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**Understanding the Components and Determinants of Police Attitudes Toward Intervention  
in Intimate Partner Violence Against Women: A Systematic Review**

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**Conflict of interest**

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**Abstract**

Police officers are society's first interveners in intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW) and are essential for victim safety. Despite IPVAW laws, police attitudes influence their real actions during IPVAW intervention. However, the fuzzy conceptualization of the construct deters the pursuit of conclusive evidence. This systematic review sought to identify the components of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW and their determinants. A search was conducted through several databases (e.g., Web of Science). Papers were included if they (a) provided original empirical findings or were review studies, (b) were published between 1990 and 2019, (c) were written in Spanish or English, (d) alluded to police officers, and (e) focused on police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW or their determinants. Fifty-seven papers were included. The studied components of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW extracted from the literature were tolerance of IPVAW, minimal police involvement, unsupportive and supportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAW, understanding of the complex nature of abuse, and IPVAW intervention as an important police task. Moreover, the central role of individual and situational determinants in police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW was confirmed, whereas organizational and societal determinants were studied scarcely. This review proposes a framework upon which to build operational definition of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW and includes remarks on police backgrounds and the situational characteristics of IPVAW events that are essential in shaping police procedures for managing them. Empirical evidence should be transferred to police training and standard operating procedures.

*Keywords:* components of police officer attitudes, determinants, intimate partner violence against women intervention, systematic review, content analysis

## **Understanding the Components and Determinants of Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in Intimate Partner Violence Against Women: A Systematic Review**

Intimate partner violence against women (IPVAW) is recognized as a public social and health problem that affects around 35% of women worldwide (Stöckl et al., 2013). Law enforcement agencies are the frontline and legal resources that society employs to confront IPVAW. Police officers' responses have a social function, reflecting the level of acceptability of this type of violence (Gracia et al., 2014). However, police interventions in IPVAW are not uniform (Gracia & Lila, 2015). One of the keys to understanding the lack of consistent interventions is the diverse attitudes police have toward intervening in IPVAW; that is, when intervening in IPVAW, police officers evaluate the nature, causes, and determinants of the violence as well as their responsibilities in handling such incidents (Gill et al., 2019). This research sheds light on components of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW to guide future research. The current study is a systematic review aimed to answer two main questions: (a) How are police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW defined in scientific literature? (b) What are the determinants of such attitudes?

### **Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAW**

In an early study characterizing police attitudes, DeJong et al. (2008) distinguished between problematic and progressive views on intimate partner violence. The term "problematic police views" refers to the idea of simplifying IPVAW incidents (e.g., justifying violence because involved parties are immature and childish) and blaming the victims (e.g., maintaining misogynistic attitudes toward women). A progressive view of IPVAW involves understanding IPVAW's complexity (e.g., cases are not easily resolved) and the seriousness of incidents (e.g.,

they are a problem worthy of police intervention) and being aware of the barriers victims face to leaving the relationship (e.g., victims do not seek help because of their prior criminal history). Later, Chu and Sun (2014) established a broader and clearer theoretical appraisal by introducing aspects related to attitudes toward new arrest policies. They proposed that police attitudes toward and responses to domestic violence could be clustered in two global domains. Proactive attitudes consider domestic violence intervention an important police task (i.e., a severe crime and police duty) and arrest policies the basis of police intervention (i.e., arresting offenders for domestic violence will deter others). Reactive attitudes promote tolerance of domestic violence cases (e.g., view the victim is partially responsible for the violent behavior of the perpetrator) and minimal police intervention (e.g., domestic violence is not a crime, and consequently, intervening in it should not be a police task). Recently, scholars have introduced other indicators, mainly of the negative component of police attitudes, for instance, skepticism toward effective legal system responses and a negative view of overly emotional or out-of-control victims in IPVAV situations (Leung, 2014; Twis et al., 2018).

In short, elucidating the prevailing research that has focused on different aspects of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV is critical to providing comprehensible insights for researchers. This work collects components and indicators of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV and analyzes available research to provide a global framework, letting us make cross-cultural comparisons (Gracia & Lila, 2015).

### **Determinants of Police Officers' Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV**

To shed light on the determinants of police officers' attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV, we resorted to Heise's (1998) socioecological perspective to classify the main determinants found in the literature. First, the individual (ontogenetic) level alludes to variables within a person that influence their attitudes. Second, the interpersonal (microsystem) level

encompasses determinants that stem from direct interactions (e.g., specific IPVAV situations). Third, the neighborhood, organizational, and community (exosystem) level includes variables within formal and informal proximal contexts but not directly related to the individuals involved (e.g., police organization). Fourth, the societal (macrosystem) level comprises determinants that affect a culture, society, country, or region as whole. Although research on IPVAV in the general population has identified several determinants at these four levels (Flood & Pease, 2009; Authors, 2020), little is known about determinants of attitudes towards IPVAV within law enforcement bodies.

### **The Research Overview**

Given the fuzzy conceptualization of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV and the lack of summary reports about the targeted and neglected areas related to the determinants of such attitudes, the objective of this systematic review was twofold: (a) to identify how police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV have been defined in scientific literature and (b) to explore which variables have been studied to explain police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV.

### **Method**

Following Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines (Moher et al., 2009), the first author developed a review protocol, and we all reviewed and supported it.

### **Search Strategy**

The first author (Reviewer 1) carried out a comprehensive search of different databases (Scopus, MEDLINE, SciELO Citation Index, Web of Science Core Collection, and ProQuest) using a search equation (Appendix A), with restrictions on the publication timespan (from January 1990 to September 2019), search fields (searches must be conducted within the papers'

titles, abstracts, or keyword lists), language (English or Spanish), and paper type (empirical or review studies). The search results were imported to Mendeley (Version 1.19.4) for storage and management of the papers' references and full texts.

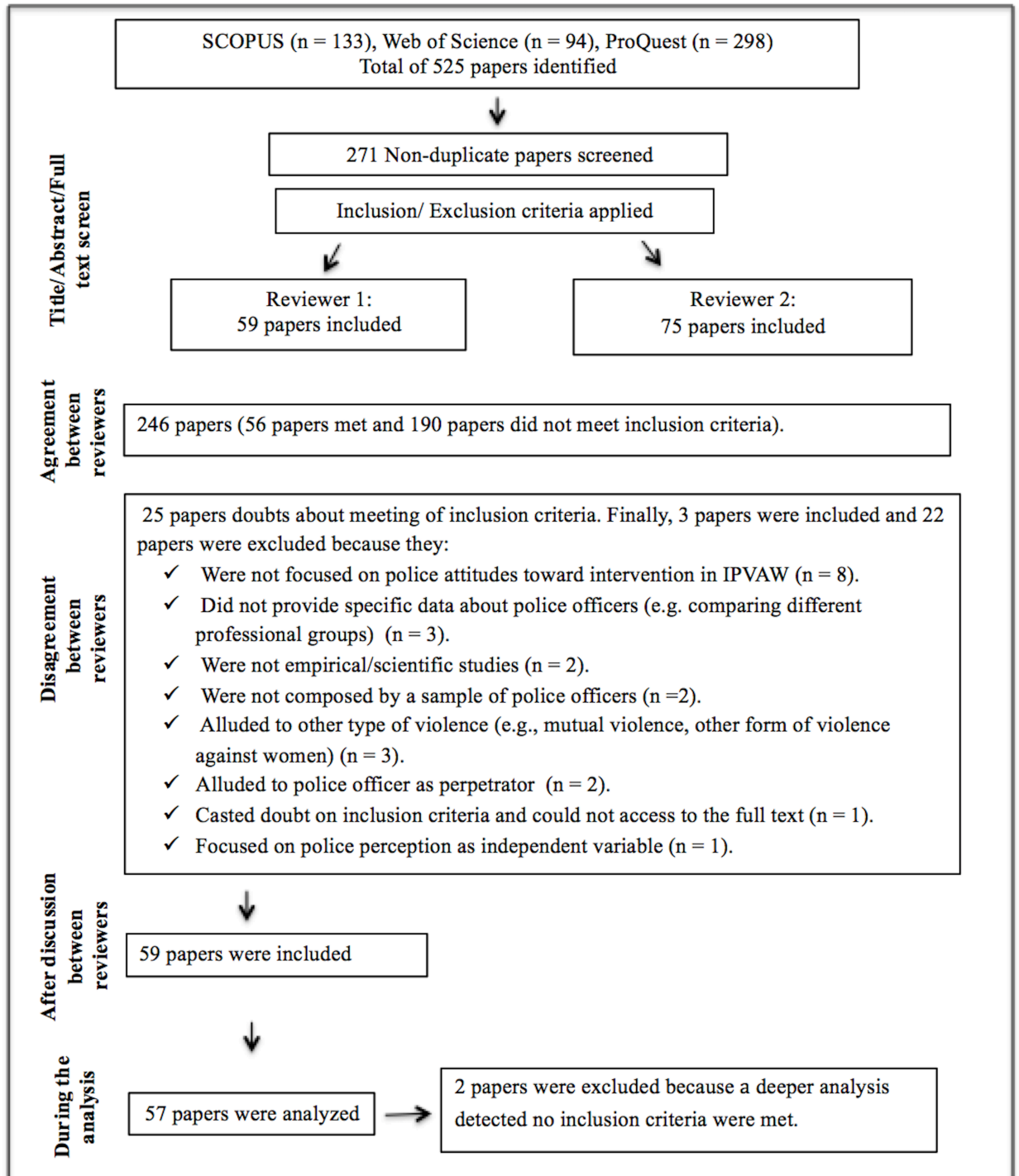
### **Study Eligibility**

Papers were included if they: (a) presented original qualitative, quantitative, or mixed empirical findings or were reviews of empirical studies; (b) were published between January 1990 and September 2019; (c) could be reviewed in Spanish or English; (d) included police officers in the sample; and (e) focused on police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV and their determinants. Studies were excluded if they: (a) focused on other types of violence against women (e.g., stalking), mutual partner violence, intimate partner violence between same-sex couples or perpetrated by police officers; (b) compared IPVAV with other types of violence; (c) included real interventions extracted from official police reports (e.g., arrest); (d) sampled only other professional groups (e.g., prosecutors, judges), the involved parties (e.g., victims), the general population, university students, or police trainees; or (e) were dissertations, editorials, or newspaper articles.

