

# Intimate Partner Violence in Young Women's Relationships: Barriers to Help-Seeking

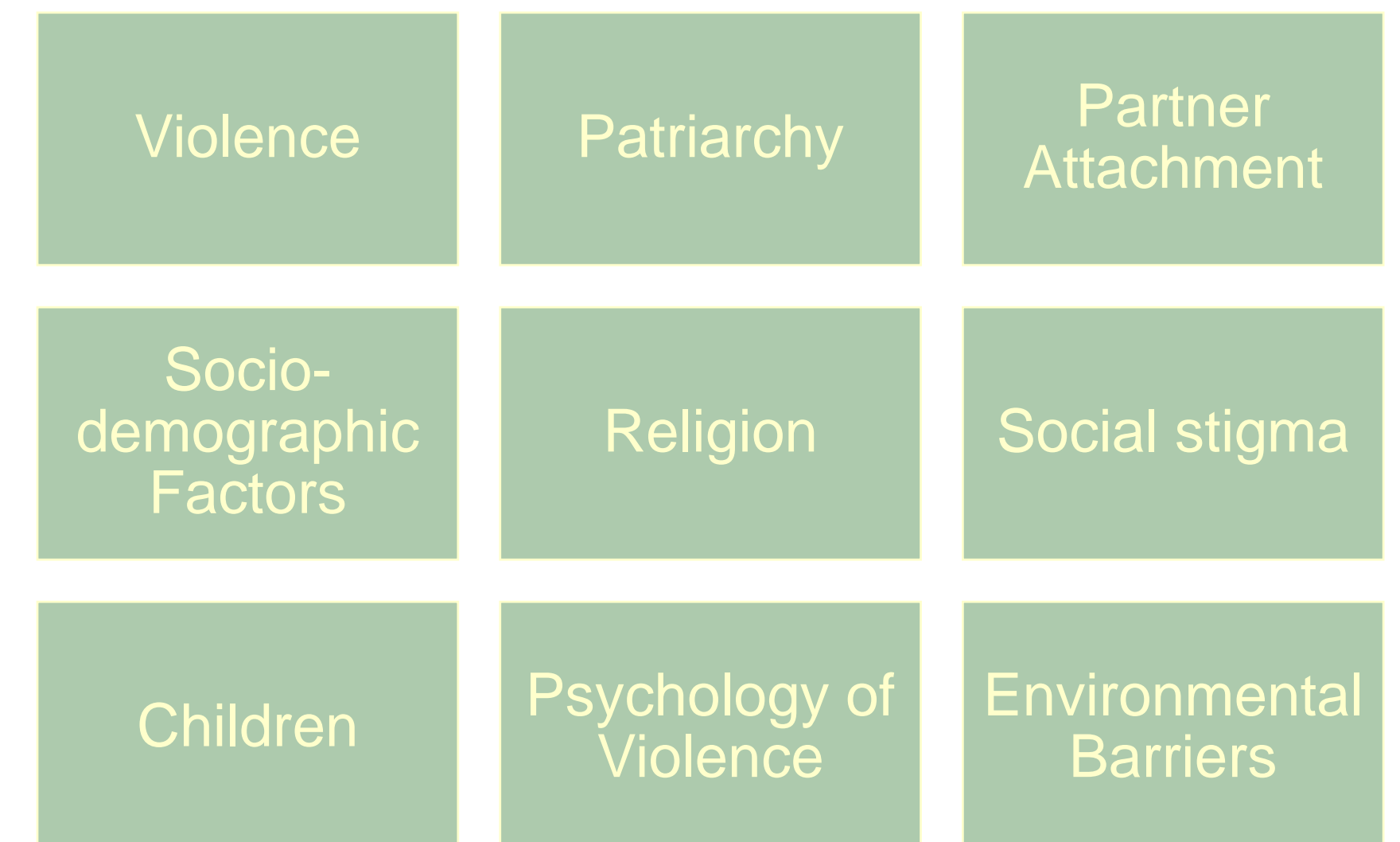
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## The Need for my Research

- Contemporary research has identified barriers to accessing support for women experiencing/ survivors of intimate partner violence (1).
- My research intends to focus on IPV amongst young women – their experiences and help seeking behaviours.
- Currently, little qualitative work on the role of pathways to support and women's experiences of disclosing their experiences of domestic abuse in different contexts (2).
- Recent systematic review on adolescents' help seeking behaviours and intentions following dating violence noted adolescents identify many barriers to help seeking and concluded there is need for further research in this area (3).

