

A Descriptive Analysis of Domestic and Intimate Partner Violence Victimization and Evictions in Omaha, Nebraska

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Purpose of the Study

- Prior literature has established a relationship between domestic violence (DV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) victimization and housing insecurity.
- Experiencing DV/IPV increases risk for becoming housing insecure as victims flee abusers and face difficulties securing stable housing afterwards (Holliday et al., 2021).
- Several factors may exacerbate this struggle, including lack of financial or other resources, discrimination due to race, sex, or prior eviction, or inaccessible victim services (Baker et al., 2003; Daoud et al., 2016; Holliday et al., 2021).
- Housing instability and DV/IPV are indirectly and directly associated with other detrimental outcomes in victims' and their children's lives – including substance use, mental health disparities, and economic disadvantage (Bomsta & Sullivan, 2018; Daoud et al., 2016).
- The direct connection between DV/IPV victimization, eviction, and subsequent housing instability is less well-understood. Housing authorities and landlords may evict survivors of DV/IPV because of property damage caused by their abusers, under zero-tolerance crime policies, or because the survivor's calls to the police for the DV/IPV constitute a disturbance or 'nuisance' to other tenants (Arnold, 2019).
- Experiencing eviction may put individuals at greater risk for DV/IPV as their housing options are limited (Anderson et al., 2003). Eviction notices and fear of eviction have been tied to greater mental health consequences for survivors (Rollins et al., 2012; Willie et al., 2021).
- Despite these serious outcomes, few studies have investigated the relationship(s) between eviction and DV/IPV. The current study begins to address this gap by exploring DV/IPV-related and other court interactions for individuals experiencing evictions.

Research Questions

What is the prevalence of DV/IPV victimization among a sample of evicted adults and differences among victims and non-victims?

What are common court interactions for individuals leading up to their evictions?

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Data and Methods

The current study examines civil and criminal case records for a random sample of adults who had an eviction case filed in the Nebraska State Court system from 2017-2019 ($n = 305$ individuals, $n = 248$ evictions).

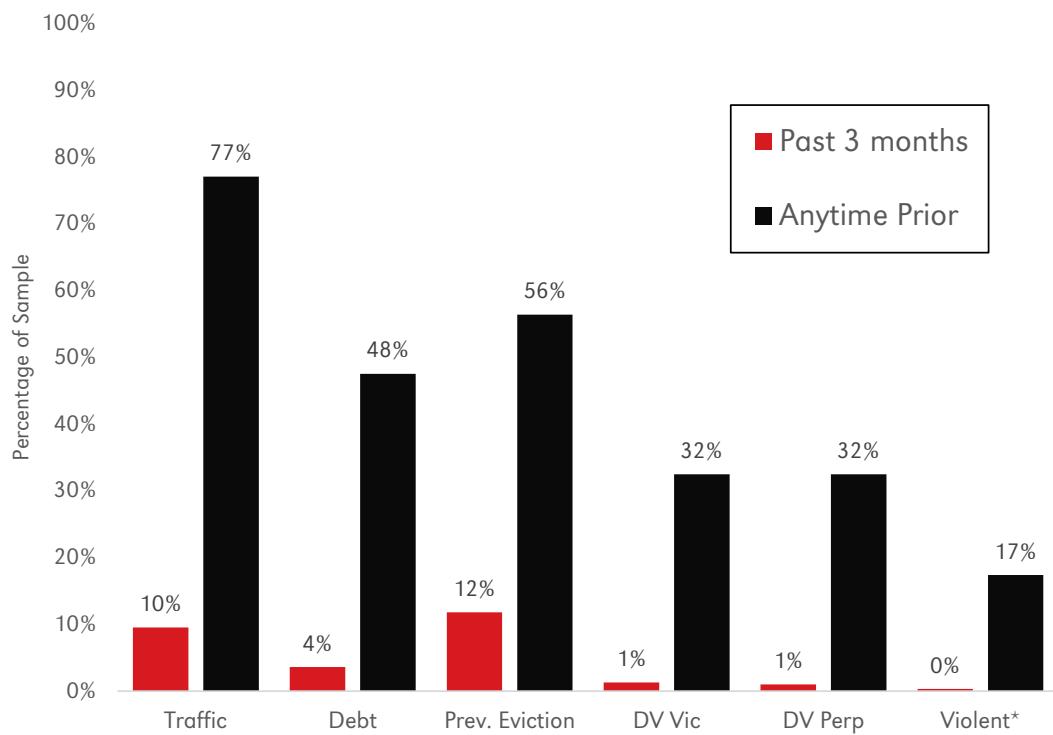
Descriptive statistics present the prevalence of DV/IPV victimization and/or perpetration, as well as other civil/criminal court interactions before/after eviction. Bivariate significance tests investigated differences for those with/without DV/IPV victimization.