### **Study Selection**

To improve the selection process, Reviewer 1 and Reviewer 2 (third author) read a full definition of IPVAV and works describing attitudes toward it (Flood & Pease, 2009). As Figure 1 shows, 525 papers were identified from the initial search. After we removed duplicates, 271 papers seemed relevant for the systematic review. Both reviewers independently screened the titles, abstracts, and full texts to determine whether the papers met the inclusion criteria. Reviewers 1 and 2 selected 59 and 75 papers, respectively. The intercoder reliability was 76% (agreement between reviewers on 246 papers and disagreement on 25 papers). After a discussion on the disagreements (see reasons in Figure 1), 59 papers were selected. Two papers were

removed after a more in-depth reading during the analysis, because they did not meet inclusion criteria. Finally, 57 empirical or review studies remained.





### **Data Extraction and Analysis**

Once the studies were selected, content analysis was performed. First, we developed a coding scheme to guide the collection of relevant data across papers (Appendix B). Reviewer 1 assessed each paper systematically and recorded information relevant to the corresponding categories using a coding sheet. In particular, police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV and key determinants were identified from researchers' aims for their original empirical studies. Then information was extracted from Measures (quantitative studies) or Results (qualitative studies) sections. A full reading of the systematic and narrative reviews was performed to identify target information. In parallel, we made a frame-coding scheme covering two main domains—police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV and their determinants—following a concept-driven approach (Schreier, 2014). First, key determinants were classified into an ontogenetic system, microsystem, exosystem, and macrosystem (Flood & Pease, 2009; Heise, 1998). Likewise, police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV were classified as proactive and reactive (Chu & Sun, 2014).

Second, using the thematic criteria facilitated coding the information into content units, that is, the minimum part of our body of data with meaning for determining classifications. Thus, each specific police attitude toward intervention in IPVAV or determinant became a content unit analyzed and classified in only one domain. Several content units could be the same (e.g., studies that used the same instruments) or highly similar across studies. Using the identified content units as data drivers during the analysis, we discovered new themes and subthemes. Reviewer 1 assigned and assessed the belonging of content units to each theme and subtheme. To ensure coding consistency, some content units were chosen randomly and evaluated at two different points in time. Likewise, the authors discussed doubts about coding schemes and classifications

of content units. Validity was contrasted by checking whether all themes and subthemes were populated with information (Schreier, 2014).

### **Methodological Quality Assessment**

Reviewers 1 and 2 independently evaluated the methodological quality of the studies using an adapted version of the Cambridge Quality Checklist (Murray et al., 2009). The standard quality criteria for empirical and review studies determined whether (a) the aim of a study was mentioned, (b) consistency was apparent between the aims and the statistical analysis, (c) the authors controlled for confounding variables, (d) effect size measures were included, and (e) an interpretation of statistical significance was reported. In addition, for original empirical papers, we specifically added the following: (f) whether they mentioned inclusion criteria for participants, sampling methods, sample sizes, and study design and (g) psychometric properties of the measures (reliability and validity). For review papers, we included the following: (h) whether they reported the sampling period and number of papers analyzed and (i) the inclusion criteria for selecting studies. Intercoder agreement ranged from 75.44% for validity evidence of the measures used to 100% for the inclusion criteria, the number of papers, and the clarity of the study aims. All criteria were scored 1 point, except effect size (maximum of 2 points); study design (maximum of 3 points); and sampling period, number of papers analyzed, sampling methods, or sample size (maximum of 4 points). The highest possible scores of methodological quality were 15 points for review papers and 21 points for empirical papers (Appendix B).

### **Results**

In addition to describing the identified studies' characteristics (Appendices B and C), we summarized the findings for the two aims of our work. Systematic review materials are available for other researchers via email from the corresponding author.

### **Components of Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV**

In the 57 analyzed studies, 743 content units on police attitudes were found, as were six themes and 32 subthemes to conceptualize police reactive and proactive attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV. Examples of content units that defined such themes and subthemes are also provided (Appendix D).

### ***Police Reactive Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV***

We identified 404 content units from 89.5% of the reviewed articles defining three themes and their respective 19 subthemes.

**Tolerance of IPVAV.** More than half of the reviewed articles (61.4%) focused on the level of police tolerance of IPVAV (220 content units clustered in four subthemes). This theme was based mainly on *victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator attitudes* (Applegate, 2006; DeJong et al., 2008; Finn et al., 2004; Finn & Stalans, 1995, 2002; Golge et al., 2016; Rigakos, 1995; Twis et al., 2018). Furthermore, police officers are more likely to tolerate IPVAV through *simplification, stereotypes, and myths* about this gender-related violence (Farris & Holman, 2015; Home, 1994; Laughon et al., 2017; McPhedran et al., 2017; Twis et al., 2018). *IPVAV justification, tolerance, and acceptability* were other ways found for police to maintain tolerant attitudes (Gracia et al., 2011; Hirschel et al., 1992; Muftić & Cruze, 2014; Rigakos, 1995).

**Minimal Police Involvement.** Most reviewed articles examined the theme of minimal police involvement (73.7%), on which 165 content units of reactive police attitudes rest, including 11 subthemes. Most police officers showed a preference for passive responses through *mediation* (Friday et al., 1991; Markowitz & Watson, 2015). Other identified subthemes were *dual arrest, willingness to use police discretion, conditional intervention, and no intervention because of police opinions*. Likewise, an attitude linked to the preference for passive intervention was a low willingness to get involved in IPVAV cases. This issue included mainly a *police misconception of IPVAV intervention* (Balenovich et al., 2008; Leung, 2014; McPhedran et al.,

2017). Furthermore, police officers might prefer passive intervention when basing their assessment of IPVAV cases on *extralegal factors* (instead of legal factors). Additionally, they would show minimal police involvement when there was *a difficulty in interpreting probable cause or detecting legal factors as causes of IPVAV* (Balluci et al., 2017; McPhedran et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2018; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2007). Finally, minimal police involvement was also composed of the *gaps in or barriers to the intervention* and the *personal cost and risk for police officers* in such disturbances, and *negative attitudes toward risk assessment tools* (Blount et al., 1992; Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005; Dutton et al., 2019; Kulwicki et al., 2007; Laughon et al., 2017).

#### **Unsupportive Attitudes Toward the Legal System and Legislation Against IPVAV.**

The theme of unsupportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAV was studied to a lesser extent, in 14.0% of the reviewed studies, and included 19 content units split into four subthemes. The *disadvantage of new laws or policies against IPVAV* was the most prevalent subtheme (Blount et al., 1992; Friday et al., 1991). Likewise, three additional subthemes allude to police attitudes against *prosecution*, the *legal system*, and *protective and restraining orders* (Hirschel et al., 1992; Horwitz et al., 2011; Rigakos, 1995; Stalans & Finn, 2000).

#### ***Proactive Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV***

Three themes and 13 subthemes throughout the proactive attitudinal domain were generated, drawing from 334 content units identified in 91.2% of the reviewed literature.

**Understanding the Complex Nature of Abuse.** Of the articles examined, 47.4% discussed police understanding of the complex nature of abuse. This theme was highlighted widely (169 content units), resulting in five subthemes. The most commonly mentioned were *progressive views about the perpetrator* and *progressive views about the victim* (Dejong et al.,

2008; Finn et al., 2004; Finn & Stalans, 1995, 1997, 2002; Laughon et al., 2017; Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). In complement to this subtheme was that police officers also could have *comprehensive knowledge about IPVAV* (Balenovich et al., 2008; Dejong et al., 2008; Espinosa & García, 2018; Gracia et al., 2011; Home, 1994; Kuhns et al., 2007; Kulwicki et al., 2007; Lockwood & Prohaska, 2015; McPhedran et al., 2017; Saunders, 1995; Tam & Tang, 2005). Otherwise, police officers showed *satisfaction with training for police officers and satisfaction with other social targets* and emphasized the importance of *education and prevention programs* as a way to know and improve intervention in IPVAV (Engelman & Deardorff, 2016; Espinosa & García, 2018; Horwitz et al., 2011; Laughon et al., 2017; McPhedran et al., 2017).

**IPVAW Intervention as an Important Police Task.** A high percentage of the reviewed articles (77.2%) dealt with the topic of IPVAV intervention as an important police task. Thus, 135 content units generated six subthemes. In this vein, the studies focused on *positive police actions toward perpetrators and toward victims*. The theme also included *positive police actions in general IPVAV situations* (Baldry et al., 2013; Dutton et al., 2019; Finn & Stalans, 1995; Rigakos, 1997; Robinson et al., 2016) and *factors that influence positive intervention* (Applegate, 2006; Balenovich et al., 2008; Ballucci et al., 2017; Blount et al., 1992; Robinson et al., 2018; Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2004). Likewise, it included *assessment of the importance of police intervention in IPVAV* (Arnold & Slusser, 2015; Balenovich et al., 2008; Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005; Chu & Sun, 2014; Dejong et al., 2008; Kuhns et al., 2007; Kulwicki et al., 2007; McPhedran et al., 2017; Muftić & Cruze, 2014; Poteyeva & Sun, 2009; Stalans & Finn, 2006; Ward-Lasher et al., 2017). Finally, we noted a subtheme of *positive attitudes toward risk assessment tools* (Ballucci et al., 2017; Campbell et al., 2018; Grant & Cross-Denny, 2017).

