

Typologies of Aggression and Anger and Their Association with Trauma

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INTRO

- Research suggests that there are two sides to anger: anger-out and anger in.
- One correlate of anger is aggression, which takes three forms: physical aggression, social aggression, and rule-breaking behavior.
- These forms of anger and aggression may cohere as typologies.
- These typologies may be influenced in part by environmental triggers.
- One such trigger is trauma, the impact of which varies in terms of interpersonal betrayal.
- However, it is unclear how different kinds of trauma may be associated with different typologies of anger and aggression.

METHODS

- Participants: 364 adults in the United States
- Measures: AEX, STAB, and BBTS
- We analyzed data using model-based cluster analysis and multinomial logistic regression.

RESULTS

- Results indicated 4 clusters that differed in terms of anger and aggression (see Figure 1).
- Trauma explained a large amount of variance in typology membership ($R^2 = .69$).
- Interpersonal trauma was positively associated with covert expression of anger (see Table 1).

DISCUSSION

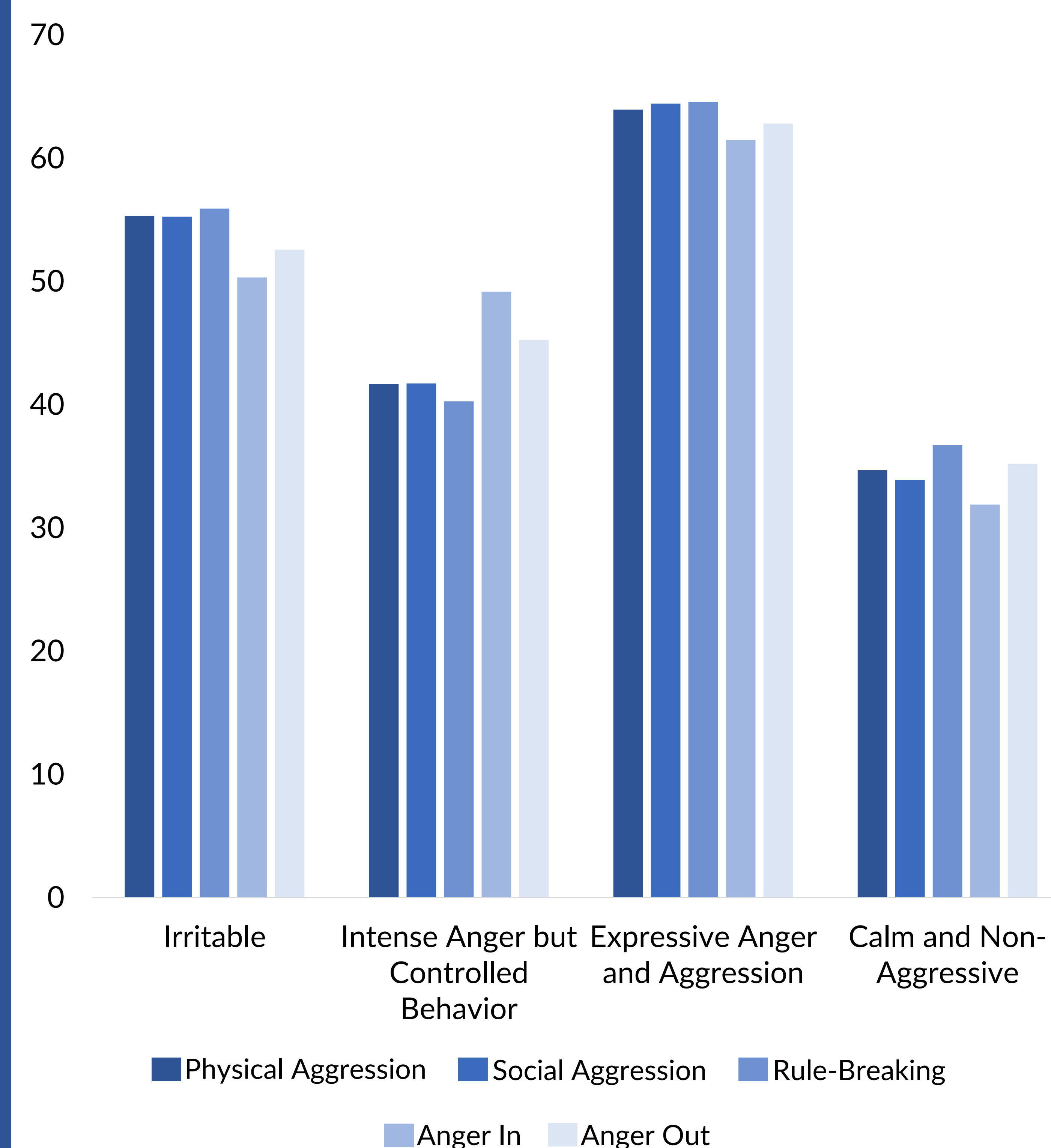
- People who experience interpersonal trauma may feel unsafe expressing anger outward and instead internalize their resentment.
- Findings suggest the potential utility of incorporating trauma-focused techniques in treating some presentations of anger and aggression.

Interpersonal trauma is associated with covert expression of anger.



Figure 1

Typologies of Anger and Aggression



Note. Clusters are on x-axis and t-scores on y-axis.

Table 1

Trauma Association with Clusters

	Irritable		Controlled		Expressive	
	OR	B	OR	B	OR	B
High BT	1.24	.21	2.49*	.92	.37	-.99
Med BT	.18*	-1.70	3.86*	1.35	.17*	-1.76
Low BT	.25*	-1.39	1.26	.23	.08*	-2.55

Note. Reference category is calm and non-aggressive; Expressive = expressive anger and aggression; Controlled: intense anger but controlled behavior; * indicates coefficient is statistically significant at $p < .05$.