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Editorial

Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

The fall 2013 issue of the *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* focuses on intimate partner violence. Barbara Krahé (University of Potsdam, Germany) and Antonia Abbey (Wayne State University, United States) have assembled a truly international collection of empirical research on this still taboo topic. We thank them for their thorough work and collaboration.
The journal's open section again features two differing papers: The first examines reactions to provocation and beliefs about aggression in an Indian sample, while the second discusses the relations between transitional justice and quality of democracy.
Enjoy reading!

November 2013

Wilhelm Heitmeyer Douglas S. Massey Steven F. Messner James Sidanius Michel Wieviorka

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Guest Editorial: Intimate Partner Violence as a Global Problem – International and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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Guest Editorial: Intimate Partner Violence as a Global Problem – International and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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This editorial introduces the Focus Section on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) as a worldwide problem, which brings together six papers that are truly international and interdisciplinary. They provide insights into IPV from nine different cultures – China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States – from scholars in the fields of psychology, gender studies, political science, and economics. The first three papers look at how widespread the experience of IPV is among different groups of women, examine selected risk factors associated with heightened vulnerability to victimization, and discuss consequences of intimate partner victimization. Another two papers place the problem of IPV in the wider context of societal perceptions and attitudes about victims and perpetrators of IPV in different countries, whereas the last paper examines the role of individual differences in the management of emotions in the escalation or de-escalation of relationship conflict. In combination, the papers highlight the interplay between the macro level of social and cultural norms condoning the use of violence, the micro level of family relations and construction of couple relationships, and the individual level of attitudes and behaviors that precipitate IPV.

1. Background

Violence in intimate relationships is a worldwide problem that poses a severe threat to victims' health and well-being and incurs high costs to societies as a whole. Intimate partner violence (IPV) refers to "behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours" (World Health Organization 2011). A recent comprehensive world-wide survey on women's experience of intimate partner violence concluded that approximately 30 percent of women worldwide have experienced some form of violence from an intimate partner at some point in their life (World Health Organization 2013, 2). There was a substantial variation between countries, with rates as high as 65 percent. Another survey published this year on the scale of men's violence against women in six countries in Asia and the Pacific region found that approximately 43 percent of women had experienced physical and/or sexual IPV at least once in their lifetime. The highest reported rate was 67 percent (Fulu et al. 2013). These findings reaffirm an earlier WHO review that found lifetime prevalence rates of women's experience of IPV of up to 69 percent (Krug et al. 2002). Although it is important to document the scale of different forms of IPV, such as psychological, physical, or sexual abuse, it has been widely established that physical violence is often accompanied by psychological and sexual abuse (Krug et al. 2002, 89).

A review of the relevant literature reveals that knowledge about the scale and context of IPV is not evenly distributed across the world. A large number of surveys and research studies have been conducted in the United States, and information regarding other Western countries has also grown steadily over the last decades. By contrast, systematic research about the scale and context of IPV in other parts of the world is far more limited, although it is clear that violence against women by their partners is widespread and often rooted in cultural traditions. IPV cannot be properly understood without considering the cultural context in which it takes place. Cultures differ in their power differentials between men and women, shared represen-

tations of masculinity and femininity, notions of male honor, and social constructions of violence. Bringing together analyses of IPV from a range of countries, including those not typically represented in the mainstream research literature, is therefore critical for advancing knowledge about IPV and promoting efforts aimed at preventing violence between intimate partners.

Although the WHO definition is neutral with regard to the sex of victims and perpetrators, IPV directed against women has generally been recognized as more prevalent and linked to more severe consequences in terms of physical harm. As noted in the 2002 WHO report, "although women can be violent in relationships with men, and violence is also sometimes found in same-sex partnerships, the overwhelming burden of partner violence is borne by women at the hands of men" (Krug et al. 2002, 89). Reflecting the heightened vulnerability of women to IPV victimization, all of the studies presented in this focus section consider women as victims of IPV. Two also address men as victims and women as perpetrators.

2. The Present Focus Section

This Focus Section brings together papers from different parts of the world that address the problem of intimate partner violence from a range of perspectives. The six papers are truly international and interdisciplinary. They provide insights into IPV from nine different cultures – China, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Northern Ireland, Sweden, Turkey, and the United States – from scholars in the fields of psychology, gender studies, political science, and economics. The first three papers look at how widespread the experience of IPV is among different groups of women, examine selected risk factors associated with heightened vulnerability to victimization, and discuss consequences of intimate partner victimization. Another two papers place the problem of IPV in the wider context of societal perceptions and attitudes about victims and perpetrators of IPV in different countries; whereas, the last paper examines the role of individual differences in the management of emotions in the escalation or de-escalation of relationship conflict.

The first paper, by Toplu-Demirtas, Hatipo lu-Sümer, and White, reports extremely high rates of physical, emotional, and sexual dating violence among Turkish women college students. The authors use the investment model (Rusbult 1980) to explain how victimization affects women's satisfaction with and commitment to their partners. They find that the relationship between physical and emotional dating violence victimization and commitment to the relationship is fully mediated by relationship satisfaction, whereas no such mediation effect is found for sexual victimization. The findings highlight the importance of considering the unique impact of different forms of partner violence on victims' well-being and commitment to the relationship.Hoewer examines the problem of IPV in the context of changing gender roles brought about by armed conflict and the ensuing peace process. She conducted qualitative interviews with female activists in Northern Ireland and the Chiapas region in Mexico. Both men and women experienced multiple challenges renegotiating gender roles within intimate relationships after the conflict ended. Hoewer examines how changes at the macro level of political development affect interpersonal relationships at the micro level, as well as how the peace process in the two regions varied in terms of affording a broader re-construction of society that includes the empowerment of women.

Schröttle and Glammeier shift the focus from students and community activists to a particularly vulnerable and hard to reach group, namely women with disabilities. The authors present a detailed picture of the extent to which women with disabilities experience IPV, as well as the significance of these experiences in relation to childhood experiences of discrimination and violence. By placing their analysis into a broader conceptual framework of the social constructions of disability and gender, they highlight the social conditions that make women with disabilities particularly susceptible to the experience of IPV.

Nguyen, Morinaga, Frieze, Cheng, M. Li, Doi, Hirai, Joo, and C. Li examine similarities and differences in Chinese, Japanese, and American college students' reactions to written depictions of men's violence toward a female partner. They find that men tend to blame female victims more than women do, although the effects of participant gender are reduced when individual differences in tradi-

tional attitudes toward women are taken into account. They also find larger differences between Chinese and American male and female students' responses than between Japanese male and female students, highlighting the importance of simultaneously considering culture, gender, and individuals' violence-supportive attitudes.

Ahmed, Alden, and Hammarstedt, in a study from Sweden, also asked college students to respond to scenarios that depicted intimate partner violence. This study was unique in its inclusion of gay and lesbian as well as heterosexual couples. Overall, violence toward a woman by a man was viewed as most serious by Swedish students; however, when severe violence was depicted, differences as a function of gender constellations between victims and perpetrators diminished. Negative attitudes toward women, as well as toward gays and lesbians, affected students' perceptions, particularly when less severe violence was depicted.

The final paper, by Nocentini, Pastorelli, and Mersini, seeks to understand the dynamics that lead to the escalation of psychological and physical dating aggression, focusing on the role of self-efficacy in anger regulation. Data were collected from two independent samples of young adults in Italy. The authors demonstrate that the extent to which partners believe they can regulate their anger predicted how much aggression they showed toward their partner, and that the path from poor self-efficacy in anger regulation to dating aggression was mediated by the level of relationship conflict. Low self-efficacy in anger management was linked to higher relationship conflict which, in turn, made dating aggression more likely. This process is further illuminated in their second study with sixty couples, which examined the effects of one partner's self-efficacy beliefs on the other partner's psychological dating aggression. Their research contributes to a better understanding of the interactional dynamics by showing that poor self-efficacy in anger regulation may lead to the escalation of relationship conflict through its effect on the other partner's behavior.

3. Outlook

The urgent need to take action worldwide to stop violence in intimate relationships is undisputed and has prompted coordinated international responses, such as the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SRVI; http://www.svri.org/index.htm). To achieve progress, evidence-based approaches are required that combine the systematic analysis of the scale and risk factors of IPV with the implementation of prevention measures found to be effective by state-of-the art evaluation methods. One important step toward achieving this goal is to develop shared tools for measuring IPV victimization and perpetration so that is becomes easier to make comparisons across countries. In the terminology of cross-cultural research, such an approach reflects an "etic" perspective which assumes that IPV is a universal problem that can be measured by equivalent assessment tools in different countries (Berry et al. 2011; Krahé, Bieneck, and Möller 2005). It needs to be complemented by an "emic" perspective that seeks to uncover the culture-specific constructions and patterns of IPV (see Krahé, Bieneck, and Möller 2005; White et al. 2013). It is important to understand the specific cultural norms that play a role in the construction of IPV. Many countries have religious and ethnic traditions that support the idea that men have the right to control their female partners (and daughters) and use physical force to punish disobedience. Cultural norms about men's sexual entitlement are also widespread. Examining data from fifty-two countries, Archer (2006) found a significant inverse relationship between men's victimization of their female partner and a national-level index of women's empowerment, indicating that rates of women's victimization were higher the less power women had in society as a whole. Furthermore, he concluded that "the link between women's victimization and gender attitude measures, although based on only a few nations, also showed an association between traditional gender attitudes and women's victimization, which was especially marked for hostile sexist attitudes" (Archer 2006, 147). In the same vein, the survey by Fulu et al. (2013) in Asian and Pacific countries found that men who reported IPV perpetration were more likely to hold gender-inequitable attitudes and use controlling behavior toward their partner.

These findings highlight the interplay between the macro level of social and cultural norms condoning the use of violence, the micro level of family relations and con-

struction of couple relationships, and the individual level of attitudes and behaviors that precipitate IPV. Therefore, to achieve progress in reducing IPV, risk and protective factors that influence trajectories of violence need to be identified by examining these levels in combination (Abbey et al. 2012; Haegerich and Dahlberg 2011). Of the seven recommendations that Fulu et al. derive from their findings, three are of particular relevance in the context of the present Focus Section (2013, 6):

- "Change social norms related to the acceptability of violence and the subordination of women."
- "Promote non-violent masculinities oriented toward equality and respect."
- "Promote healthy sexuality for men and address male sexual entitlement."

The research brought together in this section contributes to the task of creating a knowledge base from which strategies for achieving these goals may be derived. We would like to thank all authors for contributing their important research to the Focus Section on *Intimate Partner Violence as a Global Problem* and for their patience, cooperation, and understanding throughout the editorial process.

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The Relation Between Dating Violence Victimization and Commitment Among Turkish College Women: Does the Investment Model Matter?

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The Relation Between Dating Violence Victimization and Commitment Among Turkish College Women: Does the Investment Model Matter?

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The present study explored the sexual, physical, psychological, and overall dating violence experiences, and related these experiences to Investment Model variables among Turkish college women. Three hundred and ninety dating women from four universities in Ankara, Turkey completed the Satisfaction, Investment, Alternatives, and Commitment subscales from the Investment Model Scale and the Sexual Coercion, Physical Assault, and Psychological Aggression subscales from the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale. 79.5 percent reported at least one incident of violence in a dating relationship within the previous year. Regression analyses indicated that satisfaction fully mediated the relations between physical, psychological, and overall dating violence victimization and commitment, but not for sexual victimization. The results suggest that future research should explore the possibility that the dissatisfaction women experience may be related to an increased likelihood of relation termination.

Evidence suggests that dating violence is a pervasive global problem among college students (Chan, Straus, Brownridge, Tiwari, and Leung 2008). However, little is known about such victimization among college women in Turkey. Dating violence may include sexual, physical, or psychological abuse. According to Chan et al.'s comprehensive international dating violence study of nearly 16,000 college students from twenty-one countries, a high percentage of women reported physical and sexual dating violence despite large differences among countries. Their results indicate that the dating violence problem is not limited to industrialized Western countries. In another large-scale international study using data obtained from thirty-one universities in sixteen countries, Straus (2004) reported high rates of physical violence against dating partners. Two recent studies suggest that dating violence is a pervasive problem among Turkish university students as well. In one study of 240 college women, 21.6 percent reported that they experienced violence in their current dating relationship (Aslan, Vefikuluçay, Zeyneloğlu, Erdost, and Temel 2008). In a more recent survey with 337 dating college women, 29.1 percent reported having experienced sexual victimization at least once in their lifetime. This percentage climbed to 77.4 percent for psychological victimization. The rate for physical victimization was 37.1 percent (Toplu and Hatipoğlu-Sümer 2011). Taken together, the available empirical evidence demonstrates that Turkish college women are at high risk for victimization. It is likely that the cultural context of violence against women provides a backdrop for understanding dating violence among Turkish college students.