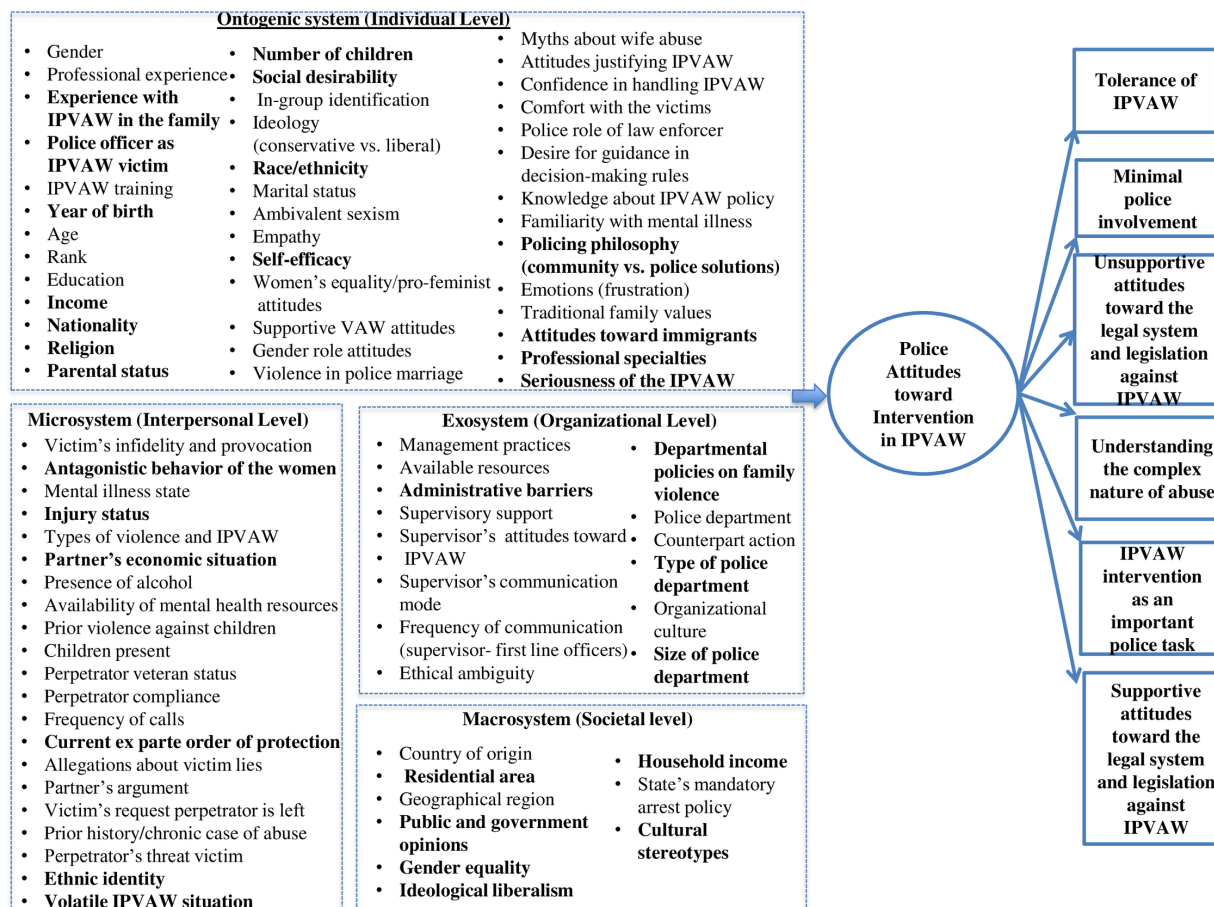
#### **Supportive Attitudes Toward the Legal System and Legislation Against IPVAV.**

The theme of supportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAV,

addressed by 31.6% of the reviewed articles, included 30 content units mostly related to two subthemes: attitudes toward the *benefits of new laws against IPVAV* such as pro-arrest policies (Arnold & Slusser, 2015; Blount et al., 1992; Farris & Holman, 2015; Friday et al., 1991; McPhedran et al., 2017) and attitudes in favor of *prosecution* (Applegate, 2006; Finn & Stalans, 2002).

### **Determinants of Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV Incidents**

Drawing from 350 content units, Figure 2 summarizes the identified determinants from the reviewed qualitative and quantitative studies according to socioecological domains. For this review, we only analyzed 265 content units related to the determinants of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV from 31 quantitative studies. Regression, mean differences, or mediation analyses were conducted in such studies, guaranteeing the precedent role of the identified variables. Therefore, such content units defined socioecological domains through 20 themes and their respective 52 subthemes.



**Ontogenic System**

Almost all reviewed quantitative studies (90.3%) addressed this individual-level domain. Specifically, 52 content units generated four themes and 20 subthemes.

**Police Sociodemographic and Background Characteristics.** More than one third of the reviewed studies (35.5%) included 16 content units, shaping the most commonly identified theme within the domain. It was operationalized through five subthemes related to police sociodemographics and prior personal experiences. Regarding *gender*, the studies found that female police officers were more likely than their male counterparts to show proactive attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW (Blount et al., 1992; Chu & Sun, 2014; Gracia et al., 2011; McPhedran et al., 2017; Stalans & Finn, 2000; Tam & Tang, 2005). Thus, female officers tended to show more supportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAW (e.g.,

new pro-arrest policies are the best approach) and police tasks in IPVAW intervention (e.g., police involvement). In addition, female police officers have comprehensive knowledge about IPVAW (e.g., incidents stem from abusers' need for power and control over victims). Conversely, they endorse fewer misconceptions about IPVAW intervention (e.g., IPVAW takes too much of officers' time and effort) and less tolerant attitudes toward IPVAW (e.g., victim blaming). Furthermore, Stalans and Finn (2000) found that both male and female police officers were more likely to prefer to arrest perpetrators when the officers perceived a high likelihood that the husband would severely injure the wife if he remained at home. Both male and female officials were also more likely to refer the woman to a shelter, and consequently, they thought the likelihood of conviction would be higher. However, when the victim was willing to settle the argument, female police officers were less likely to prefer arrest. Likewise, female police officers knew the risk factors for intimate partner homicide to a lesser extent (Ward-Lasher et al., 2017).

Concerning the *police officer's age*, older police officers were noted to endorse proactive attitudes such as support of risk assessment tools (Campbell et al., 2018) and preferences for referring victims to shelters (Finn & Stalans, 1995), but in contrast, a linkage with reactive attitudes toward intervention was also confirmed (i.e., arrest the female party; Zhao et al., 2018).

Other potential determinants studied in scientific literature were *education*, *marital status*, and *police marriage violence*. In particular, educated police officers showed less supportive attitudes toward IPVAW, and they had comprehensive knowledge about IPVAW (e.g., a broad definition of physical wife abuse) and endorsed positive police actions toward perpetrators, such as a preference for arresting them (Gracia et al., 2011; Tam & Tang, 2005; Zhao et al., 2018). Otherwise, whereas Chu and Sun (2014) found married police officers were more likely to see IPVAW as a worthy endeavor, Tam and Tang (2005) indicated that single police officers adopted



a broader definition of physical wife abuse. Furthermore, violence in police marriage was linked to a lesser preference for arresting perpetrators (Stith, 1990).

**Professional Background.** Fourteen content units were found in 38.7% of the reviewed investigations, capturing the theme of professional background through three subthemes: police experience, IPVAV training, and police rank. First, *police experience* (number of years working as a police officer) was the most studied determinant, but mixed results were reported. On one hand, most studies suggested experienced (vs. novice) police officers endorsed supportive attitudes toward new legislation against IPVAV and the importance of police tasks in IPVAV incidents. Specifically, a higher number of years of experience was linked to positive police interventions with perpetrators (e.g., inferences were more accurately made about referral decisions) instead of passive responses as mediation (Blount et al., 1992; Finn & Stalans, 1995, 1997, 2002; Stalans & Finn, 1995, 2006). For example, novice (vs. experienced) police officers tended to exonerate the perpetrator, intervene passively, and show a negative view of prosecution (Stalans & Finn, 2000, 2006). Conversely, other studies showed that experienced (vs. novice) police officers took less formal actions (Stalans & Finn, 1995), endorsed more tolerant attitudes toward IPVAV (Chu & Sun, 2014), and preferred dual arrests (Finn et al., 2004). Nuances in the link between police experience and attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV were introduced that took other variables into account. In this way, experienced officers tended to choose more easily to arrest the perpetrator when there was evidence to substantiate claims, anticipation of a successful prosecution, and wives showed hallucinations or beliefs they were acting in self-defense (Stalans & Finn, 1995, 2006). Moreover, experienced male (vs. experienced female) police officers endorsed better attitudes toward the understanding of the complex nature of abuse (e.g., the husband became aware of the wrongfulness of violence), whereas experienced female (vs. novice female) officers maintained a worse understanding of such gender-related violence

(Stalans & Finn, 2000). Unlike experienced police officers, novice officers arrested perpetrators to a larger extent when finding hallucinating and injured wives (Stalans & Finn, 1995). On the other hand, both novice and experienced police officers were more likely to choose sanctions appropriately (Logan et al., 2006).

Second, *IPVAW training* was confirmed as promoting factor of positive actions (e.g., perceived self-efficacy) and the assessment of the importance of police intervention in IPVAV incidents but a derating factor of tolerant attitudes (e.g., negative beliefs about wife beating; Engelman & Deardorff, 2016; Muftić & Cruze, 2014). Furthermore, studies examined the connection between years of experience as police officers and training in IPVAV (Finn & Stalans, 2002; Stalans & Finn, 1995). In this vein, trained and untrained novice (vs. experienced) police officers tended to endorse attitudes of minimal police involvement (e.g., thoughts about arrest do not reduce future IPVAV incidents), whereas trained novice and experienced (vs. untrained novice) officers' arrests were more effective in response to situations where visible injuries were present. When no injuries were visible, experienced (vs. untrained novice) officers showed supportive attitudes toward passive responses (e.g., the cooling-off period was more fair action), and experienced and trained officers (vs. untrained officers) believed that referring the victim to mental health counseling was significantly more effective and fair (Finn & Stalans, 2002). Trained and novice officers preferred to arrest perpetrator when the wife was hallucinating (Stalans & Finn, 1995).

Finally, being the *supervisor* in a police department was linked to a lower tolerance of IPVAV (Chu & Sun, 2014).

**Attitudes Toward Women and Gender-Based Violence.** For the theme of attitudes toward women and gender-based violence, 29% of the reviewed investigations included 14 content units, collecting different attitudes and beliefs about women and gender-based violence

by means of five subthemes: traditional gender roles, pro-feminist attitudes, sexist attitudes, myths about wife abuse, and attitudes justifying IPVAV. First, police officers who endorsed *sexist attitudes* (benevolent and hostile sexism), *tolerant attitudes toward violence against women*, and *myths about wife abuse* were more likely to prefer passive responses (e.g., conditioned responses to victim desires; Gracia et al, 2014; Stith, 1990). Moreover, officers with such characteristics considered incidents as unworthy police endeavors (Muftić & Cruze, 2014) and the social workers as unhelpful at the scene of IPVAV incidents (Ward-Lasher et al., 2017), and indeed, they would adopt narrow definitions of physical wife abuse (Tam & Tang, 2005) and unsupportive attitudes toward IPVAV intervention policies (Farris & Holman, 2015).