Table 1: Demographic Descriptive Statistics¹

Variable	Total Sample N=305 <i>n(%)</i> / <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	DV Vic (<i>n</i> =99) <i>n(%)</i> / <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Non-DV Vic (<i>n</i> =206) <i>n(%)</i> / <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>x</i> ² / <i>t</i>
Age ²	36 years (12.58)	36 years (10.57)	36 years (13.62)	0.42
Gender	-	-	-	33.72***
Female	146 (47.87%)	70 (70.70%)	81 (39.32%)	-
Male	98 (32.13%)	17 (17.17%)	76 (36.89%)	-
Other Gender	1 (0.33%)	1 (1.01%)	0 (0.00%)	-
Missing Gender		11 (11.11%)	49 (23.79%)	-
Race	-	-	-	25.53***
Black	75 (24.59%)	34 (34.34%)	41 (19.90%)	-
White	68 (22.30%)	29 (29.29%)	39 (18.93%)	-
Other Race	18 (5.90%)	6 (6.06%)	12 (5.83%)	-
Missing Race		30 (30.30%)	114 (55.34%)	-
Prior Court Contacts	16.89 contacts (18.32)	27.48 contacts (23.42)	11.80 contacts (12.46)	-7.63***
Eviction Outcome	-	-	-	6.24*
Uncontested	205 (67.21%)	57 (57.57%)	148 (71.84%)	-
Tried to Court	98 (32.13%)	41 (41.41%)	57 (27.67%)	-
Other Disposition	2 (0.66%)	1 (1.01%)	1 (0.49%)	-
Eviction Reason	-	-	-	4.32
Fail to Pay Rent	278 (91.15%)	95 (95.95%)	183 (88.83%)	-
Other Reason	11 (3.61%)	2 (2.02%)	9 (4.37%)	-
Nuisance/Crime	9 (2.95%)	1 (1.01%)	8 (3.88%)	-
Property Damage	7 (2.30%)	1 (1.01%)	6 (2.91%)	-

Notes: ¹ Individuals with invalid eviction outcomes (4 = settled/dismissed by party, 5 = dismissed by court/prosecutor) were omitted. Starting with $n = 344$, removing invalid cases produced $n = 305$ (a data loss of $n = 39$, or 11.3%). ² Could not determine age for 122 individuals (40% of sample); * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Figure 1. Court Contacts Experienced Prior to Eviction, by type of court contact ($n = 305$)



Notes: *Violent crimes exclude DV related cases

Findings

Evicted persons were 36 years old on average. Of those whose sex and/or race could be determined, nearly half were women: 15.4% were Black women, and 11.5% were White women, while 30% were men: 9% were Black men, 11% were White men; 6% of the sample identified as another race. We were unable to determine race for 47% of the sample. Most (79%) evictions involved single adult households, while 21% of evictions involved more than one adult (i.e., this does not include dependents under the age of 18).

About 11% of the evicted sample experienced other court interactions in the month prior to eviction, 21% in the two months prior, and 30% three months prior. Of court contacts in the three months prior to eviction:

- 39.33% were earlier eviction cases;
- 31.70% were traffic citations/violations;
- 12.03% were debt collection cases;
- 7.63% were DV/IPV related cases;
- and 1.10% were violent crime cases.

Of the evicted sample, **48.20% had a DV/IPV related court experience prior to eviction**: 15.74% had court experiences for DV victimization only, 15.74% for DV perpetration only, and 16.72% for both DV victimization and perpetration.

Additionally, **14.43% of the sample experienced DV/IPV related court interactions after their eviction case**.

As shown in Table 1, t/x^2 tests indicated significant differences in gender, race, number of prior court contacts, and eviction outcomes for evicted adults with a history of DV victimization compared to those without that history.

Conclusions

Our study found similar demographic profiles of evicted adults as reported in prior literature (Hepburn et al., 2020).

Review of court interactions prior to eviction demonstrates several potential catalysts for eviction involving repetitive eviction, traffic, or debt collection cases that may contribute to the so-called “poverty-trap” (Brush, 2004).

Results also show that nearly half the sample had a history of alleged DV/IPV victimization, perpetration, or both, a higher frequency than commonly found in the average population (NCVS, 2020); this is likely a conservative estimate of DV/IPV as research shows that many DV/IPV experiences go undetected by the criminal-legal system (NDVH, 2015).

Next steps for this project include more rigorous analysis of the eviction sample and court interactions. Further investigation regarding how DV/IPV experiences may connect to later evictions and housing instability.