1. The Turkish Context of Violence against Women

Since the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Turkish women have gradually been granted relatively equal legal rights, with a number of legal amendments being implemented to advance women's well-being. To name a few, Turkey signed the Convention on the Elimination of

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All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1985, and the Beijing Declaration in 1995. With the establishment of the Directorate-General on the Status and the Problems of Women in 1990, important steps have been taken at the governmental level as well. The adoption of the "Law for the Protection of the Family" in 1998, the new "Penal Code" in 2005, the "Prime Ministry's Circular No. 26218" in 2006, and the new "Law for the Protection of the Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women" in 2012 are the latest achievements indicating that prevention of violence against women is a state policy (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi [TBMM] 2012).

Despite all the measures taken to prevent violence at the state level, in practice, the traditional value structure seems to resist improving the quality of life of Turkish women. Violence against women remains a significant problem and adversely affects their health and well-being. According to the results of a nationwide representative "Violence against Women in Turkey" study (N= 1800; Altınay and Arat 2009), approximately one out of every three Turkish women has been the victim of intimate partner violence/domestic violence, and much of women's lives is strictly controlled by their husbands. Altınay and Arat found that almost half of the women who had been physically abused by their partners had never disclosed this to anyone. The study also revealed that one fourth of women did not feel adequately equipped to deal with present or future violence, stating that they could do nothing if their partner were to beat them. Social pressures on women make it very hard for them to leave an abusive relationship. Even after they leave, they are not safe. Divorced/separated women are more likely to be the victims of intimate partner violence than married women. A study conducted by the Turkish Republic Prime Ministry, Directorate-General on the Status and Problems of Women, found that 73 percent of divorced/separated women had experienced either physical or sexual violence (Turkish Republic Prime Ministry 2009).

The data available on violence against women in Turkey, in the context of Turkey's patriarchal values, raise questions about the nature of beliefs about relationships, gender roles, intimacy, and violence in college students' dating relationships. Gender inequality in patriarchal societies has been cited as one of the factors that influences the prevalence of violence against women (Hortaçsu, Kalaycıoğlu, and Ritterberger-Tılıç 2003). Turkish culture generally has been described as traditional, patriarchal, and authoritarian (Fişek 1982).

In traditional Turkish families, family honor is regarded as extremely important: "Honor may refer to a man's reputation as a participant in the community (şeref), or it may refer to his reputation as determined by the chastity of the women in his family (namus)." (Özgür and Sunar 1982, 350). The preservation of female virginity has also been equated with family honor. Defense of family honor is accepted as the man's duty (Özgür and Sunar 1982). Women who engage in premarital sexuality may be subjected to various sanctions, including "honor killing," physical abuse, and involuntary virginity examinations. In addition, they are also viewed as less desirable marriage partners (Sakallı-Uğurlu and Glick 2003). The double standards for male and female sexuality, virginity, and traditional myths regarding the hymen are still prevalent even in the better-educated sections of society (Cok and Gray 2007; Eşsizoğlu et al. 2011). Thus, while recent legislative initiatives have the effect of improving the status of women, the influence of patriarchal values and threats of serious reprisals for violation of gender roles still creates a precarious position for Turkish college women.

Research on dating violence among Turkish college women is in its infancy. Hence, there are many unanswered questions. For example: Does violence in a relationship with a sexual component have different consequences? Do victims report offenses? What factors affect the likelihood of the woman leaving an abusive relationship? How do young women make sense of the experience, given the contradictory societal expectations that men should protect women while holding women responsible for victimization by their protectors? To begin to explore these questions, the present study focused specifically on the relation between dating violence and commitment to a relationship. Given the correlational nature of the study we cannot determine whether commitment to a relationship increases risk of victimization, that is, male partners feel it is "safe" to be abusive, or, alternatively, victimization alters perceptions of

the relationship, including commitment, as a coping strategy to endure the relationship, because cultural factors may make it too difficult to leave. We begin by examining the components of commitment – relationship satisfaction, investment, and perceived alternatives.

2. Investment Model and Dating Violence Victimization

The Investment Model (Rusbult 1980, 1983) has become the major theory used to understand how women deal with abusive relationships, in light of growing evidence that many women stay in abusive relationships, if only for a short time (Katz, Kuffel, and Brown 2006; Rhatigan, Street, and Axsom 2006). The model has been of value in studying responses to dissatisfaction in romantic involvements (Rusbult, Zembrodt, and Gunn 1982), stay and leave behaviors in abusive relationships (Katz, Kuffel, and Brown 2006; Rhatigan and Street 2005; Rusbult and Martz 1995), willingness to sacrifice (Etcheverry and Le 2005), forgiveness (Cann and Baucom 2004), and dating infidelity (Drigotas, Safstrom, and Gentilia 1999).The value of the Investment Model over violence-specific theories of women's responses to abuse lies in its focus on social, contextual, and interdependence factors rather that individual variables that are open to victim-blaming interpretations (Edwards, Gidycz, and Murphy 2011; Rhatigan, Street, and Axsom 2006). The theory suggests that satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives combine to predict relationship commitment and greater commitment results in greater difficulty terminating the relationship.

As an extension of Interdependence Theory (Kelley and Thibaut 1978), the Investment Model developed by Rusbult (1980, 1983) consists of four components: commitment, level of satisfaction, size of investment made, and perception of the availability of alternatives. Satisfaction means a general evaluation of the relationship with its rewards and costs. Investment, which may be financial (money), temporal (time), and/or emotional (effort), refers to how much a person has already invested in the relationship. Quality of alternatives refers to a comparison with potential alternative relationships (i.e., is there a better available alternative?). Commitment involves intentions to stay in a relationship, feelings of psychological attachment, and a positive orientation toward a long-term relationship (Rusbult, 1980, 1983). It is theorized that higher commitment is determined by greater satisfaction, heavier investment, and poorer alternatives (Rusbult 1980, 1983), and that commitment is lower among victimized than non-victimized women (Rhatigan et al. 2006).

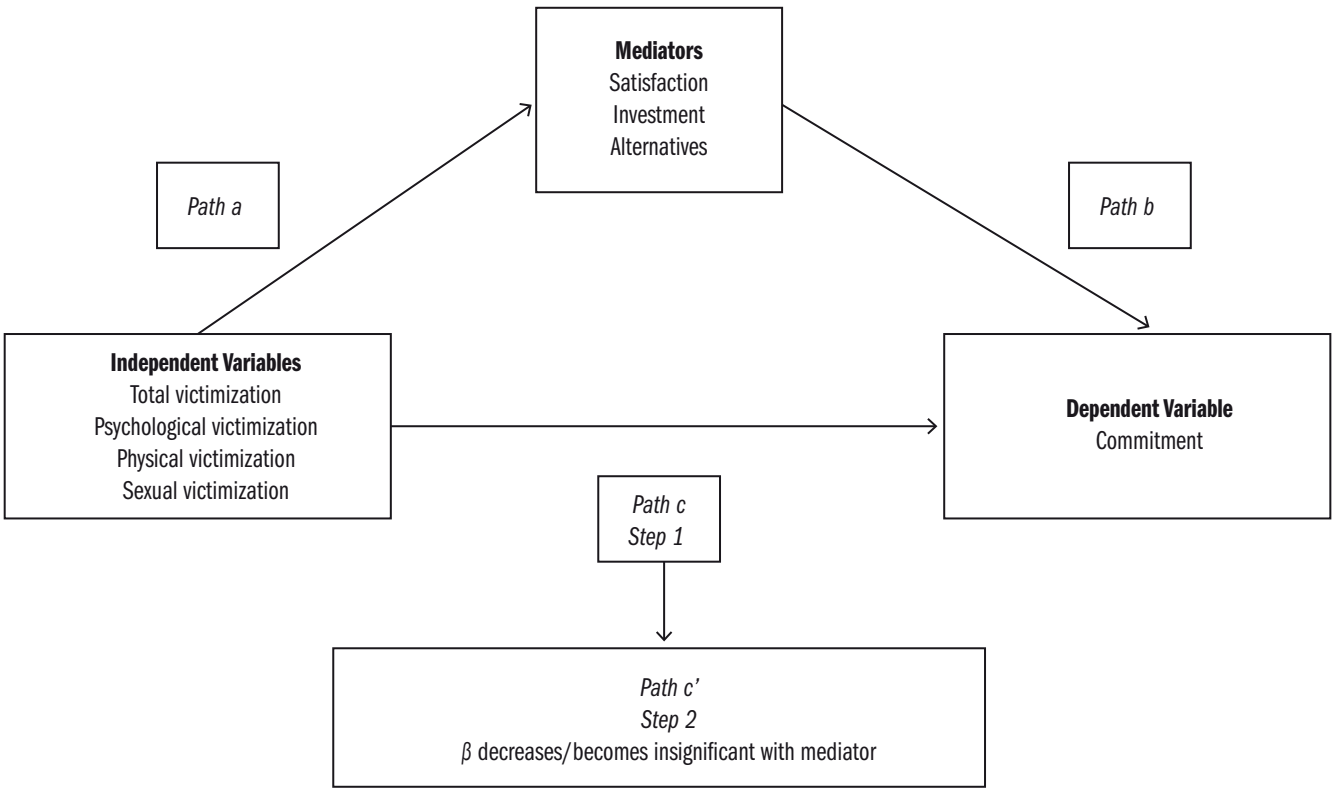
Rhatigan and Street's (2005) correlational study conducted in United States is of most relevance to the present study, and methodologically similar, although they did not include sexual victimization. They reported that higher levels of abuse were associated with lower levels of commitment, but when they looked at each type of abuse, the picture became more complicated. They found negative correlations between physical and psychological violence and satisfaction, as well as a negative correlation between physical abuse and investment, but a positive correlation between investment and psychological abuse. They also reported that satisfaction, but not investment or quality of alternatives, mediated the relation between abuse and commitment, suggesting that relationship satisfaction is critical to feelings of commitment.

In the light of findings to date, the current study seeks to investigate the relation between Investment Model (i.e., satisfaction, investment, perceived alternatives, and commitment) and dating violence victimization (i.e., sexual, psychological physical, and overall dating violence victimization) among Turkish college women. In Turkey, the Investment Model has been used to examine issues related to intimate relationships, such as the perception of religiosity and stereotypes about romantic relationships (Okutan and Büyükşahin-Sunal 2010), future time orientation in romantic relationships, love attitudes, and attachment (Büyükşahin and Hovardaoğlu 2007), and positive illusions in marriages and causality and responsibility attributions (Akbalık-Doğan and Büyükşahin-Sunal 2011), but not dating violence. Given the Turkish cultural context of intimate relationships, the relative importance of the relation between dating violence and satisfaction, investment, quality of alternatives, and commitment may differ from the pattern observed by Rhatigan and Street (2005). Thus, building on Rhatigan and Street, which is the only study to date of which we are aware that explicitly examined each type of dating violence in relation to the components of

commitment, the present study seeks to expand the findings to a different cultural context.

Firstly, we hypothesize, like Rhatigan and Street (2005), that there will be a negative correlation between satisfaction and victimization, and commitment and victimization. Secondly, when commitment is regressed on victimization and satisfaction, satisfaction will be positively related to commitment, leaving victimization non-significant, and thus will mediate the relationship between victimization and commitment (see Figure 1). Lastly, although Rhatigan and Street (2005) did not find a mediating role for investment or quality of alternatives, we remain open to the possibility that these may be relevant in the Turkish context. Given the strength of patriarchal values in Turkey, we expect alternatives and investment to also be important. Turkish college women who have engaged in any premarital sexual activity (vaginal or not) may feel they have no other alternatives, thus staying in the relationship and investing time, effort, and energy. Fewer perceived alternatives and greater investment (due to sexual involvement) may increase the likelihood of tolerating violence. Additionally, unlike Rhatigan and Street, we included sexual victimization in the present study. Because of the importance of virginity in Turkey, we expect that correlations between sexual victimization and the Investment Model may differ from those for physical and psychological victimization, although there is no current evidence to suggest that. Because we wanted to ensure that reports of victimization in the previous year refer to the same relationship as the Investment Model variables, we divided the sample into two groups based on duration of the relationship: one year and less or longer than one year. Only data from the latter were included in our test of the hypotheses.