Surprisingly, police officers who sustained certain myths (e.g., most IPVAV incidents are isolated events in good relationships) had a comprehensive knowledge of the risk factors of intimate partner homicide (Ward-Lasher et al., 2017). The endorsement of *traditional gender role attitudes* promoted tolerance of IPVAV (e.g., restrictive definition of different forms of IPVAV; Muftić & Cruze, 2014; Tam & Tang, 2005) and an unwillingness to intervene actively (Farris & Holman, 2015). Conversely, *pro-feminist attitudes* promoted wider endorsement of proactive police attitudes (a supportive view of the system and legislation against IPVAV) and less tolerance. For example, police officers maintained a preference for arresting perpetrators (Zhao et al., 2018) and implementing IPVAV policies (Farris & Holman, 2015). It is worth noting that *attitudes justifying IPVAV* have been directly and indirectly associated with minimal police involvement, such as passive preferences for intervention (Muftić & Cruze, 2014; Saunder, 1995).

For instance, Baldry et al. (2013) found that when police officers faced a situation where the victim had been unfaithful, they were more likely to justify IPVAV and were less willing to intervene.

**Police Abilities and Cognitions.** Of the reviewed studies, 22.8% grouped seven subthemes that we defined as drawing from eight content units. *Confidence in handling IPVAV*, *knowledge about IPVAV policy*, and *familiarity with mental illness* promoted the view of IPVAV intervention as an important police task (Chu & Sun, 2014; Feder, 1997; Markowitz & Watson, 2015), whereas *feeling comfortable talking with the victims* reduced tendencies for minimal police involvement such as dual arrests or arrests of female victims (Saunders, 1995). However, *the perception of police officers' role is to enforce the law* was related to greater willingness to arrest both women and men (Zhao et al., 2018). Moreover, police officers who had *a desire for guidance in decision rules* perceived the usefulness of risk assessment tools (Campbell et al., 2018). Finally, police officers with high *empathy* and low hostile sexism (vs. low empathy and high hostile sexism) preferred unconditional responses (i.e., arrest regardless of the victim's desires; Gracia et al., 2011, 2014).

### ***Microsystem***

From the 41.9% of the reviewed quantitative studies that examined the interpersonal-level domain, 49 contents units defined a set of six themes and 22 subthemes.

**Situational Characteristics.** The theme of situational characteristics was formed by 21 coding units identified in 12.9% of the reviewed studies. Such units alluded to six subthemes. Thus, knowledge about *the presence of alcohol in IPVAV situations* and *the availability of mental health resources* prompted officers' decisions to exonerate perpetrators from civil commitments (Finn & Stalans, 2002). Likewise, when alcohol was absent from the scenario, the couple's socioeconomic situation gained relevance as a factor considered responsible for the IPVAV (Home, 1994). Furthermore, two other subthemes were *prior violence toward children* and *children present in IPVAV situations*. Both prompted police officers to have a progressive view of perpetrators, treating them as responsible (Home, 1994). Finally, a set of situational

characteristics was shown through *Situation A* (i.e., frequency of calls, woman's physical signs of abuse, man was drunk, confrontation of man with police officers, and the man says she was lying) and *Situation B* (i.e., woman's physical signs of abuse, both partners argued in front of police officers, she wanted husband to leave home) in the reviewed literature. Saunders (1995) compared police attitudes toward such specific IPVAV situations. Police officers in Situation A (vs. B) were more likely to act proactively toward the perpetrator and the victim (e.g., arresting male perpetrator). Conversely, police officers facing Situation B (vs. A) had more reactive attitudes (e.g., arresting victims, warning the perpetrator of possible arrest, warning the victim of possible arrest, mediating partner disputes). Subsequently, Zhao et al. (2018) used the same situations, finding that police officers preferred mediation responses in Situation B (vs. A).

**Mental Illness Status.** Almost 20% of the reviewed quantitative studies (19.3%)—which implemented an experimental design using hypothetical vignettes—included determinants from the theme of mental illness status. In particular, it was identified by 10 content units that were clustered into six subthemes related to the mental states of the victim and the perpetrator. Evidence did not provide a clear pattern about the role of the *perpetrator's drunken state* in police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV. Whereas Feder (1997) showed that a drunken perpetrator predicted a higher likelihood of police arresting him, Finn and Stalans (2002) indicated that police officers considered a passive response (i.e., threaten with arrest) fair or effective when the perpetrator showed a drunken (vs. hallucinatory or normal) state. Results were more consistent regarding *perpetrator hallucinations or delusional thoughts*. In such circumstances, police officers endorsed proactive attitudes. For example, perpetrators were seen as dangerous, and they were seen as less likely to be credible, act in self-defense, or control their actions (Finn & Stalans, 1995, 2002). Likewise, the *perpetrator's signs of mental illness* were considered a contributor to the violence (Finn & Stalans, 1997). The perpetrator's hallucinatory

state also contributed to victims being perceived as in control of their actions, as well as less blameworthy and without any aim in fighting (Finn & Stalans, 1995, 2002). Last, police officers considered it more fair and effective to refer perpetrators with hallucinations (vs. normal or drunk) to mental health treatment instead of marriage counseling (Finn & Stalans, 2002).

Victims with different kinds of mental states also have been studied. When *victims with hallucinatory or drunken* (vs. normal) *states* were present, police officers perceived them as less credible and more dangerous. In addition, whereas victims could be seen with the intention of hurting their husbands and in control of their actions, perpetrators would be considered less dangerous (Stalans & Finn, 1995, 2000). However, there were nuances related to the victim's mental state. Specifically, victims with hallucinations (vs. normal, drunken, or unusual startled responses) were seen as less in control of their actions, as if they did not understand that violence is wrong, they had fought previously with their husbands, and their mental illness contributed to the violence (Stalans & Finn, 1995). Moreover, police officers were less likely to recommend marriage counseling (Stalans & Finn, 2000). Conversely, when *victims display unusual startled responses*, police officers preferred to refer them to a shelter (Stalans & Finn, 1995). Otherwise, *drunken victims* (vs. normal or hallucinatory) were considered more to blame (Stalans & Finn, 1995, 2000). Indeed, when officers also believed that such wives usually provoked their husbands, they tended to arrest such husbands to a lesser extent (Stalans & Finn, 1995).

**Injury Status.** Eight content units were collected through 16.1% of the reviewed studies that used experimental procedures (i.e., hypothetical vignettes). Thus, four subthemes emerged: visible injury of the perpetrator, the victim, or both partners, as well as perceived severity of the victim's injury. When *both parties were injured* (vs. injured wives whose husbands were not injured), police officers demonstrated victim blaming (e.g., she provoked the situation) and attitudes of minimal police involvement (e.g., dual arrest preferences; Finn et al., 2004).

Otherwise, *injured men* (vs. uninjured women) were perceived as if they acted in self-defense, were more credible, and were less likely to want to inflict harm on their wives in the past, control them, or initiate violence (Finn et al., 2004).

Only *injured* (vs. uninjured) *wives* were linked to proactive police attitudes toward IPVAV. In these cases, police officers tended to have a progressive view of the victim: Wives acted in self-defense (Finn et al., 2004; Finn & Stalans, 2002), and they were in control of their actions, were credible, and were neither dangerous nor initiating the violence (Finn & Stalans, 1995, 2002; Stalans & Finn, 2000). Markowitz and Watson (2015) showed that police officers also tended to make internal attributions to perpetrators about the causes of violence (i.e., the perpetrator's harmful behavior was regarded as being under his control or caused by dispositional factors). Consistent with the above notion, when there were victims with visible injuries at an IPVAV scene, police officers evaluated the husbands as blameworthy, dangerous, convicted previously, responsible, and less credible. Moreover, it was believed that the perpetrators did not act in self-defense, they wanted to fight, they had no control over their actions, they could have inflicted severe harm if they remained in the home, and they were unable to understand violence is wrong (Finn & Stalans, 1995, 2002; Stalans & Finn, 2000). Regarding preferences for intervention, police officers tended to refer victims to shelters (Finn & Stalans, 1995) and arrest perpetrators (Finn & Stalans, 2002; Markowitz & Watson, 2015). Conversely, they were less likely to mediate and involve intimate partners to resolve the incident by themselves (Markowitz & Watson, 2015). The *severity of the victim's injury* also prompted police officers to place more responsibility with the perpetrators (Finn & Stalans, 2002). Finally, the moderator role of causal attributions in the link between the victim's visible injury and arrest preferences was confirmed. Thereby, when victims had visible injuries and police officers made internal attribution (vs. external)—that is, the responsibility was placed on the perpetrator instead of external

circumstances such as mental illness—they showed a higher willingness to arrest (Markowitz & Watson, 2015).

**Types of Violence and IPVAV.** A lesser percentage of the reviewed papers (6.4%) highlighted the theme of types of violence and IPVAV. Hence, five content units shaped two subthemes: *type of violence* (i.e., violence between men in nonintimate relationships, violence against women in nonintimate relationships, and IPVAV) and *type of IPVAV* (i.e., threat, physical violence, lack of physical violence). Thus, Gracia et al. (2014) compared IPVAV with other types of violence, showing that police officers had a greater willingness to provide an unconditional intervention (i.e., regardless of the victim's desires) in IPVAV or violence against women incidents (vs. violence between men). Regarding specific forms of IPVAV, Home (1994) found that when physical violence (vs. other forms) was involved, police officers showed a higher understanding of the nature of IPVAV. For example, the situation was seen as serious, victims could be injured, perpetrators were more responsible, and victims might suffer more negative mental health consequences. Notwithstanding, when IPVAV was exhibited through threats, police officers were more likely to show victim-blaming attitudes.

**Perpetrator Characteristics.** Just as with the previous theme, 6.4% of the reviewed studies collected three content units generating two subthemes of perpetrator characteristics: perpetrator compliance and perpetrator's veteran status. First, the lack of *perpetrator compliance* was a determinant of proactive police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV (Finn & Stalans, 2002; Markowitz & Watson, 2015). Specifically, in IPVAV situations where perpetrators did not comply with requirements, police officers would prefer to punish and arrest them, holding the perpetrators accountable for the aggression (Markowitz & Watson, 2015). Likewise, Finn and Stalans (2002) found that when perpetrators cooperated with the police officers and a mental health hospital was ready to accept violent mentally ill patients, police officers were more likely



to decide to exonerate the perpetrators from civil commitment. Second, regarding the *perpetrator's veteran status*, Markowitz and Watson (2015) showed that when the perpetrator in IPVAV incidents was a veteran, police officers assessed the situation as a danger to themselves and other people. If they made external (vs. internal) attributions about the cause of the assaults (e.g., he has a mental illness, posttraumatic episodic), police officers preferred referring veteran perpetrators to mental health treatment or trying to work things out instead of arresting them. In contrast, internal causal attributions (vs. external) triggered a greater preference for arrests instead of other responses to IPVAV when facing a veteran perpetrator.