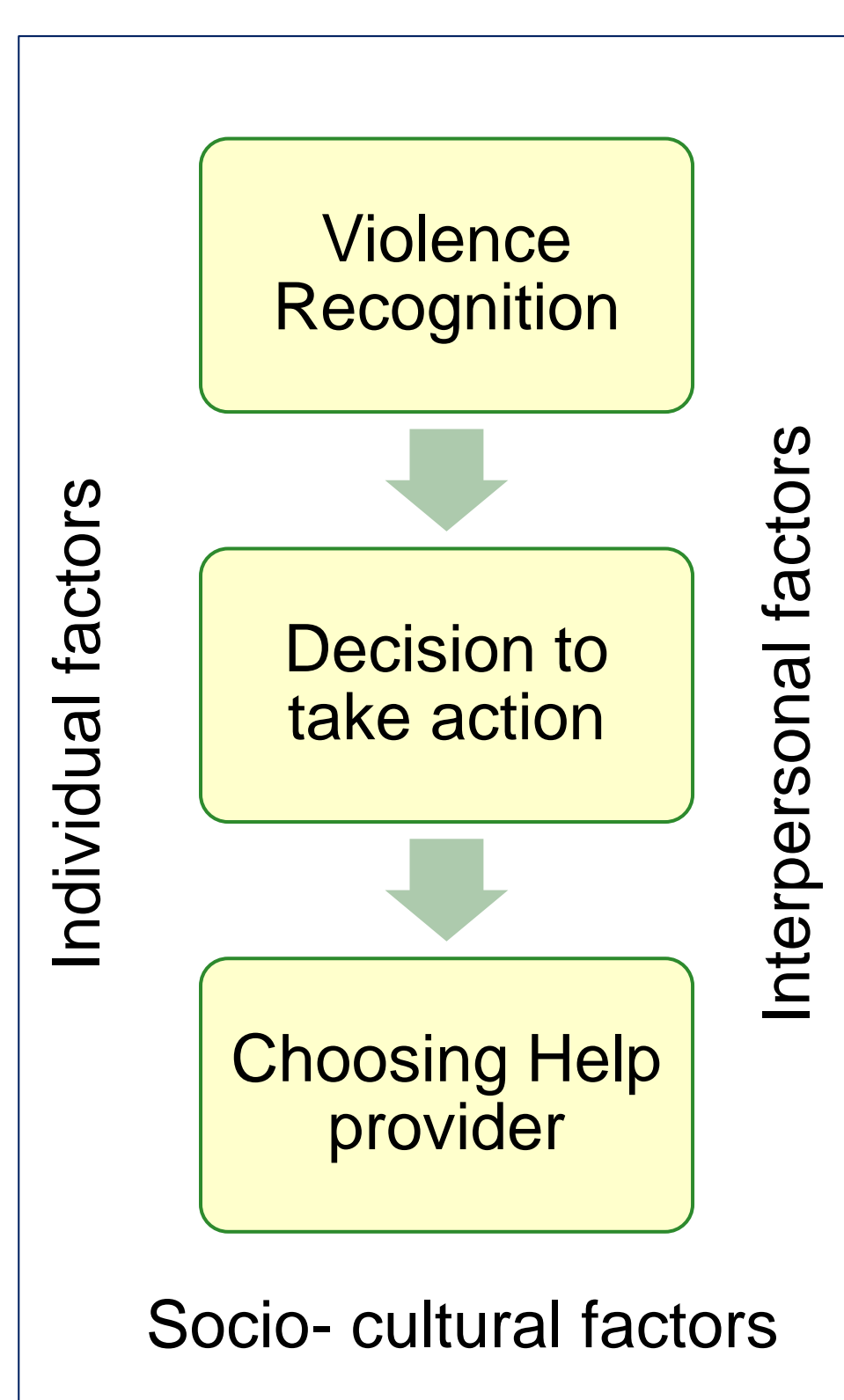
## Barriers to Help-Seeking

Barriers are often more than one and interlinked (1)



## 3 Stages of Help-Seeking

All stages are influenced by individual, interpersonal and socio-cultural factors



## Formal/ Informal support

<b>Formal</b> Police Healthcare Provider Support Agencies	<b>Informal</b> Friends Family Colleagues
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The stronger the informal support, the greater the chances of accessing formal support

## Initial Findings

Initial Findings quotes:

- I had suicidal thoughts and even tried to end it once
- I never saw it as abuse until he actually hit me
- I was walking on egg shells all the time
- If I didn't do as he wanted, he'd hit me or sulk, the sulking was much worse than the hitting
- I had no money, he had it all
- I didn't know how to leave
- I didn't know coercion was not consent
- They kept saying 'why don't you just leave?'
- I just wanted him to be happy but I would always end up upsetting him
- I hated who I had become
- He knew exactly where I was, he had a tracker on my phone
- He would change when we were alone
- He was in my whole life, had taken over it and I don't know how it happened.
- I wanted my children to have a father...you see I hadn't had one and it was important to me
- Everyone thought he was great
- At first I thought I was imagining it, he would act as if nothing had happened.
- He monitored my social media...if I liked a boys picture, then I was having an affair
- I would lie to the police or it would be worse when he returned
- I didn't think anyone would believe me
- I was so alone
- I didn't tell anyone, I didn't want them to hate him, he wasn't always like that
- Self harming was my way of coping
- I just wanted him to protect me
- I felt like it was my fault, like I let him do all those things to me
- I stopped talking to friends and family without realising until I had no one.
- Even when I said no, he kept pushing until I would give up

My research sits within a wider project being undertaken by the None in Three Research Centre, funded by GCRF (through UKRI) and the University of Huddersfield. The aim of the Centre is to reduce gender based violence. The project is multi-country (UK, India, Uganda and Jamaica) and all countries are tackling issues that are most prevalent to them. The UK focus is intimate partner violence in young people's relationships. The Centre is developing an interactive computer game as an intervention to be played in schools allowing children 14-18 years of age to reflect on their intimate relationships, helping them to recognize manipulative, coercive and abusive behaviours and the impact of those on others, whilst understanding healthy relationships. The experiences of women interviewed will influence the script and storyline of the game, paying particular attention to dialogue delivery, attitudes and perceptions. The Centre will also be involved in evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention.



### References

- (1) Lelaurain, S., Graziani, P. And Lo Monaco, G., (2017). Intimate partner violence and help-seeking: A systematic review and social psychological tracks for future research. *European Psychologist*, 22(4), pp. 263-281.  
 (2) Evans, M.A., Feder, G.S. (2014) 'Help-Seeking Amongst Women Survivors of Domestic Violence: A Qualitative Study of Pathways Towards Formal and Informal Support', *Health Expectations* 19: 62-73.  
 (3) Bundock, K., Chan, C., & Hewitt, O. (2018). Adolescents' Help-Seeking Behaviour and Intentions Following Adolescent Dating Violence: A Systematic Review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018770412>