Figure 1: Investment Model variables mediating the relationship between victimization and commitment



3. Method

3.1. Participants

Three hundred and ninety dating women from four state universities (distributed 63.8 percent, 15.6 percent, 12.3 percent, 7.7 percent, with 0.6 percent not specified) in Ankara voluntarily participated: 14 prep students (in preparatory classes; 3.6 percent), 82 first-years (21.0 percent), 146 sophomores (37.4 percent), 60 juniors (15.4 percent), 43 seniors (11.0 percent), 32 master's level (8.2 percent), and 13 doctoral level (3.3 percent). The mean age of the participants was 21.04 (SD = 2.16) with an age range between 17 and 30. Data for the study were collected during the fall and spring semesters of the 2010–2011 academic year. Surveys were administered to the participants during regular class hours after required permission had been obtained from the Human Subjects Ethics Committee (i.e., the institutional review board in Turkish universities) and course teachers. Classes in which data were collected included Introduction to Education, Educational Psychology, Classroom Management, Guidance, Principles of Kemal Ataturk, History of the Turkish Revolution, and Turkish, just to name a few. Clear instructions and information about the purpose of the study were given and anonymity and confidentiality were assured on the consent form. Participants were instructed not to involve partners/friends in the activity. It took the participants approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete the survey.

3.2. Data Collection Instruments

3.2.1. Demographic Information

A demographic information form was used to obtain the respondents' sex, age, university, year, and information related to their relationship characteristics (e.g., length of relationship in months, relationship status).

3.2.2. Dating Violence Victimization

Three subscales of the Turkish version (Turhan, Guraksin, and Inandi 2006) of the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al. 1996) were used to assess physical, sexual, and psychological victimization. Turhan, Guraksin, and Inandi (2006) used the forward translation/back-translation procedure to ensure the equivalency of the English and Turkish versions of the whole Revised CTS (CTS2). The results of the explanatory analyses of the whole scale were consistent with the original scale, revealing a multidimensional factor structure similar to the original one. The scale as a whole demonstrated satisfactory evidence of validity and reliability. For each item the respondents reported the frequency with which they experienced the event on an eight-point scale: 0 *(this has never happened)*, 1 *(once in past year)*, 2 *(twice in past year)*, 3 *(3 to 5 times in past year)*, 4 *(6 to 10 times in past year)*, 5 *(11 to 20 times in past year)*, 6 *(more than 20 times in past year)*, 7 *(not in the past year but has happened previously)*. The twelve-item Physical Assault Scale was used to measure physical dating violence victimization with items such as: "My partner threw something at me that could hurt" and "My partner slapped me." The analysis yielded an internal consistency of .91 for physical assault. The eight-item Psychological Aggression Scale was used to assess psychological dating violence victimization, and included items such as: "My partner shouted or yelled at me" and "My partner said something to spite me." Cronbach's alpha for the psychological aggression scale was .79. The seven-item Sexual Coercion Scale was used to measure sexual dating violence victimization. One of the items was about the use of condoms. The other six were related to verbal insistence (two items; one for vaginal, one for anal/oral sex), use of force (two items; one for vaginal, one for anal/oral sex), and the use of threats (two items; one for vaginal, one for anal/oral sex). Examples included "My partner insisted on sex when I did not want to (but did not use physical force)", "My partner used force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make me have sex," and "My partner used threats to make me have sex." In the present study Cronbach's alpha was .80.

The CTS subscales were scored in two ways. First, to determine the percentage of women experiencing each type of victimization, a dichotomous 0/1 prevalence variable was created to categorize whether or not sexual, physical, and psychological victimization had occurred during the past twelve months (Straus et al. 1996). Because we were interested in victimization during the previous year (in the last twelve months), we coded category 7 as 0, as recommended by Straus et al. (1996). For each subscale, responses were summed to create an index of degree of victimization in the past year. Higher scores indicate more victimization. Finally, an index of total victimization was

obtained by summing the sexual, physical, and psychological victimization scores.

3.2.3. The Investment Model

Büyükşahin, Hasta, and Hovardaoğlu (2005) adapted and evaluated the satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives subscales of Rusbult, Martz, and Agnew's (1998) Investment Model Scale (IMS) in terms of validity and reliability among Turkish university students. The commitment subscale was later translated by Büyükşahin and Taluy (2008). All the items make use of nine-point Likert scales with 1 indicating "disagree completely" and 9 indicating "agree completely." Satisfaction is defined as the number and magnitude of resources tied to a relationship, measured using a five-item scale. Items include "Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy, companionship, etc." and "My relationship is close to ideal." Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction. Investment is measured using a five-item scale that focuses on resources put into the relationship. Items include "I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end" and "Many aspects of my life have become linked to my partner (recreational activities), and I would lose all of this if we were to break up." Higher scores indicate greater investment. Quality of Alternatives is measured using a five-item scale and assesses perceptions of availability of other partners. Items include "The people other than my partner with whom I might become involved are very appealing" and "If I weren't dating my partner, I would do fine – I would find another appealing person to date." Higher scores indicate higher-quality alternatives. Commitment is measured using a seven-item scale that assesses commitment to the relationship. Items include "I want our relationship to last for a very long time" and "It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year." Higher scores indicate greater commitment. In the current study, Cronbach's alpha for satisfaction, quality of alternatives, investment, and commitment was .94, .85, .88, and .93, respectively.

4. Results

Analysis proceeded in three steps. First, we determined that there were no significant differences between the samples obtained at the different universities, and were thus able to collapse the data from all four universities for all analyses. We also assessed for age differences between victimized and non-victimized women, and found only one. The psychologically victimized group was younger, but the magnitude of the difference was small (eta squared = .04), thus age was not included in the analyses. The mean relationship duration was 16.6 months (*SD* = 18.18) with a range from 1 to 144 months, with only the psychologically victimized group having significantly longer relationships than the not psychologically victimized group, but the magnitude of the difference was small (eta squared = .01). For the purpose of testing the relations between the investment model variables and victimization, the sample was dichotomized on the basis of length of relationship, into shorter duration (0–12 months inclusive; n = 206, 52.8 percent) and longer duration (13 months or longer; n = 184, 47.2 percent). Second, descriptive statistics were computed, along with bivariate correlations between all variables. Third, for the women in the longer-duration group, we conducted a series of regression analyses to test the hypothesis that the relation between victimization and commitment was mediated by satisfaction, investment, and qualitative of alternatives, as predictors of sexual, physical, psychological, and overall victimization. Before performing regression analyses, we conducted a series of tests to assess whether the assumptions of linear regression were violated. Although the distributions for the Physical Assault and Sexual Coercion subscales were positively skewed, our sample size was sufficient to justify not performing a transformation (Hayes 2013). To handle missing data due to item non-response, we used the listwise deletion method, since the cases lost were less than 5 percent (Graham, Cumsille, and Elek-Fisk 2003).

4.1. Frequency of Victimization and Bivariate Relations among Variables

Table 1 presents a breakdown of each type of victimization, as well as patterns of co-occurrence for the total sample as well as for women in the shorter and longer relationship groups. Of 206 women whose relationship had lasted one year or less, 65 reported sexual victimization, (31.6 percent), 67 reported physical victimization (32.5 percent), and 139 reported psychological victimization (67.5 percent). There was also a pattern of significant co-occurrence between sexual and psychological victimization, $\chi 2 = 16.37$,

p <.001; sexual and physical victimization, $\chi 2 = 18.28$, p <.001; and psychological and physical victimization $\chi 2 = 23.57$, p <.001. For the short duration group, 35 (16.9 percent) experienced all three forms of victimization.

Of 184 dating women whose relationship had lasted longer than a year, 42 reported sexual victimization (22.8 percent), 68 reported physical victimization (37 percent), and 146 reported psychological victimization (79.3 percent). For longer-duration relationships the pattern of co-occurrence was less pronounced, with only psychological and physical victimization co- occurring, $\chi 2 = 4.34$, p <.05. For the long duration group, 19 (10.3 percent) experienced all three forms of victimization.

Table 1: Mean frequency and percentage of types of victimization in the past year (N=184)

	Total N=390			Shorter duration N=206			Longer duration N=184			
Type of victimization	*f (%)*	*M*	*SD*	*f (%)*	*M*	*SD*	*f (%)*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
None	20.51	–	–	25.73	–	–	14.67	–	–	–
Only sexual	2.82	3.50	2.01	3.88	2.71	1.79	1.63	5.33	1.15	–2.28*
Only physical	3.33	3.18	1.88	2.91	4.16	1.94	3.80	2.00	1.00	2.24*
Only psychological	31.53	4.51	3.94	27.18	3.94	3.75	36.41	4.98	3.77	–1.52
Physical and psychological but not sexual	17.18	16.13	15.65	12.62	10.95	6.63	22.28	19.17	18.47	–2.09*
Physical and sexual but not psychological	0.26	4.00	–	–	–	–	0.54	4.00	–	–
Sexual and psychological but not physical	10.51	9.48	5.64	10.68	8.89	6.19	10.32	10.60	4.50	-.76
Sexual and physical and psychological	13.85	40.31	32.06	16.99	44.93	36.55	10.32	31.93	20.15	1.31
Any	79.49	13.26	19.63	74.27	14.18	12.35	85.33	12.35	14.18	.78

*Note: *p*<.05
Frequency (M): The items in CTS-R were rated on an eight-point frequency scale (never, once, twice, three to five times, six to ten times, eleven to twenty times, more than twenty times, and not in the past year but did happen before. Category 7 (not in the past year but did happen before) was coded as 0, as suggested by Straus, since we wanted the victimization scores for the past twelve months. For the percentage, a 0/1 dichotomy was created.

Table 2 shows the bivariate correlations between all variables for the longer-duration group. As can be seen, all forms of victimization were significantly correlated (ranging from .24 to .75), with sexual victimization showing the weakest relation with physical and psychological. Correlations with total victimization suggest that all forms of abuse contributed to the total (for physical, $r = .93$; for psychological; $r = .90$, and for sexual, $r = .50$). Small but statistically significant correlations were found between the component variables of the Investment Model. Physical and psychological victimization, as well as total victimization, were significantly negatively correlated with satisfaction and commitment, but not correlated with investment or quality of alternatives. However, the correlations between sexual victimization and components of the Investment Model were non-significant.

Table 2: Descriptives and bivariate correlations among predictor and outcome variables for longer relationship duration (Ns from 172 to 184)

Variable	Possible range	Actual range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
sexual victimization (1)	0–42	0–20	1.00	.36**	.24**	.50**	-.14	-.07	.08	-.15
physical victimization (2)	0–72	0–60		1.00	.75**	.93**	-.21**	.07	.05	-.16*
psychological victimization(3)	0–48	0–48			1.00	.90**	-.35**	.08	.11	-.28**
total victimization (4)	0–162	0–108				1.00	–.28**	.06	.08	-.22**
satisfaction(5)	5–45	7–45					1.00	.42**	-.40**	.76**
investment(6)	5–45	5–45						1.00	.-35**	.60**
quality of alternatives (7)	5–45	5–45							1.00	-.58**
commitment (8)	7–63	15–63								1.00

Note: **p < .01; *p < .05

4.2. Evaluation of the Investment Model

The Investment Model, as proposed by Rusbult (1980, 1983), was tested for those women in the longer-duration subsample who reported at least one experience of victimization during the past year. The effects of predictors (satisfaction, investment, quality of alternatives) on commitment were examined.[1] As shown in Table 3, the model significantly predicted commitment, F (3, 163) = 128.19, p < .05 with R^2 = .70, indicating that 70 percent of the variance in commitment (M = 51.07; SD = 13.63) was predicted by satisfaction (M = 35.75; SD = 9.29), investment (M = 25.12; SD = 9.78), and alternatives (M = 19.75; SD = 10.38). Satisfaction, investment, and alternatives uniquely explained 20 percent, 6 percent, and 6 percent of the variance, respectively. According to standardized coefficients (β), there were significant positive relations between satisfaction and commitment (β = .52), and investment and commitment (β = .27). The association of alternatives to commitment remained significantly negative (β = -.27). Women in longer-duration relationships reported greater investment, t (1, 381) = 3.54, p < .05, fewer alternatives, t (1, 377) = 2.12, p < .05, and greater commitment, t (1, 369) = 2.98, p < .05, than women in shorter-duration relationships.

Table 3: Regression analysis summary for commitment, test of Investment Model (N=167)

Variable	*B*	*SEB*	ß	sr^2	*t*	*p*	*R*	R^2	*F*
							.84	.70	128.19*
Satisfaction	.77	.07	.52	20	10.53	.00*			
Investment	.38	.07	.27	6	5.61	.00*			
Alternatives	-.35	.06	-.27	6	–5.68	.00*			

Note: B = unstandardized regression coefficient; *SEB* = standard error of the unstandardized regression coefficient; ß = standardized regression coefficient; sr^2 = proportion of all the variance in the outcome variable associated with one predictor; R = the multiple correlation coefficient; R^2 = the proportion of variance in the outcome accounted for by the predictor variable(s); F ratio, whether the equation as a whole is statistically significant
* p < .001

1 We examined the alternative direction (commitment predicted victimization), and whether the relation was mediated by satisfaction, investment, or alternatives. The results were non-significant.