**Victim Characteristics.** In addition to victim injury, 6.45% of the reviewed studies indicated two relevant subthemes through two content units: *victim's infidelity* and *provocation* as drivers of tolerance and attitudes of minimal police involvement in IPVAV. When victims were seen as provoking violence (i.e., verbal provocation), police officers considered either both partners sharing part of the responsibility or blaming only female victims (Home, 1994). Additionally, the victim's infidelity prompted police officers to justify IPVAV to a larger extent, and in turn, they were less willing to intervene (Baldry et al., 2013).

#### ***Exosystem (Organizational Level)***

Beyond the individual and interpersonal levels, 16.13% of the reviewed studies focused on the organizational level. Ten content units defined four themes and seven subthemes.

**Management and Communication Characteristics.** Of the reviewed studies, 6.4% included one or more of the following six subthemes of management and communication characteristics (shaped by seven content units). Concerning management determinants, research highlighted resources, management practices, and organizational culture (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005; Finn et al., 2004). Notably, police officers tended to implement new IPVAV programs in full when their organizations had high levels of *resources* and *management practices*

(i.e., there is not a gap between supervisor expectations and formal procedures and policies; Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005). Furthermore, *organizational police culture* had a relevant weight in police attitudes. For instance, in police cultures where arrest intervention was not perceived as a waste of time, police officers showed a proactive attitude toward implementing IPVAV programs (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005). Conversely, Finn et al. (2004) found that when the organizational police culture supported dual arrest when both parties had visible injuries, attitudes of minimal police involvement toward such cases were more prevalent (i.e., dual arrest preferences). Regarding communication, three subthemes were mentioned: informal communication mode, communication frequency, and ethical ambiguity (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005). In police departments where supervisors used *informal communication modes* (e.g., face-to-face interactions) and a *higher frequency of communication*, police officers from the first line tended to implement IPVAV policies in full (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005). Moreover, *ethical ambiguity*—the degree to which a police organization clarified how police officers should attempt to influence customer decisions or whether to provide or withhold information—prompted the full implementation of the new IPVAV programs (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005). Finally, communication determinants moderated the effects of management factors on police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005). Thus, when both high levels of informal and frequent communication were established within a police department, a greater amount of available resources or a positive organizational culture (i.e., organizational ideology about the importance of IPVAV interventions) was associated with a greater implementation of an IPVAV program in full.

**Authority Figure.** Almost 10% of the reviewed studies (6.4%) and two content units focused on the figure of the supervisor. *Supervisor support* was associated with proactive police attitudes such as recognizing the importance of police tasks and being pro-arrest (Chu & Sun,

2014). Likewise, supportive (vs. unsupportive) attitudes toward IPVAV interventions endorsed by supervisors also promoted reactive police attitudes (i.e., the idea of female police officers facing IPVAV without a male counterpart; Sun & Chu, 2010).

**Group Influence.** An almost negligible 3.22% of the reviewed studies provided information about a singular subtheme of group influence (only one content unit). In particular, *counterpart action* (i.e., arrest decisions in IPVAV situations) influenced the tendency to arrest the perpetrator (arresting him and calling for reinforcement). That effect was stronger when police officers had high identification with their in-group (Baldry et al., 2014).

**Police Department.** Just 3.22% of the reviewed studies remarked on differences between organizational settings—a subtheme supported by two content units—showing that police officers from the Taipei (vs. Kaohsiung) City Police Department were less likely to endorse important police tasks and pro-arrest attitudes (Chu & Sun, 2014).

### ***Macrosystem***

A scarce amount of the reviewed research pointed out determinants at the societal level (9.68%). In general, two themes and three subthemes were established, drawing from four content units. Despite this, it is essential to remark upon the study of determinants at this level.

**Geographical Settings.** A small percentage of the reviewed studies (6.45%) demonstrated the existence of two subthemes (three content units): *the United States* and *Australia*. Regarding United States regions, in the Northeast (vs. South, Midwest, and West), police officers ranked IPVAV as a main concern (Kuhns et al., 2007). In addition, Australia and the United States were two countries where police attitudes were compared. McPhedran et al. (2017) showed police officers in the United States (vs. Australia) endorsed myths about IPVAV (e.g., minority victims are less likely to call the police than White victims) and attitudes of minimal police involvement in IPVAV (e.g., arresting someone at an IPVAV call seldom helps

reduce future incidents). On the other hand, police officers in Australia (vs. the United States) supported misconceptions about IPVAW interventions (e.g., IPVAW is best handled as a private matter), myths (e.g., IPVAW is higher among minorities), and difficulties with interpreting what was the probable cause for arrest. However, they were more likely to make an arrest when identifying legal factors (e.g., children are present).

**State Arrest Policy.** The theme of a state arrest policy was analyzed slightly (3.22% of the reviewed studies), including one subtheme (mandatory arrest policy) referred to by only one content unit. Farris and Holman (2015) found that police officers were less likely to implement IPVAW policies when mandatory arrest laws were in force.

### **Discussion**

This systematic review is, to our knowledge, the first to delve deeply into the meaning of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW literature. Drawing from Chu and Sun's (2014) theoretical approach, the identified themes and subthemes contribute to comprehensively and clearly defining the two domains—reactive and proactive—of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW (Aim 1).

Most of the reviewed studies focused on the reactive domain through three themes. First, tolerance of IPVAW mainly includes police attitudes such as victim blaming and perpetrator exoneration. In addition, it is also conceptualized through a simplistic view, stereotypes, and myths about IPVAW and general attitudes accepting, tolerating, or justifying IPVAW (e.g., justifying wife beating under certain circumstances). Second, minimal police involvement spreads police misconceptions of IPVAW intervention further (Chu & Sun, 2014). Mostly, the identified subthemes focus on passive willingness to intervene per se (e.g., mediation). Importantly, another content area is police attitudes that act like detrimental drivers of intervention in IPVAW. In this way, police officers who endorse attitudes of minimal police

involvement would downplay risk factors, endorse misconceptions of IPVAW, and prioritize extralegal factors (e.g., perceived victim or perpetrator cooperativeness) to weigh their interventions. Furthermore, minimal police involvement includes other nuances. Police officers could also find different gaps or barriers in the intervention, personal risk, or costs and difficulties in interpreting the probable cause of the violence. Third, unsupportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAW would comprise the subthemes related to negative police attitudes toward new laws or policies against IPVAW established in their home countries and toward prosecution, the current legal system (e.g., professionals such as judges), and protective and restraining orders.

Regarding the proactive domain, we identified three additional themes. The theme of police understanding of the complex nature of abuse introduces subthemes not only regarding a progressive view of victims and perpetrators but also concerning comprehensive knowledge about IPVAW and supportive attitudes toward training, educational, and prevention programs for professionals involved in this type of gender-related violence. Likewise, the theme of IPVAW intervention as an important police task mostly refers to a proactive willingness to intervene (i.e., with the perpetrator, victims, or general IPVAW situation). Equally important, this theme includes subthemes such as factors that influence positive intervention in IPVAW (e.g., legal factors), positive police attitudes toward IPVAW risk assessment tools, and the importance of intervention in IPVAW. Last, the theme of supportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAW extends largely to prior content proposed by Chu and Sun (2014). Although there is scarce literature about this theme, it comprises positive police attitudes toward new laws or policies against IPVAW and toward prosecution.

This systematic review also advances research by providing insightful evidence on how different individual characteristics of police officers or IPVAW situations, as well as belonging

to a specific police organization or society, may lead to proactive and reactive attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV (Aim 2). At first glance, the results show that research has been focused on the bottom spheres of social ecology (i.e., ontogenic system and microsystem) in comparison to the upper spheres (i.e., exosystem and macrosystem). Within each level, the years of police experience, injury status, the authority figure (i.e., supervisor role), organizational police culture, and country of origin have been the variables further studied and linked to police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV. Furthermore, factors belonging to the exosystem and macrosystem levels have rarely been confirmed as precedents of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV.

Despite this fact, qualitative studies suggest some tentative variables that should be examined in depth: the characteristics of police organizations, such as the type or size of police departments (Farris & Holman, 2015; Kuhns et al. 2007) departmental policies toward family violence (Finn et al., 2004) and administrative barriers (Campbell et al., 2018). Similarly, it could be promising to research the effects of public and government opinions, gender equality (Applegate, 2006; Farris & Holman, 2015), household income, residential areas, ideological liberalism (Farris & Holman, 2015), and cultural stereotypes (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2004).

### **Implications for Research**

Police officers who repeatedly are exposed to IPVAV events eventually tend to end up creating a generic cognitive representation or schema about IPVAV (Robinson, 2000). Thus, when they face IPVAV events, police officers compare the fit of their schemas to existing information on the scene, and it triggers specific police interpretations of, attitudes toward, and responses to IPVAV (Robinson, 2000). The reviewed studies mainly have obtained empirical evidence regarding individual (e.g., professional experience) and situational (e.g., types of IPVAV) variables that are only a part of the base upon which police schemas are built. However, research on the way socialization—through the variables of belonging to police organizations and

society of origin—shapes such schemas and the correlation among all schema variables explaining police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW, is still in an incipient state. In this sense, some implications and questions for future research emerge from this review.

The first question concerns how different determinants, which have been raised here, interact with each other to shape police schemas and ultimately their attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW. Thus, some determinants have been found inconsistently related to police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW. This was the case for the police officer's gender, professional experience, age, and marital status; myths about IPVAW; and the victim's injury and drunken state. For example, when the victim's injury is linked to other situational characteristics (e.g., both partners argue in front of police officers), the results change, prompting reactive (vs. proactive) attitudes toward IPVAW (Saunders, 1995; Zhao et al., 2018). Our methodological quality analysis points toward problems related to the control of confounding variables as an explanation for this inconsistency. A clear discussion about inconsistent findings should be had, using suitable research designs and statistical analyses to control potential confounding determinants.

