

Self-attributions and other-attributions of male batterers in court mandated programmes

Marisol Lila, Enrique Gracia, and Juan Herrero

First Biennial Conference of the International Family Aggression. "Family Aggression: Causes & Consequences", Preston (Inglaterra), Marzo, 2008

Abstract:

Assumption of responsibility is considered a key element in effective batterers' intervention programmes. Researchers and practitioners indicate that perpetrators of violence against women generally attribute their behaviour to external causes –e.g., blaming their own partner, circumstances or external factors like drugs, alcohol or problematic childhood. Attribution of responsibility is an important factor on actual behavioural change. In this study we analyze self-attributions (both internal and external) and other-attributions (based mainly on court mandates and sentences). We use a sample of 80 male batterers participating at the time of study in a court mandated rehabilitative programme. Analyses show important differences between self-attributions and other-attributions as well as a bias toward external self-attributions rather than internal self-attributions. We propose a categorization of external self-attributions, and we discuss the implications of these findings for court mandated batterers programmes.