4.3. Relations between Investment Model Variables and Victimization

We tested the hypothesis that the relation between total victimization and commitment would be mediated by satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives, using steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986), using the subset of the sample that reported a current relationship of longer than a year. First, the test of the investment model (see above) confirmed that all three variables predicted commitment. Second, we documented that total victimization predicted commitment, F (1, 161) = 7.94, $p < .05$, with $R^2 = .05$, ($\beta = -.22$, $t = -2.82$, $p < .01$). Third, a regression analysis examining total victimization as a predictor of satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives revealed that only satisfaction was significantly predicted by total victimization, F (1, 161) = 13.50, $p < .05$, with $R^2 = .08$, ($\beta = -.28$, $t = -3.68$, $p < .01$). Thus, in the final step testing for mediation, we considered satisfaction as a mediator of the victimization-commitment relation. The final model was significant, F (2, 155) = 96.24, $p < .05$, with $R^2 = .55$, and satisfaction, $\beta = .74$, $t = 13.28$, $p = .001$, remained significant, indicating that satisfaction fully mediated the relation between total victimization and commitment. We repeated the same tests of mediation for each type of victimization. The same pattern was observed for psychological and physical victimization. For both forms of victimization, satisfaction fully mediated the relation between victimization and commitment. A Sobel test was performed to ascertain whether there was a significant decline in the relation between victimization and commitment when satisfaction was added as a mediator. Results revealed that satisfaction carried the influence of victimization ($z = 2.23$, $p < .05$ for overall victimization, $z = 2.97$, $p < .05$ for psychological victimization, and $z = -1.68$, $p < .10$ for physical victimization). However, sexual victimization, although negatively related to satisfaction ($p = .07$), was not related to commitment; therefore, we could not test for mediation. See Table 4 for a summary of all the regression analyses.

Table 4: Summary of mediation analyses with satisfaction as mediator between victimization within past year and commitment (Ns from 158 to 170)

		B	*SEB*	ß	R^2
	Total victimization and commitment				
Step 1	Total victimization	-.20	.07	-.22**	.05**
Step 2	Total victimization	-.00	.05	$-.00^{ns}$	
	Satisfaction	1.09	.08	.74***	.55***
	Sobel z = 2.23, p = .02				
	Psychological victimization and commitment				
Step 1	Psychological victimization	-.53	.14	-.28***	.08***
Step 2	Psychological victimization	-.02	.09	$-.01^{ns}$	
	Satisfaction	.90	.08	.61***	.65***
	Sobel z = 2.97, p = .00				
	Physical victimization and commitment				
Step 1	Physical victimization	-.30	.14	-.16*	.03*
Step 2	Physical victimization	.00	.09	$-.00^{ns}$	
	Satisfaction	1.12	.08	.76***	.57***
	Sobel z = –1.68, p = .09				

Note: B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SEB = standard error of the unstandardized regression coefficient; ß = standardized regression coefficient; R2 = the proportion of variance in the outcome accounted for by the predictor variable(s).
*** p < .001;**p < .01; *p < .05

5. Discussion

The present study revealed several significant aspects of dating violence among Turkish students. First, within longer-duration relationships (on average sixteen months up to survey date), a surprisingly high percentage of women (85.4 percent) had experienced at least one instance of dating violence, with psychological abuse being the most frequently experienced form (M = 6.21) (by over half the sample: 79.3 percent) and sexual victimization being the least frequently experienced (M = 1.12) (22.8 percent). Physical victimization was intermediate (M = 2.92, 37 percent). Second, the percentage of Turkish women who experienced some form of victimization was higher than typically reported in Western samples, especially for just the past twelve months rather than lifetime. For example, college women from ten European countries, Canada, and the United States reported physical victimization rates ranging from 12.7 percent (Sweden) to 31.5 percent (United Kingdom) and sexual victimization rates ranging from 9.2 percent (Netherlands) to 42 percent (Greece), in the previous twelve months (Chan et al. 2008). Similar to the present study, Toplu and Hatipoğlu-Sümer (2011) found a high percentage of women reporting psychological abuse in a Turkish sample (77.4 percent). Additionally, frequent co-occurrence of multiple forms of victimization was reported in the present study, adding to a growing literature arguing for explicit attention to co-occurrence (Smith, White, and Holland 2003; White 2009). The present study is the first to report on co-occurrence of victimization among Turkish college women, and the first to include psychological victimization in the examination of co-occurrence. Additionally, the results indicate that women who experienced physical victimization were also at increased risk of experiencing psychological abuse, although the data cannot tell us if the various forms of victimization occurred during the same event or on different occasions during the relationship.

The present study confirms the validity of the Investment Model among Turkish college women. As hypothesized, satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives predicted commitment, increasing our confidence in using the model to understand dating violence among Turkish college women. In the present study, we examined the Investment Model and victimization among only the subset of women who reported a current relationship lasting longer than one year, in order to ensure that the ratings of the Investment Model variables were associated with the perpetrator of the abuse. Our results did not fully replicate those of Rhatigan and Street (2005). Whereas they found a positive relation between investment and psychological abuse and a negative association between investment and physical abuse, we did not. However, like Rhatigan and Street (2005), the present study found that both forms of victimization were negatively associated with satisfaction, which mediated the relation between commitment and both psychological and physical victimization, as well as total victimization. We had expected that sexual victimization would also be related to commitment, as well as to satisfaction, investment, and quality of alternatives. However, it was not. It is possible that although a substantial percentage of the sample experienced sexual victimization, the mean frequencies were too low to detect the expected relations. Additionally, the measure of sexual victimization included both verbally coerced and physically forced sexual victimization. Hence, the degree of specificity may have been inadequate to uncover a relation between sexual victimization and various aspects of investment in a relationship.

6. Limitations of the Study and Future Directions

The present study had several limitations. First, the data were based on retrospective self-reporting. Participants were asked to remember dating violence occurrence within the past year, with the risk of memory distortion. Moreover, there is the risk of respondents concealing certain information. Secondly, the sample was a convenience sample (undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the four universities in Ankara, Turkey). Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable or may be generalizable only to this population. Thirdly, although the results of the Sobel test indicated that satisfaction mediated the victimization/commitment relationship, the p-value for physical victimization did not reach the standard .05 level. This could be due to an inadequate sample size (the Sobel test works best with large samples) or it is possible that for physical victimization other factors, such as fear, might also mediate the relationship. Further research is recommended to explore this possibility. Finally, the study is

cross-sectional/correlational in nature. Therefore, one cannot infer causality or establish temporal ordering from the findings. However, neither the Investment Model nor other theories of dating violence hypothesize that level of commitment would alter the risk of victimization. Additionally, preliminary analyses exploring the possibility that commitment might predict victimization indicated that this is unlikely, strengthening a tentative conclusion that victimization leads to less commitment as a result of less satisfaction in the relationship. However, longitudinal research will be necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the victimization/commitment relation.

Despite these limitations, the results add to the growing literature that has adopted the framework of the Investment Model to understand various facets of abusive relationships. This approach is promising for Turkish samples as well, given that the Investment Model appears valid for Turkish samples. There is a lack of literature regarding dating violence in Turkey and no application of a relational perspective. Hence, our findings provide a foundation for additional studies. Future studies should extend the current findings by examining relationship termination. Rhatigan, Street, and Axsom (2006) have argued that the Investment Model may be one of the best theoretical frameworks for assisting victims of intimate partner violence and understanding factors associated with relationship termination. Based on the results of the present study, we suggest the possibility that the dissatisfaction women experience as a result of victimization would increase the chances of terminating the relationship. However, whether this would happen in dating relationships in Turkish culture, as has been documented in Western ones, remains to be determined. The cultural pressures on Turkish women to stay in even unsatisfactory relationships may be too strong for them to leave. Leaving the relationship may result in social sanctions due to sexual double standards applying to male and female sexuality and virginity.

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Women, Violence, and Social Change in Northern Ireland and Chiapas: Societies Between Tradition and Transition

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Violence against women occurs in peacetime, intensifies during wartime, and continues in the aftermath of armed conflict. Women sometimes make gains during conflict and their efforts to break the pattern of violence have led to a greater awareness of gender-based violence. However, a lack of acknowledgement of transformations in gender identity at the macro-level during peace processes may create conflict in intimate partnerships. This study brings to light the complexity of changes occurring during peace processes in a multi-level analysis of women's perceptions and positioning towards the state, their community, and their intimate partnership. This comparative analysis of fifty-seven female activists' narratives from Chiapas and Northern Ireland demonstrates how a one-dimensional peace process (Northern Ireland) can limit the space for addressing women's concerns, while peace processes that transcend the ethno-national dimension of conflict (Chiapas) can open a dialogue on issues of contention in male-female relationships.

> My husband was in prison and he is an alcoholic now. And after [he came out of prison] his life has changed quite a lot. Being a woman, an activist and a mother, my life is taking on other roles now. I'm actually a bit of a buffer, you know between the kids and that alcoholism, you know. And it's not even just me; you know that has happened in so many other families too.
>
> Maire, Republican community activist, Northern Ireland[1]

> By learning and organizing we are moving forwards. It will never be the same again once you learned new things, once you experienced that you are of great value for the community. Men do not understand all that we have in our heart at once, but bit by bit they also learn and understand.
>
> Odelia, indigenous women's rights activist from Chol community, Chiapas[2]

Feminist literature on ethno-national conflict often highlights an increase in domestic violence in the aftermath of wars as proof for unequal gender structures in post-conflict developments (Turshen 2001, Alison 2007). Although it is of great importance to highlight failures of peace processes, it is also important to recognize shifts in beliefs which have occurred during the conflict. Many ethno-national conflicts have included women's voices and brought women's concerns from the private into the public realm (Kampwirth 2004), leading to changes in traditional gender roles and perceptions (Hoewer 2011). This article asks how changes in gender identity occurring during conflict are translated into peace processes and in what way more or less successful translations impact on contention in intimate partnerships. It does so by looking in a comparative fashion at the way in which changes in gender and ethnic identity feature in women's perceptions of the state, the community, and the micro-level (intimate partnerships) of society. The analysis shows that while ethno-national resistance communities have been central spaces for gender and ethnic identity change during conflict, these spaces can become limited depending on the way in which the resis-

1 Interview, 8 March 2010, Belfast, page 15, line 3ff. In order to comply with research ethics and protect the identity of the participants, all participants' names have been altered.

2 Focus group/workshop organised in collaboration with the peace organisation SERAPAZ and the human rights organisation Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Pedro de la Nada, 13 and 14 July 2010, Ocosingo, Chiapas (Mexico), page 31.

tance movement reengages with the state in conflict settlement processes. The failure to acknowledge the intersection of changes in ethnic and gender identity precludes a comprehensive understanding of the contentious dynamics in the private sphere after episodes of armed conflict.

The male-female power imbalance is inarguably fundamental to gender-based violence in situations of peace and conflict, though the motivation and meaning of gender-based violence are different in war and peacetime (Pillay 2001, 35ff.). Violence against women during armed conflict is usually reflective of existing pre-conflict patterns of violence (Rehn and Johnson Sirleaf 2002) that are often overlooked in overall studies on ethno-national mobilizations. The neglect of gendered perspectives and experiences of conflict in both academic research and policy-making prevents intimate partner violence and violence prevention from being addressed adequately in peace treaties and in conceptualizations of security in the aftermath of armed conflict.

Historically, gender-based violence has not been addressed adequately in the legal framework of war. The 1949 Geneva Convention and the 1977 Additional Protocol acknowledge sexual violence against women in times of war not as a "grave breach" but only as a "lesser abuse." Only in the 1990s was violence against women acknowledged as a distinct war crime by the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (1993) and for Rwanda (1994). Additionally, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (2002) recognizes sexual violence as a war crime and a crime against humanity. Global grassroots and transnational initiatives on women's rights and gender equality have been instrumental in addressing violence against women and in bringing the issue into policy agendas in the 1990s, particularly evident at the Fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing (1995) and in the 1994 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. An important shift in the international agenda acknowledging the different experiences men and women have during conflict occurred in 2000, when the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security was passed, followed by Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960. This new international framework on women, peace, and security highlights the need to protect women from violence. Moreover, it calls for the inclusion of women and their different gendered experiences and perspectives in political decision-making (United Nations Security Council 2013). By doing so, the framework acknowledges women's agency and emphasizes the importance of women's participation in connection with ending gender-based violence as central elements of peace-building.