Second, researchers could question if there are differences between the influence of police schemas on attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW in specific police departments, countries and/or culture. For example, specific characteristics of organizational police culture (e.g., management characteristics, supervisor's role) or the country's IPVAW legislation (e.g., arrest policy) could explain differences in the way police officers address IPVAW. A multilevel approach—where Level 2 would be countries or police departments—should be taken to test such hypotheses.

Third, it is important to understand further the role of pressing social factors such as racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic status conflicts. Most reviewed studies were carried out in countries

(e.g., United States, Israel; see Appendix C) where such pressing factors are undoubted. Our review provides some responses regarding this issue. For instance, Leung (2014) concluded that some police officers think immigrant women make frequent reports simply to gain access to public housing or social security benefits. Similarly, in Israel, law enforcers tended to indicate that Jewish (vs. Arab) women should be helped first (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2007). Furthermore, a couple's economic problems are an extralegal factor police officers might use to justify IPVAW events (Farris & Holman, 2015; Home, 1994). The collected evidence also has gaps regarding race. Hence, the role of the victim's race has not been well correlated to police attitudes toward intervention in this review. It is known that racial minority populations experience IPVAW at greater rates, but curiously, they report this violence to police to a lesser extent, with the lack of trust in law enforcement being one explanatory factor (Fedina et al., 2019). In addition, a significant decrease in the likelihood of actual arrest when victims were Black females (Robinson & Chandek, 2000) and the race of the female and male partners were significantly associated with female-only and dual arrests in ambiguous IPVAW events (Durfee, 2012). In this vein, future research should address why women of color are reluctant to call police. Specifically, it could be more clearly elucidate how the victim's race affects police attitudes toward intervention with a specific response to IPVAW events.

Finally, given that most studies were performed in the United States (see Appendix C), the cultural and legal contexts should be considered. Police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW are a universal construct, but cultural, legal, and other values can determine a partial construct overlap across countries. Therefore, future researchers should follow recommended practices in cross-cultural assessment (i.e., cultural decentering) to avoid the construct bias when developing an instrument to measure police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAW in a specific context (Van de Vijver & Tanzer, 2004). Similarly, the time covered in this review is wide and



the cultural and legal contexts within and across countries have changed since 1990. Researchers should move forward with caution when drawing general conclusions and questioning whether the relationships between determinants and police attitudes could be further supported nowadays when laws and norms may have changed in a particular country or cultural context.

### **Implication for Practice**

Given that police schemas are an active process (Robinson, 2000), evidence has indicated several target points to focus on for IPVAV training in law enforcement settings. In general, training should be focused on police officers in different ways according to their professional experience and ranks. Scholarly work has suggested that novice police officers endorse reactive attitudes when facing IPVAV incidents, whereas experienced police officers tend to have proactive attitudes, particularly when there is clear evidence of abuse or for prosecution of the IPVAV case. Likewise, supervisor attitudes toward IPVAV influence the first-line officer's disposition. The support, as well as fluent and informal communication without contradictory messages, between the supervisor and first-line police officers is essential to promote proactive attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV. Otherwise, regarding the content of training, it is important to clarify what is evidence of abuse—that is, the distinction between legal versus extralegal factors—and provide clear knowledge of current policies. Similarly, the definition, prevalence, myths, causes, and consequences of IPVAV should be discussed. Moreover, research has shown that one avenue for changing attitudes is having an IPVAV victim talk about her experience and having experienced police officers and supervisors provide support and resources to face such incidents (Foubert & Perry, 2007).

### **Implication for Policy**

Laws against IPVAV, mandatory or pro-arrest policies, and even primary perpetrator laws are in force in almost all countries where reviewed studies were carried out. Despite this

legal context, our review cannot provide a clear notion on the open debate about whether police officers follow preferable policies or their own criteria (e.g., attitudes, beliefs about the nature of abuse) to guide their decisions in IPVAV cases (Phillips & Gillham, 2010). Only one of the reviewed studies—in line with prior research that indicated mandatory arrest policies disproportionately affect women in ambiguous events (Durfee, 2012)—seems to note that police officers would endorse fewer proactive attitudes toward the implementation of IPVAV policies within states with mandatory arrest policies (Farris & Holman, 2015).

Otherwise, institutions could make efforts to develop standard operating procedures that translate the empirical evidence we summarize into real police practice. Because ethical ambiguity is detrimental to proactive police attitudes (Brunetto & Farr-Wharton, 2005), official authorities should avoid such ambiguity through the standardization of action protocols, taking into account which variables are present in police schemas. In addition, they should invest funding in training that goes beyond the legalistic approach, such as including attitudes and their determinants, because both aspects are essential for actual police responses to IPVAV.

### **Limitations**

It is also important to note some limitations of our research. First, the criteria established for the search (e.g., inclusion criteria, keywords) were based on the authors' knowledge of the topic. Likewise, it was possible to miss studies of interest if they were not registered in the chosen datasets or were not empirical or review studies. In addition, we focused on police officers' attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV without considering their actual responses. Finally, the methodological quality of our selected papers highlighted two main concerns: a lack of adequate psychometric properties of the measures and problems related to the control of confounding variables. This could lead to noncomparable results across studies and serious doubts about the interpretations drawn from the collected data.

## **Conclusion**

For the most part, law enforcement professionals are the first to intervene in IPVAV cases, and indeed, their attitudes and responses condition the victim's state (i.e., victims do not feel believed; they distrust law enforcement and experience discrimination), the legal process (i.e., protection orders, success in prosecution), and social perceptions of the acceptability of IPVAV (Gracia et al., 2014; Robinson et al., 2020). Identifying police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV and their underlying determinants across different levels has been challenging. In our view, increased efforts in this line of work, the development of suitable contextual and operational definitions of attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV, and the employment of appropriate quality methodologies are prerequisites for a better way forward in understanding such attitudes.

## **Summary of Critical Findings**

1. A theoretical framework about police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV is composed of three themes in two domains: reactive (i.e., tolerance of IPVAV, minimal police involvement, and unsupportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAV) and proactive (i.e., understanding the complex nature of abuse, recognizing IPVAV intervention as an important police task, and having supportive attitudes toward the legal system and legislation against IPVAV).
2. The most studied determinants of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV operate at different levels of social ecology: individual (years of police experience), situational (injury status), organizational (authority figure such as a supervisor or organizational police culture), and societal (country of origin).
3. Research should be carried out that improves the methodological quality (i.e., confounding variables and nonvalidated instruments).

## **Implications for Research, Practice, and Policy**

### ***Research***

- More empirical research is needed to ascertain organizational and societal determinants.
- The role of the police officer's gender, professional experience, age, and marital status; myths about IPVAV; and the victim's injury and drunken state should be clarified, taking potential confounding variables into account.
- Discriminatory settings and related pressing social factors (e.g., race, ethnicity, income status) are most in need of focus in the analysis of attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV.

### ***Practice***

- Training programs should concentrate on three areas: target groups (i.e., novice and supervising police officers), content (i.e., a multidisciplinary approach to IPVAV), and support for training (i.e., victims and supervisors talking about their experiences).

### ***Policy***

- Policy makers should reanalyze the benefits of arrest policies and laws against IPVAV based on the engagement of police officers with proactive tendencies to intervene in IPVAV cases.
- Official institutions should make efforts to translate empirical evidence into real practice (e.g., police operating procedures and training).

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**Appendix A.1. Keywords were used across databases**

Keywords sequence: ("individual factors" OR "personality" OR "gender" OR "psychosocial factors" OR "demographic" OR "beliefs" OR "ideology" OR "stereotypes" OR "prejudices" OR "culture" OR "contextual factors" OR "situational factors" OR "organizational factors" OR "structural factors" OR "social relations" OR "policies" OR "characteristics of formal organizations and institutions" OR "societal factors" OR "community factors" OR "race" OR "cultural factors" OR "socioeconomic factors" OR "ethnicity" OR "gender attitudes" OR "roles" OR "relations" OR "traditional gender norms" OR "sexual norms" ) AND ( "attitudes" OR "perception" OR "intention" OR "knowledge" OR "attributions" OR "justifications" OR "explications" ) AND ( "police officers" OR "law enforcement" OR "patrol" ) AND ( "intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence" OR "domestic abuse" OR "violence against women" OR "wife battering" OR "marital violence").

**Appendix A.2. Categories of First Coding Scheme**

The coding scheme included the following categories: author, title, publication year, location, aim, study design and source of information, methodology, sample size, determinants, outcomes (the type of police attitudes toward intervention in IPVAV), measuring tools, statistical analyses, and results

**Appendix B. Characteristics of reviewed studies**

Table S1.

*Characteristics of reviewed studies*

<b>Author/s (Year)</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Methodology (Design of study)</b>	<b>Source of information</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Quality assessment</b>
Applegate (2006)	To consider the influences that have shaped local DV policy and how this has affected police practice in one English police force.	U.K. and Gales	Mixed method	Open ended but structured interviews, analysis of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) Reports and local policy documents, self-administered questionnaire.	148	6



Arnold, & Slusser (2015)	To analyze how the organizational structures and dynamics within law enforcement personnel and victims' advocates groups works give rise to different stocks of working knowledge about DV.	U.S.	Qualitative	Interviews, participant observation at meetings, examination of existing documents, and Ms. Slusser's knowledge of the Nuisance Property Law	3	6
Balenovich, Grossi, & Hughes (2008)	To explore how police officers define their roles through the use of focus group interviews with detectives assigned to a DV unit.	U.S.	Qualitative	Focus groups	10	5
					108	12
Baldry, Pagliaro, &	To investigate the role that masculine honor plays when	Afghanistan	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through		

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Porcaro (2013)	police officers make decisions with regard to help and support to victims of IPV.			scenarios and measures based on previous research, and develop for the study)		
Baldry, & Pagliaro (2014)	To manipulate group norms and assess their impact on willingness to help victims of IPV.	Italy	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures based on previous research, and develop for the study)	216	14
Ballucci, Gill, & Campbell (2017)	To report how police view the importance of risk assessment in IPV cases.	Canada	Qualitative	Self-report questionnaire (open-ended responses) is based on the work of Mazerolle et al. (2013)	169	6
Blount, Yegidis, & Maheux	To describe police attitudes toward a Preferred Arrest	U.S.	Quantitative (No	Self-report questionnaire developed for present	350	8

