## PERITRAUMATIC RISK FACTORS FOR PTSD IN A SAMPLE OF BATTERED WOMEN



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### BACKGROUND

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) research findings (Brewin, Andrews and Valentine, 2000; Ozer, Weiss, Best and Lipsey, 2003) indicate that several clusters of factors may explain the development of PTSD.These include sociodemographic, pretraumatic, peritraumatic and posttraumatic factors.

Data from these meta-analyses concluded that the significant risk factors for PTSD were most



# **OBJECTIVE**

This study analyzes the relationship between peritraumatic **risk factors** (event characteristics and emotional response) PTSD and and **posttraumatic symptoms** (intrusion, avoidance, negative alterations in cognitions and mood, and alterations in arousal) in battered women.

## METHOD

### **Participants** 49 battered woman

posttraumatic (stress and social support), and mainly peritraumatic ones, including trauma severity, perceived threat, intense emotional responses and, above all, dissociation.

### RESULTS

characteristics

Event

Table 1.Correlations between EGEP scores and event characteristics / emotional response

PERITRAUMATIC FACTORS	PTSD (0-80)	Intrusion (0-20)	Avoidance (0-8)	Negative alterations cognition and mood (0-28)	Alterations in Arousal (0-24)
Trauma severity (0=low; 3=high)	.365*	.319*	.269	.360*	.254
Sexual aggresision (0=no; 1=yes)	.020	106	042	.013	.090
Physical aggression (0=no; 1=yes)	.120	.001	.090	.115	.183
Oneself Serius injury (0=no; 1=yes)	.254	.292*	.246	.080	.291*
Serius injury or death person (0=no; 1=yes)	.243	.370**	.119	.195	.099
Threat to physical integrity (0=no; 1=yes)	.137	.074	.148	.081	.178
Threat to others' physical integrity (0=no;	.208	.220	.019	.201	.170
1=yes) Life threatening (0=no; 1=yes)	.381**	.256	.237	.361*	.419**
Threat to others' life (0=no; 1=yes)	.144	.209	.031	.059	.090

Age: Mean=40.46; SD=9.27 Civil status: 20% married or living with their partners Months of violence: Mean=136.70; SD=133.06

#### **Procedure**

- Participants were asked to identify the worst episode of violence suffered.
- $\checkmark$  All of them completed an assessment battery, that included the following measures.

#### Emotional response Event characteristics Diagnostic criteria for PTSD (DSM 5) and posttraumatic symptoms

**Global Assessment of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder EGEP** (Crespo & Gómez, 2012)

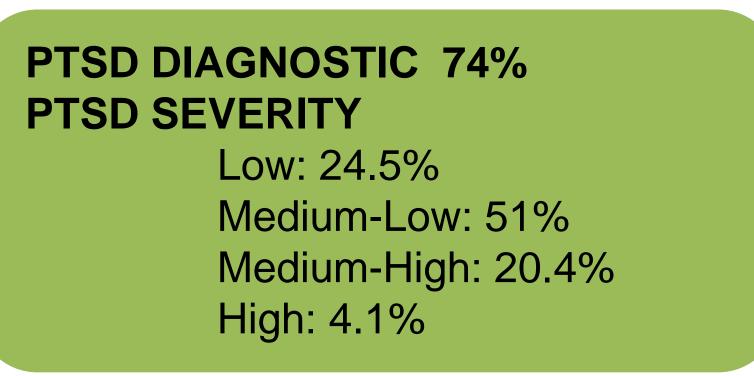
**Peritraumatic Dissociative Experiences** Questionnaire, PDEQ (Marmar, Metzler & Otte, 2004)

Dissociation

### **Data Analysis**

Point-biserial correlations were calculated to analyze the association between PTSD Diagnostic, posttraumatic symptoms and emotional response (e.g fear) and event characteristic (e.g serious injury or death person).

		*p<.05 **p<.01				
	Dissociation (10-50)	.714**	.652**	.590**	.561**	.608**
otio	Loss of consciousness (0=no; 1=yes)	.042	084	.089	.088	.080
	Horror (0=no; 1=yes)	.157	.223	031	.122	.097
	Helplessness (0=no; 1=yes)	.225	.255	.117	.177	.150
	Fear (0=no; 1=yes)	.332*	.207	.151	.303*	.365**
	Threats to personal dignity (0=no; 1=yes)	.229	.255	.092	.199	.150
	Disagreeable scenes (0=no; 1=yes)	.037	.176	.000	.000	075



### CONCLUSIONS

As expected, **Dissociation** is the peritraumatic factor that is most closely related with PTSD symptoms and also with the different group of symptoms specified in DSM-5. Also as

found in previous studies, trauma severity, the presence of life threats, and the fear response during the event relate to overall PTSD symptoms.

Nevertheless, when groups of symptoms are considered separately results are different. So that, **Negative alterations in cognition and mood** show the same pattern than overall PTSD symptoms, whereas Intrusion severity is related with trauma severity and by the presence of serious injury during the event, and alterations in arousal relate to the presence of both, serious injury and life threat, an also to the presence of fear responses during de event. Moreover Avoidance responses seem to have no relationship with peritraumatic factors but dissociation.

All in all, results show that every group of PTSD symptoms is related to different peritraumatic factors, though Dissociation is the most important factor in predicting all of them.

#### **References:**

Brewin, C.R., Andrews, B., & Valentine, J.D. (2000). Meta-analysis of risk factors for posttraumatic stress disorder in trauma-exposed adults. Journal of consulting and clinical psychology 68(5), 748-766. Crespo, M., & Gómez, M.M. (2012). Evaluación Global de Estrés Postraumático. EGEP [Global Assessment of Post-traumatic Stress Scale]. Madrid: Tea Ediciones. Marmar, C. R., Metzler, T. J., & Otte, C. (2004). The Peritraumatic Dissociative Experiences Questionnaire. In J.P. Wilson y T.M. Keane (eds.). Assessing psychological trauma and PTSD (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford Press.