However, despite the advancing international discourse on addressing gender-based violence against women, both in general and in situations of armed conflict, many questions remain regarding how women's perspectives are addressed in the aftermath of armed conflict. In particular, it is important to understand which processes and structures contribute to an increase in intimate partner violence post-conflict and when conflict empowers women to refuse to accept violence from partners.

Studies of domestic and sexual violence in the transition from conflict to peace (UNHCR 2007; Oosterfeld 1996) fulfil the important purpose of bringing women and women's issues onto the agenda. However, they conflate women and children into a single category (Freedman 2012, 124) and portray women as silent victims or survivors of abuse. The focus on sexual violence has a disempowering function as it fails to take into consideration women's agency and changes in gender and ethnic identity developed during conflict.

Academic literature often highlights the way ethno-national movements fail to value women's contribution to the struggle in the aftermath of armed conflict, which sees the return of conventional conceptions of femininity, masculinity, and gender relations (Yuval-Davis 1997; Yuval Davis and Anthias 1989), a backlash against women's "newfound freedoms" (Meintjes, Pillay, and Turshen 2001, 12), and the intensification of violence against women. Post-conflict strategizing about gender based violence is left to non-governmental women's agencies, and the training of new police forces, the development of a new judiciary and of a new criminal code typically ignore women's perspectives and perpetuate the presumption that masculinized violence is natural (Enloe 2002). To address violent gender patterns in a holistic way, we need to understand

the way in which the construction of nationhood involves specific notions of both "manhood" and "womanhood" (Yuval Davis 1997, 1). However, we also need to acknowledge that ethno-national conflict often also leads to changes in social norms and ethno-national identity that encourage violence against women through the inclusion of women and demands for women's rights into ethno-national protest agendas (Kampwirth 2004; Hoewer 2011).

Collective identity narratives from Northern Ireland and Chiapas reveal that ethno-national conflicts, in the sense of social mobilization processes based on the triggering of ethno-national solidarity and demands for group rights,[3] provide a space for breaking patterns of gender-based violence by constructing new gender images though the active participation of women in those processes. However, those same changes collide with the masculinized legacy of war that often determines peace processes at the macro-level of society.

This article sets out to bring to light the complexity of changes in both perceptions and positioning of women in peace and conflict processes, and in particular to contribute a deeper understanding of the connection between the peace process in the public sphere (state and community) and its impact on intimate partnerships. It examines the way in which changes in women's perceptions and positioning during armed conflict have been translated into peace processes, by analyzing female activists' stories of peace in Northern Ireland and in Chiapas. These reveal the extent to which a failure to acknowledge changes in gender perceptions in policy-making creates conflict in intimate relationships in the aftermath of armed conflict.

1. Methodology

This article presents findings from a research project on gendered perspectives of identity change during episodes of ethno-national conflict and in conflict settlement processes in Chiapas and Northern Ireland (Hoewer 2011), which received ethical approval of the Human Research Ethics Committee at University College Dublin.

I position myself as a female academic activist from a white western background and a strong advocate of social justice and human rights, in particular women's rights. Based on my awareness of my own background, I acknowledge my otherness regards my ethno-national identity, my class, my age, my sexual orientation, my experiences et cetera in comparison to the female activists from Chiapas and Northern Ireland. I met many of the female activists who took part in this research while working on peace, human rights, and social justice projects in Chiapas (July 2002 to December 2002 and October 2004 to June 2005) and in Ireland (Republic and Northern Ireland; ongoing since 2005). The snowball method was used in order to enlarge the sample. I contacted all participants personally; before the interview, I informed them about the study and its aims and obtained their written informed consent. I was the only person who extracted themes from the data.

The qualitative approach of this project facilitates an "in-depth understanding of historical processes and individual motivation" (della Porta 2008, 202) through the analysis of semi-structured interviews. Open-ended questions on the ways in which women became involved in social movements and on the meaning of this involvement for them provided for the inclusion of maximum variety. The length of the interviews and focus groups, all of which I conducted, transcribed, and translated, varies from one hour to a focus group discussion organized as a two day workshop.

The different circumstances in Chiapas and Northern Ireland required different field research approaches; while the field research in Northern Ireland focused on field observation and the organization of individual interviews, the data gathering process in Chiapas additionally included two focus groups organized as active participative workshops

3 For a more detailed definition of ethno-national conflict see for instance: *John Coakley, Nationalism, Ethnicity and the State: Making and Breaking Nations* (London: Sage, 2012); Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations* (London: Sage, 1997).

with and for female indigenous human rights, peace, and women's rights activists. The first workshop was rather informal and lasted five hours, the second was organized as a two day-event in collaboration with the peace organisation SERAPAZ and the Fray Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada human rights centre, and with the support of the women's rights centre Centro de los Derechos de la Mujer de Chiapas. It enabled women from Zapatista communities to participate in the research without jeopardizing their own safety and the safety of their communities. Challenges in organizing the focus groups included high illiteracy levels among indigenous female participants, most of whom have not learned to read or write, and the practical and methodological problem of choosing a common language for the workshop.[4] We addressed the "language problem" by using indigenous interpreters and ensured that both languages, Tseltal and Spanish, were given the same space. In order to avoid the written word within the workshop, we focused on visual and oral methods such as art work and the theatre of the oppressed (Boal 1979). Both the art work (a mapping exercise) and the development of theatre plays were based on facilitated story-telling sessions; they were followed by discussions of both process and outcome (visual maps and theatre plays).

Both interviews and focus groups enabled female activists to share their story as member of a social movement, to connect their experiences of womanhood and of being part of a socioeconomic and culturally marginalized community. Their collective identity narratives (Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe 2004) reveal the ways in which ethnic and gender identity change in conflict situations, and the impact these changes have on women's everyday lives during conflict settlement processes in Northern Ireland and Chiapas.

1.1. Case Study Approach

A two-case comparative historical study, examining the intersection of formation and change in gender and ethnic identity during different episodes of mobilisation and demobilization processes in Chiapas and Northern Ireland, allows maximum variance along relevant dimensions (gender and ethnic identity) and exploration of the different ways in which those dimensions intersect in episodes of peace and conflict.. Comparing Chiapas and Northern Ireland provides cases with different contexts but which follow similar mechanisms of mobilisation and demobilization (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001), but lead to different outcomes.

The Northern Ireland conflict has witnessed a longer duration of violent confrontation and a greater number of casualties, over 3,500 deaths since the start of the Troubles in 1969.[5] By comparison, the Chiapas conflict began on 1 January 1994 with twelve days of intense violence, which led to between 145 (official government figure) and 1,000 deaths[6] (according to the Zapatistas) and continuing tension between the Zapatista movement and the Mexican Government, often described as "low intensity war", after the failed settlement between Zapatistas and government post-1997. Although armed resistance organizations developed in both cases, the size, tactic, and aims of the organizations during the mobilisation phase differed. In both cases, armed ethno-national resistance arose out of previous episodes of contention with a social justice focus (the Zapatista movement out of the land rights struggle in Chiapas and the post-1969 Republican mobilisation in Northern Ireland out of the civil rights movement), and in parallel to different women's activisms. The implementation of a negotiated agreement has been successful in Northern Ireland, while in Chiapas the peace agreement was only partially implemented and central issues remain unsolved. Although mediation and negotiation processes took place in both cases, the terms of the agreements differ: while the peace process in Northern Ireland centres on the establishment of a power-sharing government, recognition of indigenous autonomy and the reversal of neoliberal socio-economic processes are at the centre of the peace

4 The first language of thirteen of the fifteen participants was Tseltal; some did not speak or did not want to speak Spanish, as they felt this would reproduce existing ethnic power hierarchies.

5 Martin Melaugh, Draft List of Deaths Related to the Conflict in 2008, http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/violence/deaths2008draft.htm.

6 SIPAZ, Brief History of the Conflict in Chiapas: 1994-2007, http://www.sipaz.org/crono/proceng.htm.

negotiations in Chiapas. Furthermore, the different geographical location of the two cases leads to a distinct impact of the regional and international sphere. However, both cases share a history of colonization and the development of a settler society, although Northern Ireland and Chiapas vary significantly with regard to ethno-national cleavages, levels of marginalization, and culture.

This research does not attempt to present a representative sample of contemporary peace and conflict processes, but aims to expand theories to reach an analytical, rather than a statistical generalization (Yin 1984, 21). Even though Chiapas and Northern Ireland are only two specific cases, we can draw interesting lessons from the way women engage in, and are affected by, similar mechanisms in different contexts.

1.2. Participants' Characteristics

Interviews with seventeen female activists from Northern Ireland were conducted in Belfast and Derry in February and March 2010. In Chiapas, I conducted interviews with twenty-two female activists and organised two focus group discussions (one with fifteen and one with five) in San Cristobal de las Casas, in Ocosingo in the Altos (mountain) region, and in a small village in the Selva (rain forest) region from June to August 2010. Due to access constraints, all participants from Northern Ireland came from an urban background, while in Chiapas the sample includes fifteen mestiza ("mixed race") women from a mainly urban background and twenty-seven female indigenous activists from rural communities. The length of the interviews varied from one hour to focus-group discussions organized as two-day workshop sessions. I conducted all interviews in English and Spanish and translated them. In the focus groups, indigenous translators were used to interpret from Tzeltal (indigenous language) into Spanish.

In Northern Ireland, the sample included members of the civil rights movement (1967/68), the Republican movement (from 1969), and various women's rights initiatives (post-1968/69). My research in Chiapas is informed by female activists from various peasants' organizations,[7] women's organizations,[8] and peace and human rights organizations.[9] Although it was not possible to conduct interviews in autonomous Zapatista communities due to the political tensions at the time, twenty female activists who participated in this research identified as "Zapatistas".

In order to facilitate comparison, the research includes only narratives of women who have been actively involved in social mobilisation processes against unequal power structures. However, women's experiences of conflict and peace cannot be seen in isolation from men's experiences and, indeed of other women not actively involved in mobilisation processes. The choice was informed by time and resource constraints and guided by the research question, which asked about changes in social positioning and perceptions of women during social mobilization processes and in the post-conflict period.

1.3. Data Analysis

Description, analysis, and interpretation (Wolcott 1994) were at the core of the analysis of the qualitative research data gathered during the field research. The descriptive approach allows the women's voices to speak for themselves and the women to actively engage in producing meaning for the roles and positions they occupy (Skeggs 1994, 2). In the second stage, the data analysis, common themes in the narratives were identified and systematized. This research inductively ascertains the principles of classification and identification that inform the different ways in which the research participants make sense of themselves and their environment. In other words, it examines how the research participants ascribe value and meaning to the different social identity categories, how they draw the boundaries between "us" and "other" through the analysis of both the content of ethnic, gender, and other boundaries and the interrelation of those different boundary processes.

7 including CIOAC (Central Independiente de Obreros Agrícolas y Campesinos), UNORCA (Unión Nacional de Organizaciones Regionales Campesinas Autónomas), and the ARIC-independiente (Asociación Rural de Interés Colectivo)

8 including Centro de los Derechos de la Mujer de Chiapas and the Diocesan Commission for Woman (CODIMUJ) in San Cristobal de las Casas

9 including SERAPAZ and the Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada, both located in Ocosingo

2. Findings from the Interviews

All participants were asked to talk about themselves, the way they got involved in different social movements, and what this involvement meant to them. The following section provides a short introduction to the different contexts followed by a presentation of the content of the collective identity narratives from Northern Ireland and Chiapas. It concludes with an analysis of central similarities and differences evolving from the narratives in a comparative fashion.

2.1. Post-conflict Contention in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's latest episode of armed conflict began in 1969, after the civil rights mobilizations, and officially ended with the Good Friday Agreement (Belfast Agreement), signed in Belfast on 10 April 1998 (Good Friday) by the British and Irish governments and endorsed by most Northern Ireland political parties. However, the region has a long history of ethno-national conflict, which reaches back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and is based on contentious "systems of relationships" that produced "a set of differences, a structure of dominance, dependence and inequality and a tendency towards communal division" (Ruane and Todd 1996, 144–45). Both symbolic differences and unequal power structures are at the same time of ethno-national, class and gendered nature. The position of women in Northern Ireland is entangled with both religious and national identity (Ryan and Ward 2004), central lines of division run between Catholics (Irish – Nationalist – Republican) and Protestants (British – Unionist – Loyalist).

2.1.1. Transformed Gender Images and Resistance to Change in Intimate Partnerships

As former IRA volunteers, both Aoibhin, a former IRA activist and community activist, and her husband have served time in prison, but this experience has shaped their lives differently. Aoibhin believes that while women moved on after leaving the prison environment, men who have been interned for many years face challenges in settling back into society. Men expect to return to the normality they knew before the conflict, which requires women to fall back into their traditional pre-conflict role: to stay home, raise the children, and make the tea. But Aoibhin does not want to go back to her traditional role; her normality has changed during the conflict. Balancing her time between a full-time job, her community activism, and her family is difficult for Aoibhin. However, her role in the community has strengthened her self-confidence and independence and changed her self-perception as a woman.