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(1992)	Policy and to determine if these attitudes were influenced by rank or reported activity.		experimental)	study		
Brunetto, & Farr-Wharton (2005)	To examine the impact of resources, accountability, management practices and organizational culture on the implementation of a policy (in this case, a DV policy/program)	Australia	Mixed method	Interviews with key stakeholders, review of relevant state documentation, focus group, and Self-report questionnaire (some included measures based on previous research, and other ones were developed for the study)	≈18	14 8
Campbell, Gill, & Ballucci	To examine police officer's experiences with IPV risk	Canada	Quantitative (No	Self-report questionnaire (modified survey of	159	12

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(2018)	tools, their attitudes about using such tools, and identified predictors of these attitudes.		experimental)	McPhedran et al. (2017), based on the work of Gover et al. (2011)		
Chu, & Sun (2014)	To compared male and female police officers' reactive and proactive attitudes toward handling dv incidents.	Taiwan	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire developed by authors	272	15
DeJong, Burgess-Proctor, & Elis (2008)	To examine officers' views of IPV as well as whether policing philosophy is related to officers' attitudes toward IPV.	U.S.	Qualitative (Ex post facto)	Narrative data from police ride-alongs	209	9
Dutton,	To assess police officers' and	U.S.	Mixed method	Self-report questionnaire	168	8

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Tamborra, & Pittman (2019)	victim advocates' experiences with and perceptions of the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP)		with closed and opened- ended questions (Modified version of an officer survey developed by Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence)	
Engelman, & Deardorff (2016)	To evaluate a training workshop for law enforcement as first responders for the purpose of increasing officers' cultural competency in working with Deaf and hard-of hearing people (Deaf/HH) during domestic violence (DV)	U.S.	Mixed method	Self-report questionnaire 41 11 based on previous research measures (pre- post training) and Focus Group

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	emergencies.					
Farris, & Holman (2015)	To examine sheriffs' attitudes and their offices' policies concerning VAW and to assess the connection between their attitudes and policies.	U.S.	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire based on previous research measures.	456	11
Feder (1997)	To look at factors affecting the likelihood of police to arrest in a jurisdiction with pro-arrest legislation.	U.S.	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire based on previous research measures.	297	12
Finn, & Bettis (2006)	To examine the rationales employed by officers to justify dual arrests in a preferred arrest jurisdiction.	U.S.	Qualitative	Self-report questionnaire developed by authors (randomly assigned to read only one scenarios and write down their	24	10

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				thoughts, answering closed-ended questions)		
Finn, Blackwell, Stalans, Studdard, & Dugan (2004)	To examine the relationship between officers' perceptions of their departmental policies and arrest outcomes.	U.S.	Quantitative  (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)	299	13
Finn, & Stalans (2002)	To test reasoning underlying officers' decisions to civilly commit or arrest hallucinating suspects of DV.	U.S.	Quantitative  (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)	257	13
Finn, & Stalans (1997)	To examine how disputants gender, and mental state	U.S.	Quantitative  (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through	130	11

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	affected officers' inferences about dangerousness, responsibility, credibility, control, and their decisions to arrest or refer for involuntary civil commitment in domestic assault cases.			scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)		
Finn, & Stalans (1995)	To examine how husband's mental state, antagonism between the disputants, and victim injury affect officers' inferences and referral decisions to battered women shelters and outpatient mental health center.	U.S.	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)	257	12
Friday, Metzgar,	To explore police attitudes	U.S.	Quantitative (No	Self-report questionnaire	80	8

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& Walters (1991)	and experience with departmental policy favoring arrest cases of DV.		experimental)	developed		
Golge, Sanal, Yavuz, & Arslanoglu- Cetin (2016)	To examine the attitudes of police officers and judiciary members toward wife abuse in Turkey, and the relation between these attitudes and profession, ambivalent sexism, gender, and gender roles.	Turkey	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (previous adapted measures)	300	14
Gracia, García, & Lila (2014)	To explore male police officers' law enforcement preferences across different scenarios of interpersonal violence, involving intimate	Spain	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios, and adapted previous measures)	308	13

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	(partner violence against women) and non-intimate relationships (between- and within-gender).					
Gracia, García, & Lila (2011)	To analyze whether police attitudes toward policing partner violence against women corresponded with different psychosocial profiles.	Spain	Quantitative (Quasi-experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (previous adapted measures)	378	12
Grant, & Cross-Denny (2017)	To examine the attitudes and barriers police officers identified in successful implementation of the lethality assessment protocol (LAP).	U.S.	Qualitative	Focus group	22	6

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Hirschel, Hutchison, Dean, & Mills (1992)	To assess the role of law enforcement in spouse abuse.	U.S.	Qualitative (Narrative review)	Reviewed papers	NI	1
Horwitz, Mitchell, LaRussa-Trott, Santiago, Pearson, Skiff, & Cerulli (2011)	To explore police officers' scope of practice and emotional reactions to DV calls.	U.S.	Qualitative	Focus group	22	5
Home (1994)	To compare police officers and social workers	Canada	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through	235	14

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	attributions of responsibility, and their assessment of gravity of DV incidents.			scenarios and measures developed for the study)		
Kuhns III, Maguire, & Cox (2007)	To explore the public safety concerns of nearly 6,000 law enforcement agencies.	U.S.	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services developed a list of 15 public-safety concerns)	NI	12
Kulwicki, Aswad, Carmona, & Ballout (2010)	To explored the role of personal resources, family, religion, culture, and social support system in the utilization of DV services by Arab immigrants	U.S.	Qualitative	Focus Groups	NI	6

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	experiencing DV.					
Laughon, Mitchell, & Price (2017)	To answer these research questions: What are the current practices for addressing gender violence in the Nicaragua and the Southern Caribbean Autonomous Region? What do professionals consider to be the current strengths and gaps in policies related to gender violence in this region?	Nicaragua	Qualitative	Focus Groups	NI	6
Lea, & Lynn (2012)	To investigate the social construction of domestic abuse by police officers,	U.K.	Qualitative	Files that had completed their prosecutorial journey	NI	5

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	specifically in the context of arguments presented to the prosecutor for a decision on whether to proceed with or discontinue the case.					
Leung (2014)	To examine the intervention approach of the police in handling DV, and the reasons behind the inactive response.	China	Qualitative	In-depth interviews	2	6
Lila, Gracia, & García (2013)	To examine ambivalent sexism and empathy as determinants of male police officers' law enforcement attitudes towards IPVAV.	Spain	Quantitative (Quasi-experimental)	Self-report questionnaire with adapted measures developed by previous research.	404	14
Lockwood, & Prohaska (2015)	To review findings concerning whether officer	U.S. and Canada	Qualitative (Narrative	Reviewed papers	NI	1

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	gender affects arrest rates of		review)			
	abusers, the criteria an officer					
	considers when making the					
	decision to arrest an abuser,					
	and whether officer gender					
	corresponds with a specific					
	preference for the gender of					
	officers sent to respond to					
	IPV incidents.					
Logan,	To examine police attitudes	U.S.	Quantitative	Self-report questionnaire	315	8
Shannon, &	toward sanctions, and		(No	adapted from adaptation		
Walker (2006)	treatment for domestic		experimental)	Peter D. Hart Research		
	violence offenders compared			Associates (1996)		
	with other violent and					
	nonviolent offenders.					
Muftić, & Cruze	To examine gender and DV	Bosnia and	Quantitative	Self-report questionnaire	137	12

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(2014)	attitudes held by 137 Bosnian police officers	Herzegovina	(No experimental)	with measure developed by previous research.		
Markowitz, & Watson (2015)	To examine attributional processes in police decision making in response to DV situations involving veterans and nonveterans with signs of mental illness.	U.S.	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios developed for the study and measures modified from previous research)	309	13
McPhedran, Gover, & Mazerolle (2017)	To conduct a cross-national examination of law enforcement officer attitudes about DV by comparing officer attitudes in the U.S. to officer attitudes in Australia. To examine law enforcement officer attitudes about DV	U.S.	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire based on Gover et al. 2011.	612	11

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	using a gender lens to identify whether patterns in attitudes among male and female.					
Pagelow (1992)	To review the vast of accumulation of literature on woman battering during the past decade to present a synopsis of some of the selected works that may offer the greatest assistance to activists, practitioners, and researchers in the field.	U.S.	Qualitative (Narrative review)	Reviewed papers	NI	1
Poteyeva, & Sun (2009)	To review empirical results regarding attitudinal differences between female and male police officers.	U.S.	Qualitative (Systematic review)	Articles in several popular police journals and the authors' understanding of the	994	10

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				literature of gender and policing.		
Rigakos (1997)	To examine the enforcement practices of police officers when responding to breaches of civil restraining orders and Canadian criminal code peace bonds.	Canada	Quantitative  (No experimental)	Constructed self-report questionnaire (from conversations with justice officials, researchers, department of justice research section, feminist literature on police response to VAW in the home and police administrators, policy analysts, and colleagues at Simon Fraser university)	45	6

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Rigakos (1995)	To examine the effect of patriarchy on police subcultural and individual attitudes toward the enforcement of protective court orders for battered women.	Canada	Qualitative	Face to face and telephone interviews	13	5
Robinson, Pinchevsky, & Guthrie (2016)	To assess police officers' perceptions of domestic abuse, including those incidents that are not necessarily physically violent, but involve stalking and other coercive, controlling behaviors that are harmful and require intervention.	U.S. and U.K.	Mixed method	Self-report questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions developed by authors (manipulation through scenarios)	773	14

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Robinson, Pinchevsky, & Guthrie (2016)	To explore the responses of British and American police officers to questions regarding how important and how essential various risk factors are for evaluating the level of risk or harm a victim of domestic abuse may face in the future.	U.S. and U.K.	Mixed method	Self-report questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions (measures were taken from previous research)	776	13
Saunders (1995)	To study officer's likelihood of arrest victim depending on police officer's characteristics.	U.S.	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios developed by author and adapted measures from previous research)	111	11
Shalhoub-	To consider key features of	Israel	Qualitative	In-depth interviews	60	9

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Kevorkian (2004)	the policing of VAW in a militaristic context and during a continuous political conflict.					
Stalans, & Finn (1995)	To examine how officers use their prior knowledge to interpret wife assault situations and how these interpretations shape their responses.	U.S.	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)	128	11
Stalans, & Finn (2000)	To examine how women and men police officers perceive and respond to a hypothetical realistic domestic violence situation.	U.S.	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)	254	13

