.7% for men and 29.9% for women), suggesting that economic control and restriction are similarly experienced by both genders in intimate relationships. In contrast, physical and sexual IPV display clearer gender differences. Women report substantially higher lifetime rates of physical IPV (21.5%) and sexual IPV (16.9%) compared to men (12.1% and 6.1%, respectively), which corresponds to the results that prior research has found (Ansara & Hindin, 2010). Past-year overall IPV also differs by gender: 57.1% of women experienced IPV in the last 12 months, compared to 24.1% of men. Taken together, this comparison indicates that psychological and economic IPV could be gender neutral in prevalence, whereas physical and sexual IPV remain strongly gendered.

Conclusions and Future Directions

The current study advances the understanding of IPV victimization among men by documenting its prevalence, identifying socio-demographic correlates, and comparing these findings to broader international data. It should be noted that the prevalence of the different types of IPV and comparisons of the prevalence rates between countries should be interpreted cautiously, since the definitions and measurements of violence may vary across different countries. In addition, the measure used to assess IPV in this study cannot be fully utilized to identify the shifts in the severity of violence and other contextual factors. These include variables such as the pattern, intention, or meaning of violence that was experienced (Scott-Storey et al., 2022). Future research should attempt to include these contextual factors to get a clearer image of male victimization and the possible differences between female and male victims. The lack of linear age trends and the correlation with relationship status and exposure to violence during childhood highlight the complexity of IPV trajectories in adulthood. Future research could examine the longitudinal patterns of victimization and the conditions under which victimization increases or decreases.

To our knowledge, the current study is the only national prevalence study that explores male IPV in Lithuania. The findings of this study challenge the traditional perspective of IPV as a predominantly female-victim phenomenon by demonstrating that men also experience substantial levels of abuse. At the same time, the gendered nature of physical and sexual IPV remains evident, suggesting that psychological and economic IPV may be more correlated to other factors than gender. However, these findings require more investigation in diverse contexts.

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Author Contributions

Marius Viltrakis: conceptualization (lead), writing – original draft preparation (equal), writing – reviewing and editing (equal), and project administration (lead)

Milli Melodia Marika Leinonen: writing – original draft preparation (equal) and writing – reviewing and editing (equal)

Aleksandr Segal: writing – original draft preparation (equal) and writing – reviewing and editing (equal)

Aistė Bakaitytė-Bagdonė: data curation (lead), formal analysis (lead), investigation (lead), methodology (lead), resources (lead), supervision (lead), validation (lead), visualization (lead), and writing – review & editing (equal)

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