Like Aoibhin, all respondents who became actively involved in social movements during the conflict in Northern Ireland cherish the independence and empowerment they gained through their involvement. However, many of them (9 of 17), in particular women who are actively involved in their community, reveal in their narratives that many men perceive those changes in gender perceptions and gender roles as threatening. Female activists (7 of 17) report that their active involvement in the community had required adjustments in the home; the different experiences, perceptions, and expectations of men and women make it hard for a marriage to survive in the post-1998 period. Many marriages break down, as women are not prepared to return to the pre-conflict status quo and to their traditional roles as wives and mothers within the home. Like Aoibhin, many respondents (7 of 17) highlight that men do not cope well with the changes in their private life. A new normality for women, visible in changing gender roles and perceptions, has been described as a central characteristic of the turbulences of the post-conflict environment in Northern Ireland. The absence of appropriate mechanisms for addressing experiences and changes during conflict leads to behaviours detrimental to health. Many collective identity narratives refer to post-conflict alcohol problems of men and contentious intimate relationships as symptoms of both "the invisible wounds people get through the struggle" but also of the "unresolved issue of gender inequality".[10]

10 Interview, 26 March 2010, Belfast, page 3, lines 25/26, page 5, lines 10–14, page 9, line 13, page 10, line 15.

When outlining the challenges resulting from the contentious intimate relationships, respondents express concerns about the increase in domestic abuse and in the workload of women (5 of 17). They emphasize that despite the increasing involvement of women in the public sphere, household duties and childcare remain predominantly the responsibility of women. While two female activists refer to slow changes, evident in some husbands taking on more tasks in the home, they also speak of other men reacting with violence to changes in the private realm.

Women often refer to traditional gender images when highlighting the division of public-male and private-female sphere, such as: "Women staying at home, making the dinner, and raising the children, while men bring in the salary and make decisions in the community."[11] Those traditional images still inform policy-making in Northern Ireland; they penetrate and compete with changes all interview participants experienced in gender perceptions and in their roles at both the community and the micro-level. The competition between old and new gender images becomes visible in an increase in hostility to those changes.

2.1.2. Gendered Structures and Symbolic Boundaries in the Public Sphere

In the course of the peace process, the perception of the state has changed for most activists who fought against the Northern Irish state (9 of 17); they describe the new situation as liberating as they do no longer have to hide or fight for their Irishness. Within this context, the meaning of security for many women has shifted from concerns about the survival of the community to emphasizing socio-economic inequality, domestic violence, and the struggle for gender equality within and beyond the borders of the community. Many activists (12 of 17) report that the start of the peace process opened different spaces for addressing women's concerns, in a changing political environment marked by the ceasefires and increased self-confidence of women and awareness about women's issues. For all female Republican respondents, a new feeling of communality marked the first episode of the peace process, a grey zone in which compromises could be found based on the respect and equal acceptance of individuals from different sides of the divide. In order to "make peace work, Republican women moved out of their comfort zone (…), from the black and white us versus them [to an] us and them"[12] perception of Northern Irish society. Women from Republican communities now had the possibility to highlight "women's demands" in their activism. This connected them to women with similar demands outside their community boundary and allowed alliances to be built with women across the divide. Their shared aim was to include women's voices and experiences in a meaningful way in the peace process. For Bairbre, a feminist women's rights activist it was "a moment in time where people felt that this might work".[13] Evidence for this perception was found in the coming together of grassroots women with what she describes as "more traditional women's groups"[14] to create a women' party for the peace talks, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (NIWC).[15]

However, the reaffirmation of the ethno-national boundary in the formal peace talks (1996–98) shifted the emphasis away from women's issues, increased divisions between women, and hence limited those opportunities. According to Niamh, a feminist Republican community activist:

> The start of the peace process would have been the kind of chance [to] start combining feminism and Republicanism more actively. (...) The priority here was always the war, the military movement and I felt like I wasn't part of the movement. But at the start of the peace process my feminism and my Republicanism finally came together. And then what happened was that Sinn Fein were excluded from the talks, so my campaign then became, to get Sinn Fein at the talks, not even around what they were going to do in the talks, but just even to get them there. So, my demands got really reduced there.[16]

11 Interview, 8 March, page 7, line 6 ff. Visible also in other interviews with female community activists, conducted on 8, 9, 24, 26, 30 March, and 7 May, 2010.

12 Interview, 7 May 2010, Belfast, page 5, lines 38/39, page 24, lines 32/33, 39/40.

13 Interview, 30 March 2010, Belfast, page 18, lines 28–31.

14 Interview, 30 March 2010, Belfast, page 14, lines 14–16

15 The NIWC promoted "inclusion, equality, and human rights" and involved women from both sides of the ethno-national divide. See: Kate Fearon, *Women's Work: The Story of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition* (Belfast: Blackstaff, 1999).

16 Interview, 24 March 2010, Belfast, page 2, line 3ff.

All of the respondents identifying as part of the Republican movement (11 of 17) feel a sense of entitlement to leadership positions as they secured the survival of their communities during the conflict. However, some women actively involved in the community sector (5 of 11) feel that men returning to the community after imprisonment started to compete with them for leadership positions and paid community jobs. Aideen, a community activist, says:

> If you look at any of the community groups they started from volunteers, from women volunteering whether it was a playgroup, putting a playgroup together and doing a wee summer scheme, having a Christmas party or whatever. They got bigger and bigger, but as soon as funding came, money being paid, (…) men came in and took those positions.[17]

While contention in the private realm during the peace process features prominently in the narratives of women involved in social mobilization processes in Northern Ireland, collective identity stories from Chiapas highlight this process as space for finding ways of resolving the conflict in the private sphere.

2.2. Tangible Transformations in Chiapas

The uprising of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in Chiapas on 1 January 1994 brought to light the marginalization of indigenous culture in Mexican nationalism and Mexico's settler society, which are dominated by the mestizos and culture of mestizaje.[18] After a short period of armed conflict, the peace accords of San Andres signed by representatives of the EZLN and of the Mexican government on 16 February 1996 granted autonomy, recognition, and rights to the indigenous population of Mexico – but were never fully implemented by the Mexican state. Women's concerns, in particular those of indigenous women, featured prominently during the conflict, in the negotiation process, and in the post-agreement episode, evident in the institutionalization of the Revolutionary Women's Law,[19] discriminating between "good" and "bad" community traditions.[20] The period after the peace negotiation is marked by the absence of armed confrontation between the EZLN and governmental forces, the increased institutionalization of indigenous autonomy (Leyva Solano and Burguete Cal y Mayor 2007), and the continuing development of international Zapatismo (Olesen 2005), as an alliance between indigenous, mestiza, and global Zapatista activists. Further, the period after the agreement in 1996 was marked by violence on the one side, for instance the violent attack by right wing paramilitaries on the Christian pacifist group Las Abejas in Acteal in 1997 (FRAYBA 1998; SIPAZ 2009), and by peaceful protest, such as the march for indigenous dignity in 2001.

2.2.1. Transformed Gender Perceptions and Intimate Partnerships

Marga, an indigenous women's rights and Zapatista activist, feels that her relationship to her husband has changed significantly as result of the Zapatista mobilization. Having escaped the indigenous tradition of forced marriage as a young girl by joining the Zapatista movement, she believes that her personal progress is intertwined with the changes in her father's and husband's gender perceptions. She describes the process of her husband adapting to her changed gender images in their intimate partnership as challenging; first he was unfaithful and beat her when she complained about his "macho lifestyle".[21] However, the gender equality rule in the Zapatista movement made it easier for changes in gender images and structures to become a part of normality, and her work on women's rights provided her with the strength to stand up to her husband. Through dialogue they were able to address contentious issues and create a power balance in their relationship; her husband is no longer violent and fears most that she sees him as too uneducated and will leave him.

17 Interview, 8 March, Belfast, page 6, lines 1–6.

18 Mestizaje is the process of racial and cultural miscegenation which began during the Spanish conquest; about 90 percent of the Mexican population is now considered *mestizo* (Gutierrez 1995, 161).

19 The Revolutionary Women's Law of 1993 comprises ten demands, including the right of indigenous women to political participation and leadership positions, the right to a life free of sexual and domestic violence, the right to decide how many children to have and to raise, the right to a fair salary, the right to choose a marriage partner, and the right to good health and education services. For further details see: Shannon Speed, R. Aída Hernández Castillo, and Lynn M. Stephen , eds., *Dissident Women: Gender and Cultural Politics in Chiapas* (Austin: University of Texas, 2006), 3ff. It was expanded to thirty-one demands in 1996. Lutz Kerkeling, *La Lucha Sigue! EZLN – Ursachen und Entwicklungen des Zapatistischen Aufstands* (Münster: UNRAST, 2003), 148.

20 The meaning of tradition as used in this article evolved from the perspectives of the interview participants.

21 Interview, 17 July 2010, San Cristobal de las Casas, page 7, lines 18/19.

Carmen, an indigenous women's rights and Zapatista activist, feels that the relationship with her husband has been transformed from one dominated by violence into one based on "calmness and understanding".[22] Her husband now understands that Carmen is her own person and not his property. She describes how their relationship improved once he began to support her and help with housework and childcare when she went to training sessions and community events. Carmen refers to a better understanding amongst men for the situation of women and their needs as a central outcome of their involvement in the Zapatista movement and of her women's rights work.

Many indigenous activists (19 of 27) say that contention arose initially in private relationships as indigenous men were caught between old, male-dominated, and new, transformed community traditions. They highlight challenges for men in adapting to these changes; transformed community traditions "take power and control away" from men as they aim for gender equality and make violence against women a crime, and for instance "beating women to educate them" an inappropriate behaviour.[23] That way they refect a changed normality. While many accounts of change in women's positioning and perceptions (referred to by 12 of 27 respondents) reveal male anxiety, confusion, and lack of self-confidence, women also mention an increased "understanding" among men of the need to change community traditions that support gender-based violence.[24] For instance, whereas indigenous men carrying their children was considered inappropriate in the public domain before the social mobilization process, it now forms a part of the new post-conflict normality. This is particularly true of Zapatista communities, where men taking care of their offspring while their wives perform public duties has become a part of normal community life.[25]

The reported improvement in male-female intimate relationships evolves from an increase in dialogue on changing community traditions and gender roles encouraged by the Zapatista movement in many indigenous communities.[26] In the private realm this dialogue fosters an understanding between husbands and wives of their different experiences, and of changes in gender roles. For many female activists, men's understanding of women's changed perceptions of their role in the community and in the family is central to the transformation and reconstruction of male-female relationships. Within this context, it is seen as essential for men to acknowledge that the traditional positioning of men and women in society is unequal and unjust. The post conflict dialogue between men and women on community traditions has helped many women to transform their relationships with their husbands.

2.2.2. Gendered Structures and Symbolic Boundaries in the Public Sphere

A re-engagement with the state in the peace negotiations (1995–96) and in the dialogue with the PAN (Party of National Action) government of President Vicente Fox in 2001 has led to a national dialogue on indigenous peoples' autonomy and strengthened women's belief in the peaceful transformation of unequal power structures. Indigenous women are proud about leading the way and feel encouraged in their activism for women's gender interests by the support of both male and female comrades. Many indigenous women (20 of 27) feel that the new forms of women's participation are stepping stones on the way to greater gender, ethnic, and class equality. In order to overcome remaining distinctions, such as mestiza (mixed race)/indigenous, Zapatista/non-Zapatista, women feel that they need these distinctions first to be acknowledged. "Being aware of where women come from"[27] is important when working with and for other women. New community rules or traditions highlight the increasing role of men in the

22 Interview, 28 June 2010, San Cristobal de las Casas.

23 Interview, 17 June 2010, Ocosingo, page 11, lines 22/23.

24 For instance Marga's interview, 17 July 2010, San Cristobal de las Casas, page 7, lines 18/19, but also the focus group discussions held in a community in the Selva region (which cannot be named due for security reasons), 7 July 2010, and in Ocosingo, 13 and 14 July 2010.

25 Interviews with female community activists, San Cristobal de las Casas, 28 June and 2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 17, 19 July; focus group discussions in the Selva region, 7 July 2010; focus group discussions in Ocosingo,13 and 14 July 2010.

26 Interviews with female community activists, San Cristobal de las Casas, 28 June and 2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 17, 19 July; focus group discussions in the Selva region, 7 July 2010; focus group discussions in Ocosingo,13 and 14 July 2010.