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Stalans, & Finn (2006)	To examine whether lay persons and police officers have similar stereotypes about DV and similar objectives for handling DV situations.	U.S.	Quantitative (Experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (manipulation through scenarios and measures develop by authors for the study basing in previous literature)	258	15
Stith (1990)	To address how individual and family characteristic influence the male police officer's responsiveness in these situations.	U.S.	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (adapted measures by previous research, and two vignettes developed by Saunders (1980))	72	11
Sun, & Chu (2010)	To examine Taiwanese female and male police officers' perceptions of handling DV.	Taiwan	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (adapted measures from previous research, and developed for the present study)	252	11

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Tam, & Tang (2005)	To report social workers and police officers gender-role attitudes, endorsement of wife abuse myths, and definitions of wife abuse.	China	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (adapted measures from previous research)	74	11
Twis, Nguyen, & Nordberg (2018)	To explore the influence of IPV mythology on police officers' decision-making and intervention.	U.S.	Qualitative	Police reports	58	5
Ward-Lasher, Messing, & Hart (2017)	To examine police officer attitudes toward IPV risk assessment, and collaboration with social workers.	U.S.	Quantitative (No experimental)	Self-report questionnaire (measures modified from Toon, and Hart, (2005))	544	13
Zhao, Zhang, Jiang, & Yao	To examine police officer attitudes, and responses to	China	Quantitative (No	Self-report or self-administered survey	520	13

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(2018)	domestic violence.		experimental)	method after reading two vignette (based on previous literature, measures and relevant theories)		
Espinosa, & García (2018)	To explore the meanings of gender and sexuality expressed by women suffering IPV, batterers and municipal police officers intervening in cases of violence.	Mexico	Qualitative	Interviews semi-structured	2	7

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IPV = Intimate Partner Violence; IPVAV = Intimate Partner Violence Against Women; DV = Domestic violence; VAW= violence against Women; U.S. = United States of America; U.K. = United Kingdom; NI= Not indicated



**Appendix C. Summarized Characteristics of reviewed studies****Table S2***Summarized Characteristics of Identified Studies*

Grouping Variables	Frequency	%
Publication Date		
Twentieth century	13	22.8
Twenty-first century	44	77.2
Country of Origin		
U.S.	30	52.3
Canada	5	8.8

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Spain	3	5.3
China	3	5.3
Taiwan	2	3.5
U.S. and U.K.	2	3.5
U.K.	1	1.7
U.K. and Wales	1	1.7
Afghanistan	1	1.7
Others (Italy, Australia, Turkey, Israel, Nicaragua, Mexico, Bosnia and Herzegovina, U.S. and Canada, U.S. and Australia)	9	15.3
Methodology		
Qualitative	19	33.3
Quantitative	32	56.1
Mixed method	6	10.5
Time		
Cross-sectional	47	82.5
Ex post facto	7	12.3

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Mixed (cross-sectional and ex post facto)	3	5.3
Research Sources		
Self-reported questionnaire (develop by the authors)	14	24.6
Adapted self-reported questionnaire	13	22.8
Self-reported questionnaire (both previous ones)	5	8.8
Self-report questionnaire (open-ended questions)	2	3.5
Focus group	5	8.8
Official documents (police reports, laws, files, police ride-alongs)	3	5.3
Interviews	4	7.0
Mixed (interviews, participant observation, official documents)	1	1.7
Review of previous literature	4	7.0
Interview + review official documents + self-reported questionnaire	1	1.7
Interview + review official documents + self-reported questionnaire + focus group	1	1.7
Self-reported questionnaire with closed and opened-ended questions	3	5.3
Self-reported questionnaire + focus groups	1	1.7

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	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b><i>M (SD)</i></b>
Sample	2	5791	345.3 (807.1)
Methodological Quality			
Review studies ( <i>n</i> = 4)	1	10	3.2 (4.5)
Empirical studies ( <i>n</i> = 53)	5	15	10.2 (3.2)

*Note.* We coded all papers in each grouping variable. The percentage adds up to 100%. The highest scores for methodological quality could be 15 points for review studies and 21 points for empirical studies. *N* = 57.

**Appendix D. Frequency, Percentage, and Examples of Content Units Coded in Each Theme and Subtheme Related to Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV**

**Table S3**

*Frequency, Percentage, and Examples of Content Units Coded in Each Theme and Subtheme Related to Police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV*

Themes and Subthemes	Frequency (%)	Examples of Content Units
<b>Reactive police Attitudes Toward Intervention in IPVAV</b>		
<i>Tolerance of IPVAV</i>	220 (29.6)	
Victim blaming	94 (42.7)	Victims as responsible for their abuse, liars, cynical, uncooperative with the law enforcement, withdrawing from the legal proceedings.
Exoneration of perpetrator	71 (32.3)	Perpetrator has no intention to hurt the victim, have mental illness or he is out of

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		control.
Simplifications, stereotypes, and myths of IPVAV	29 (13.2)	IPVAV incidents only occur in low-middle social classes or minorities, when alcohol or drug abuse, verbal family arguments without severity.
Attitudes justifying, tolerating, and accepting of IPVAV	24 (10.1)	Beliefs in a just world, sexist attitudes, justifying wife beating under certain circumstances, conservative attitudes toward marriage.
<i>Minimal Police Involvement</i>	165 (22.2)	
Mediation	38 (23.0)	Preference for asking one disputant to leave the home for the night, asking both parties if they want to prosecute, suggesting marriage counseling.
Police misconception of IPVAV intervention	24 (14.5)	IPVAV intervention is considered a waste of time, secondary police work, without any impact on the decrease of future incidents.
Consideration of extralegal factors in IPVAV decision making	17 (10.3)	Racist perceptions, level of victim and perpetrator cooperativeness.
Gaps in or barriers to IPVAV	17 (10.3)	Geographic and infrastructure, lapses in communication, lack of confidentiality,

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intervention		problems to contact victim.
Personal cost and risk for police officers	15 (9.1)	Personal safety, personal responsibility, tremendous amount of personal effort and time invested on IPVAV.
Conditional intervention	12 (7.3)	Preferences for asking the victim if she wants to press charges, decision to arrest if there physical abuse.
Dual arrest	11 (6.7)	Preferences for arresting both involved parties.
Willingness to use police discretion	10 (6.1)	The policy takes away police discretion; officers usually do what they think necessary regardless of supervisor opinions or department procedures.
Difficulty interpreting probable cause or detecting legal factors as causes of IPVAV	7 (4.2)	Difficulty interpreting who is the primary perpetrator, detecting legal factors (e.g., severity of injury to the wife, prior violence)
No intervention because of police opinions	5 (3.0)	Preferences for avoiding arrest because no evidence of physical abuse, situation seemed under control, both parties are believed equally at fault.
Negative attitudes toward risk	4 (2.4)	Risk assessment tools do not improve previous protocols, increase workload,

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assessment tools		paperwork, investing many resources.
<i>Unsupportive attitudes toward the Legal System and Legislation Against IPVAW</i>	19 (2.56)	
Disadvantage of new laws or policies against IPVAV	5 (26.3)	Preferred arrest policies require many times in making an arrest, the law itself is not effective in changing either the number of calls or its seriousness.
Against prosecution	5 (26.3)	Bureaucratic or technical impediments to obtaining a conviction, IPVAV cases do not follow because there is not clear evidence.
Against legal system	5 (26.3)	Justice officials are blamed by the suffering of the victims, and challenging their motives in issuing protective orders, larger system is ineffective.
Against Protective and restraining orders	4 (21.0)	Orders are liberally dispensed and rarely taken seriously by judges, order without an arrest provision on it is not enforceable.

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**Proactive Police Attitudes Toward**

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**Intervention in IPVAV**


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*Understanding of Complex Nature of* 169 (22.7)

*Abuse*

Progressive view about perpetrator 70 (41.4) He would harm again the victim if she remains in the home, he initiates the violence, he is not mentally ill.

Progressive view about victim 61 (36.1) She does not initiate the violence, she does not intend to hurt, fight, control, argue with the husband.

Comprehensive knowledge about IPVAV 29 (17.2) Knowledge about the traditional IPVAV stereotypes, the types of violence, the detrimental victim's consequences of neither stopping the cycle of violence, the legal and social resources.

Satisfaction with training for police officers and other social targets 5 (3.0) Training helps police officers to evaluate better the IPVAV scenes; training improves police knowledge, skills, and sense of self-efficacy.

Education and prevention programs 4 (2.4) IPVAV prevention programs have benefits for victims and increasing awareness

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<i>IPVAW intervention as an Important Police Task</i>	135 (18.2)	
Positive police actions toward perpetrators	27 (19.3)	Preferences for bringing perpetrator to the police station for further questioning, putting perpetrator in a jail, informing him about their rights.
Positive police actions in general IPVAV situations	26 (18.5)	Preferences for making a report or filling out a complaint form, risk identification checklist, collecting evidence, asking for collaboration of specialist response teams
Factors that influence positive intervention IPVAV incidents	25 (18.5)	Police officers rate being physically assaulted in the course of IPVAV call, victim's injury, suspect was "mouthy", the call was the second of the shift to the same residence
Positive police actions toward victims	23 (17.0)	Preferences for referring victims to a battered women's shelter, going to the victim's home and talking with her to find out more about her situation and build a strong case, informing the victim about legal and service options.

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Assessment of the importance of police intervention in IPVAV	22 (16.3)	Discouragement of future incidents; police support to the cooperation between legal and social workers, treating the encounters seriously and as a priority.
Positive attitudes toward risk assessment tools	12 (8.9)	Useful and positive resources to collect consistent and centralized data to guide investigation, reducing the risk of coming to the wrong conclusion, promoting the need to justify their action in a clear manner.
<i>Supportive attitudes toward the Legal System and Legislation Against IPVAV</i>	30 (4.04)	
Benefits of new laws against IPVAV	24 (80.0)	New legal framework help to identify and reach out to IPVAV victims, enhancing the victim's safety or improving their ability to handle domestic violence calls
For prosecution	6 (20.0)	Lack of prosecution had led to an increase in recorded crimes.

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*Note.* Percentages for subthemes were calculated taking the total coding units of each theme, regardless of whether they were repeated in several papers. Percentages of some main themes do not add up to 100% because the theme “others” is not shown.