27 Interview with Cristina, mestiza community and women's rights activist, 19 July 2010, San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas.

home and of women in community leadership; intimate partner violence is prosecuted as a criminal act that disturbs the internal peace of the community.[28] Reflecting on the time before their active involvement in social mobilization processes, Marga and many other indigenous women often refer to their lives being dominated by bad traditions, which lead to them being triply discriminated: as female, indigenous, and poor.[29] They distinguish the bad traditions from new ones enshrined in the Revolutionary Women's Law and its principles. Bad traditions include the idea that the woman is property of the man and his family, as evident in the practice of selling girls into marriage. Another aspect of such bad community rules is control of the woman through the use of violence, in the community and in particular in the private setting.

3. Absent Adaptations and Transparent Transitions in Peace Processes: A Comparative Perspective

Changes in self-identification of female activists and in their positioning towards the state, the community, and the home are revealed in the understanding of normality in their narratives. The comparative analysis of collective identity narratives from Northern Ireland and Chiapas provide interesting insights into the way identity change and structural change during ethno-national conflict are translated into post-conflict processes. Comparing the two cases in a multi-levelled analysis reveals how peace processes at the macro-level of society impact on intimate partner relations and illustrates in particular how the absence of the acknowledgement of changes in gender identity at the macro-level of peace processes can lead to contentious male-female relationships and to an increase in intimate partner violence.

3.1. The Peace Process in the Private Realm

In their narratives, women from Northern Ireland and Chiapas reveal how the political peace process at the macro level impacts on their private lives. In both cases, changed female self-perceptions compete with remaining traditional male-dominated gender concepts at the macro-level of political decision-making. However, the two cases differ in the way this competition is addressed and consequently in the distinct impact those changes have on intimate male-female relationships.

In Northern Ireland, political decision-making is dominated by the perspectives of those men who directly participated in the conflict and marked by the underrepresentation of the experiences women share of structural and physical violence associated with the armed conflict and its aftermath (Gallagher, Hamber, and Joy 2012, 71). The focus on the regulation of ethnic distinctions in the power-sharing peace agreement limits the space to address issues of gender-based violence; more specifically it fails to address the increasing number of family disruptions and intimate partner violence within the home, which are linked to the lack of reconciling "violent conflict masculinities" (Hamber 2007; Hamber et al. 2006). Statistics for domestic violence show a dramatic increase since the signing of the peace agreement; domestic incidents increased from 5,900 in 1985 to 15,500 in 2003 (PSNI 2003). The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI 2012) reports that in March 2012 the number of incidents of domestic abuse reached its highest level since the data series was instituted in 2004/2005; the latest figure of 25,196 for 2012 is 11.1 percent higher than in 2010/11 and 20.2 percent higher than in 2004/2005. The rise in domestic violence could be attributable to increases in reporting due to women having a stronger feeling of entitlement to assert their rights. However, domestic violence remains underreported as judicial procedures are expensive and difficult (Women's Aid Federation NI, 2009, as cited in Ward 2009). Lessons learned from recent work on women, peace, and security with grassroots or community activists in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland include major concerns about increasing levels of domestic violence particularly affecting younger women and about the reluctance to report such crimes (Kilmurray 2013). The lack of space to address contention in the private realm further con-

28 Interviews with female community activists, San Cristobal de las Casas, 28 June and 2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 17, 19 July; focus group discussions in Ocosingo,13 and 14 July 2010.

29 See for instance interviews with indigenous community activists in Ocosingo, 17 June and 9 July 2010.

tributes to an increase in self-inflicted violence visible in the number of male suicides. Between 1999 and 2008, suicide rates in Northern Ireland rose by 64 percent, the majority of suicide deaths in 2010 were males aged between 15 and 34, and a total of 240 male deaths as a result of suicide were registered in comparison to 73 female deaths (Gallagher, Hamber, and Joy 2012). The competition between the traditional image of hegemonic masculinity and new gender images is central to the contention in intimate partnerships between men and women at the private level of society; this becomes visible in challenges in the re-integration of male prisoners into their families and leads to an increase in contention and violence in intimate relationships post 1998. This leaves female activists halfway between aspirations for changed gender relationships and remaining unresolved gender inequalities.

In contrast to Northern Ireland, the macro-level peace process in Chiapas is informed by male and female perspectives and has opened spaces for the transformation of traditional gender images at the micro-level. This is visible not only in the way indigenous women have challenged community traditions that promote a masculine power structure based on the submission of women (Olivera Bustamante 2004), but also in structural changes in indigenous community traditions that take account of these changes. For instance marriage rituals obliging girls aged 11 or 12 marry often older men without their consent or the perception of violence against women as a form of education (Roman Motero 2004) are now outlawed in Zapatista communities, institutionalizing this change in perception. More significantly, the institutionalization of changed gender perceptions was based on a dialogue between men and women of the Zapatista movement, led by indigenous women (Kampwirth 2004; Lovera and Palomo 1997; Stephen 2001). The dialogue about the transformation of community traditions has resulted in men gaining a better understanding of the private realm from a female point of view, which has reduced violence in intimate male-female relationships (Hernandez Castillo 1998, 128–29).

3.2. The Peace Process in the Public Sphere

Periods of armed conflict in Northern Ireland and Chiapas have opened spaces for changing gender identity and societal gender roles. However, the ways those changes are addressed in the conflict settlement process distinguishes the two cases. The space that official peace processes between resistance movements and the state provide to include women's voices determines the way changes in gender identity becomes manifest at the community level and how they are adapted or contested in women's private realms.

In both cases, the peace process initially created new opportunities for including women's concerns, experiences, and perspectives. In Northern Ireland this is visible in the successful intervention of the Women's Agenda for Peace in Republican communities and the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (NIWC). However, the women's role in the peace negotiations shifted from being agents of change to being mediators (NIWC) and supporters (Republican feminists) of ethno-national difference. The reaffirmation of the ethnic boundary in official peace negotiations and the power-sharing peace agreement has subjugated women's concerns to the conservative ethno-national political agendas. Those agendas of the post-agreement phase are determined by images of ethno-nationalism focusing on the aggressive defence of community rights (Ashe 2007) and are based on "sexism and the side-lining of women and alternative political approaches" (Ashe 2012, 234). The male monopoly in both nationalist/Republican and Unionist/Loyalist politics has resulted in weak representation for women in political decision-making in Northern Ireland (Galligan, Ward, and Wilford 1999); after the 2011 election, women hold 19 percent of seats in the regional parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, an increase from 12 percent in 1998. Further, members of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition faced aggressive behaviour by male representatives and were described by some male politicians as "time-wasters" or "silly women" (Hinds 2009). In addition to the small number of female representatives in political decision-making, gender inequality remains endemic in the police service, where female officers are often referred to as the "shopping squad" (Hinds 2009).

Whereas power-sharing between the two conflicting ethno-national groups dominated the peace talks in Northern Ireland, the redefinition of power structures between the

centre of mestizo power and the indigenous people at the margins of Mexican society, but also between men and women, were at the heart of the peace talks in Chiapas. By promoting new gender images informed by women's experiences and demands, the Zapatista movement and its supporters challenged traditional gender images, marked by violent and aggressive behaviour of men, at the macro-level of society. The high visibility of female indigenous commanders at the public peace process re-produces the paradox of the "power of the powerless" (Huffschmid 2004, 275) and penetrates the gendered image of the nation (Yuval Davis 1997) by bringing indigenous women's rights and liberation into the national debate.

By including discussions about the understanding of democracy, intersectional inequalities, and women's rights, the peace agenda in Chiapas was multifaceted. This situation is different from Northern Ireland, where the peace process was mainly one-dimensional and centred on the ethno-national divide. While ethno-national key stakeholders in Northern Ireland became part of the power-sharing government, the Zapatista movement disengaged the Mexican state after the failure of the peace agreement. The creation of an autonomous, self-sufficient, self-governing structure, the caracoles, provided an alternative to existing state structures.[30] As part of this process, the activism agenda has broadened post-agreement; the Zapatista movement has become one of the main actors in the national and global "netwar" (Ronfeld et al. 1998) for social justice and against the "dysfunctions of neoliberalism" (Olesen 2005).

The different positioning of women within the macro-level peace processes in Northern Ireland and Chiapas has impacted the way changes in gender identity have been manifested at the community level of society in the two regions. In Northern Ireland, the role of Republican women in community activism has changed; although they remain active, leadership positions are increasingly taken up by men. Further, gender interests are often deprioritized by community leaders, evident for instance in Sinn Fein's support for a DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) motion against the extension of the 1967 British Abortion Act to Northern Ireland in 2007 (Northern Ireland Assembly 2007; Sinn Fein 2007).

While women in Republican communities in Northern Ireland face challenges, the presence of women and feminist demands are making progress in Zapatista communities in Chiapas. This progress is connected with two central aspects: an expanding of the Zapatista activism agenda from local (indigenous rights) to global demands (anti-neoliberalism) and the ongoing development of indigenous autonomy. Indigenous feminist demands, such as the "parity or duality of men and women" (Marcos 2005, 89ff.) or the changing of harmful community traditions promoting violence against women (Lovera and Palomo 1999, 59–60, Kerkeling 2003, 151ff.) are enshrined in the Revolutionary Women's Law, which forms part of the new community rules. Indigenous women continue to play an important role in the Zapatista autonomous structure in the period after the peace negotiations. As result of the 50 percent quota in the autonomous government structures, the number of women represented in community leadership increased (K'inal Antzetik 1995; Millán Moncayo 2006).

In both cases, contentious intimate relationships in the private realm reveal difficulties in the adaption to changes in women's perceptions of themselves and of their role in society. However, while the space for addressing micro-level concerns was restricted by the one-dimensional macro-level peace process in Northern Ireland, post-conflict dynamics in the public sphere in Chiapas created a space for dialogue on issues of contention in male-female relationships.

4. Conclusions

The comparative analysis of female activists' collective identity narratives from Chiapas and from Northern Ire-

30 The so called "caracoles" as the regional coordination of the autonomous Zapatista communities, and in particular the Juntas de Buen Gobierno (JBG) as their formal representation, are organized as basis democracy, including a 50/50 gender quota, providing an alternative to the male-dominated, top-down macro-level power structures of the Mexican state.

land has shown that conflict provides opportunities for change in societal gender roles and a reduction in violence against women. It contributes to breaking down essentialist notions of ethno-national conflict (Yuval Davis 1997) and brings to light the centrality of the dynamics of peace talks in those processes in the public sphere that impact on the private realm. By doing so it offers a deeper understanding of reasons for and the consequences of the neglect of the private sphere in political decision-making in the aftermath of armed conflict.

In both cases, ethno-national conflict provided opportunities to change gender identity and societal gender roles. The inclusion of women in ethno-national resistance movements has shifted beliefs, ideas, values, and speech that promote male domination and superiority and female subordination and "secondariness" (Rowbotham 1983, 27); further it has challenged male-dominated national discourses on "women's place and role" (Sideris 2001, 145). However, the post-agreement processes in Northern Ireland and Chiapas differ in the way in which those changes are translated into peace processes, resulting in different outcomes for women in the period after the peace agreement. Political decision-making processes in Northern Ireland allow only limited space for the inclusion of women and their demands; this leads to increased contention in intimate male-female relationships and violence against women. On the other hand, in Chiapas the space for addressing concerns of gender-based violence and gender inequality widened during and after the peace talks, which allowed the different perceptions of men and women to be addressed more effectively; this in turn leads to a reduction of violence.

Two central aspects distinguish the two post-agreement episodes: firstly the space provided during the peace talks for including women and addressing gender-based violence or the dimensionality of the peace agenda. Secondly, the proximity of ethno-national resistance movements to the conservative macro-level of society, which is traditionally dominated by conservative images of hegemonic masculinities. In Chiapas, the demands discussed at the peace table were of a multidimensional nature, connecting the local dimension (land rights, indigenous rights, and indigenous autonomy) to the global fight against neoliberalism (Olesen 2005); this allowed for the inclusion of women's demands and prevented the privatization of sexual violence in the aftermath of the armed conflict. In contrast, the focus in Northern Ireland on the ethno-national dimension of conflict fails to include women's voices and demands (Ashe 2012), which reinforces the private nature of sexual violence. Further, in Chiapas the indigenous Zapatista communities continue to be autonomous spaces after the peace agreement, whereas in Northern Ireland representatives of the Republican communities form part of the power-sharing government. This leads in the latter case to a penetration of the community space by conservative gender images, which pushes women and their changed gender perceptions to the margins. On the other hand, in Chiapas the community space remains dominated by changed gender images, marked by women's participation in the public sphere.

While we can draw interesting lessons from the way women engage in and are affected by similar mechanisms and different conflict contexts in Northern Ireland and Chiapas, those cases do not provide a representative sample of contemporary views on the peace and conflict processes; the analysis of a larger case study sample would be required in order to allow quantitative measures to be used to further explore the outcomes of identity change. We need additional in-depth case studies of the impact of identity shift and social change on intimate partnerships and sexual violence in the aftermath of armed conflicts in order to generate the data necessary for such a larger comparison.

Secondly, the scope of this research is limited to women who have been actively involved in social mobilization processes. However, those experiences cannot be seen in isolation from the experiences of men, and indeed of other women not actively involved in mobilization processes. Hence, further multi-level, comparative, and in-depth case studies of gendered experiences and perspectives of women and men during peace and conflict are required; in particular intersectional analysis connecting gender, class, and intergenerational dimensions of ethno-national contention.

This article demonstrates that significant changes in gender perceptions as well as the failure to address chal-

lenges of peace in the private realm (violence against women, male suicide rates) often get overlooked through the focus on peace talks at the macro-level of society. This reveals the need to make a connection between macro-level peace processes and peace processes at the community level and in the private realm. In order to adequately address intimate partner violence in the post-conflict period a better understanding is required of the way women's participation in peace and conflict processes changes ethnic and gender identity and of how those changes are translated into peace processes. Within this context, a multi-dimensional and multi-levelled approach in both policy-making and academic research, which places a particular emphasis on the private sphere, is essential for the examination of gendered aspects of peace and conflict.

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Prevalence rates of partner violence are high for women in general, but disabled women seem to be even more vulnerable. To explore this question, interviews were conducted with a representative sample of women with physical, mental, intellectual, hearing, and vision disabilities living in households (N=800) and in institutions (N=420). Additionally, a supplementary survey with a non-representative sample of blind, severely physically/multiply disabled, and deaf women (N=341) and qualitative interviews with thirty-one victimized women with disabilities were conducted. The standardized questionnaire was comparable to an earlier German representative survey on violence against women in the general population (N=10,264). Overall, 25 to 45 percent of women with disabilities had experienced intimate partner violence, which is two to five times the rate for the general population (depending on the specific group). Type and severity of disability, living situation, and experience of discrimination and violence in childhood and adolescence correlated with increased vulnerability. The findings confirm the hypothesis of elevated vulnerability discussed in international research and deepen insights into risk factors for victimization, for example discrimination, violence in childhood and youth, life situation, and type of disability. The results are crucial for further research as well as for prevention, intervention and support.

After having been invisible for many decades, violence against women is an increasingly studied phenomenon. Different studies show that the most common perpetrators of violence against women are current and former intimate partners. Large-scale prevalence surveys conducted in many countries over the past two decades found prevalence rates of at least 15–36 percent for physical and/or sexual partner violence against women in many countries across Europe, as well as in the United States, Canada and Australia (Black et al. 2011; Collins et al. 1999; Schröttle et al. 2006; Tjaden and Thoennes 2000; WAVE 2012). International surveys found even higher rates in African, South Asian and Latin American countries (WHO 2005; International Violence against Women Survey, see Johnson, Ollus, and Nevala 2008).

Research has revealed several risk factors that elevate the prevalence of intimate partner violence, such as the experience of sexual, physical, or emotional child abuse, witnessing violence against the mother as a child, alcohol abuse, pregnancy, separation, ethnicity, and power imbalance between the partners (Abramsky et al. 2011; Johnson, Ollus, and Nevala 2008; Schröttle and Ansorge 2009; Schröttle et al. 2006; Stith et al. 2004). Another important but rarely discussed risk factor is disability. In the past decade, research on violence against women with disabilities has found indications of highly increased prevalence rates compared to women without disabilities (see e.g. Brownridge 2006; Foster and Sandel 2010; Hall and Innes 2010; Marge 2003; Nosek, Howland et al. 2001; Powers, Hughes, and Lund 2009; Smith 2008; Schröttle et al. 2013, Schröttle et al. forthcoming).[1] Women with disabilities seem to be more likely to experience violence and are affected by more severe violence (Brownridge 2006) over a longer period of time (Nosek, Howland, and Hughes 2001). Some small-

1 The terms "women with disabilities" and "disabled women" are used interchangeably, recognising that there are different ideas about their political implications. The term "disabled people" and "disability" in the singular, which is preferred in the United Kingdom, can be used to describe "the impacts of a discriminating society, rather than as a word to refer to the individual conditions or impairments that people may have" (Thiara et al. 2012,

scale and a few large-scale studies are available, but the research is still thin.[2]

Small studies are often unrepresentative and/or unable to compare data from different groups of women with and without disabilities. Most of the available large-scale data on violence against disabled women is based on unrepresentative samples as it usually excludes women living in institutions, deaf women, and women with intellectual disabilities. Studies that interview disabled women in a sensitive and low-threshold or barrier-free way and are able to unfold the broader life situation and the continuum of several types of violence and discrimination through the life time are rare, as are studies that produce comparable data for women with intellectual disabilities using simple language or for deaf women using sign language.

To fill some of these gaps, the Interdisciplinary Center for Women and Gender Studies at the University of Bielefeld conducted a German nationally representative study on violence against women with various disabilities in different living situations (see Schröttle et al. 2012 and Schröttle et al. forthcoming for a summary of the results and Schröttle et al. 2013 for the full report). An additional qualitative study with thirty-one victimized women with disabilities was conducted within the project to explore in greater depth the disabled women's experiences of violence and help-seeking behaviour.

The aim was to explore the experiences of women with disabilities in comparison to women without disabilities: To what extent can similarities and/or differences be found, for example, in terms of prevalence and forms of violence? Are there certain groups of disabled women who are even more vulnerable than others? What role does the type of disability play? How do the living situation (private household or institution) and biographical experiences affect vulnerability for intimate partner violence? Which factors increase the risk of experiencing violence in the context of disability?

After describing the theoretical background, the methods and empirical findings of the study are presented and discussed with reference to the relevant literature. The paper focuses on prevalence, risk factors, and vulnerabilities in the context of violence dynamics, gender, and disability constructions. It must be stressed that intimate partner violence against disabled women is embedded in other relevant forms and contexts of violence and discrimination that have to be taken into account for a full understanding of the problem.

1. Theoretical Background

Although women with disabilities are "collectively defined as a social monolith" (Foster and Sandel 2012, 180), the differences among disabled women are substantial, and they experience the phenomenon of disability differently. On the one hand, their experience depends on "the type and severity of disability, the age and manner of disability onset" (ibid.), socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, and biographical experiences. On the other hand, Foster and Sandel (2012) identify the social and institutional categorization "disabled" and the associated discrimination as a shared thread (ibid.). Social norms contribute to the stigmatization of women with disabilities as undervalued, undesirable, asexual, naïve, and dependent, and give thus rise to abuse (ibid., 181). The greater vulnerability of disabled women can be understood in an intersectional perspective as simultaneous discrimination relating to disability and gender (Brownridge 2006; Chenoweth 1996; Köbsell 2010).

Gender studies have shown that gender is a social, symbolic, and cultural construction (Becker and Kortendiek 2010; Davis, Evans, and Lorber 2006; Hagemann-White1988; Lorber 1994). Constructing women in contrast

14). In other countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and certain European countries, "people first" language is used to "emphasize the critical importance of understanding that people happen to experience disabilities that do not define them" (Powers, Hughes, and Lund 2009, 1). In Germany the politically preferred wording is not undisputed: there are groups preferring the one or the other term, both for good reasons as explained above.

2 For an overview see the latest systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies by Hughes et al. (2012).

to men as weak, passive, dependent, and in need of (male) help is still an influential social process. In the process of socialization, women establish subject positions between self-determination, autonomy, and heteronomy. Potential and experienced violence plays an important role, because it occurs on the basis of the construction of male violent potency and female vulnerability. It is not a difference in physical strength, but the embodiment of these social, symbolic, and cultural constructions that enables violence against women to be viewed as a "normal" and normalized part of society. Simultaneously, violence itself creates these gendered subject positions of potency and vulnerability, as well as the power or powerlessness to act. In this sense, intimate partner violence is gendered and gendering at the same time (Glammeier 2011).

In parallel to the changing perceptions of gender initiated by gender studies, there has been a shift in the perception of disability induced by the disability movement, disability studies, and political changes associated with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. While individual or medical models construct disability as a defect and impairment of the individual, the social model understands disability as a social construction and a process in which certain people (defined as different) are excluded from social participation and recognition. In this sense disability is not a personal attribute, but the result of a societal process of othering and discrimination. The cultural model further broadens this perspective by problematizing the concept of (physical) impairment and the definition of difference itself, and focussing on the social, historical, and cultural contexts that constitute disability as a problem (Dederich 2010). This means that the problem is not only discrimination as a consequence of disability, but also the categorization as (dis)abled itself. The categorizations "female" and "disabled" are associated with social constructions of vulnerability and weakness, which tend to be intensified for the construction of disabled women. In this process of defining differences, power relations are reinforced: "It is possible that women with disabilities are perceived by men who espouse a patriarchal ideology as being less difficult to dominate, which may include domination through violence" (Brownridge 2006, 809).

2. Research on Prevalence of Violence Against Women with Disabilities

Large-scale population-based research on women with disabilities is still rare today, although there are a few examples. Such studies usually use population-based data compiled for other reasons that include questions about violence. In the underlying surveys, experiences of violence are only a side issue and are generally not explored in detail using the specific methods developed to uncover the extent and contexts of violence in an appropriate, sensitive, and ethically responsible way (for specific methods see: Martinez et al. 2007; WHO 2005). Although some of these studies are relatively large-scale and include women with different disabilities, the samples are mostly not representative of disabled women as they are limited to non-institutionalized women, and to women who can be interviewed by telephone and understand the survey questions. This excludes deaf women, women with intellectual disabilities who need simple language, women with difficulties speaking, and women who cannot physically reach the telephone within the number of rings typically allowed by survey researchers, as well as women living in institutions. Furthermore, the methodology of telephone interviews may be problematic for research on intimate partner violence as it cannot be ensured that the interview is conducted in privacy and the potential perpetrator is not present during the interview (an important condition and ethical standard in prevalence research, see Martinez et al. 2007).

With respect to violence prevalence, all studies point in the same direction. Powers, Hughes, and Lund summarize (2009, 1041): "Studies using population-based and purposive samples have found that, compared to women without disabilities, women with disabilities are more likely to experience physical and sexual violence (Brownridge, 2006; Martin et al., 2006; Powers et al., 2002; Smith, 2008), increased severity of violence (Brownridge, 2006; Nannini, 2006; Nosek et al. 2001), multiple forms of violence (Curry et al., 2003; Martin et al., 2006; Nosek et al., 2001), and longer duration of violence (Nosek et al. 2001)."

Brownridge (2006), for example, conducted a study on intimate partner violence against women with and without disabilities using a random sample of 7,027 married or cohabiting heterosexual women aged 15 years or older, of

whom 1,092 were disabled. The data stem from Statistics Canada's Cycle 13 of the General Social Survey (GSS). The study employed a modified version of the Conflict Tactic Scales measuring violence as acts of physical and sexual assault (being forced into any sexual activity).

The main result was that women with disabilities had 40 percent higher prevalence rates of violence in the five years preceding the interview. These women were also at high risk of severe violence (Brownridge 2006, 805). Furthermore, Brownridge found that "perpetrator-related characteristics alone accounted for the elevated risk of partner violence against women with disabilities" (ibid.). These characteristics were patriarchal dominance, sexual possessiveness, and sexual jealousy (ibid., 813).

Martin et al. (2006) analysed a sample of 5,326 women (age 18 to 99 years) in North Carolina using data from a random digital household telephone survey (North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, NC-BRFSS) conducted during 2000 and 2001. Twenty-six per cent of these women were assessed as having a disability. The high proportion of disabled women is probably due to the relatively broad disability definition and to the fact that women aged over 65 years were included. Violence was measured as physical violence (asking the women whether anyone had "pushed, hit, slapped, kicked or physically hurt" them in any other way) and sexual violence (forced them to have sex or to do sexual things) during the past year (ibid., 827). The findings showed that the most common perpetrators were current or former intimate partners. Martin and colleagues found that disabled women had more than four times higher rates of sexual assault in the past year compared to women without disabilities, although there were no significant differences in rates of physical violence.

Smith (2008) analysed the data from the 2005 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) in the United States (telephone survey) regarding intimate partner violence. The sample comprised 219,911 women, 49,756 of whom identified themselves as having an activity limitation or disability. Sexual abuse was defined as unwanted sex. Physical abuse was measured with the question: "Has an intimate partner ever hit, slapped, pushed, kicked, or physically hurt you in any way?" Results showed that disabled women were 2.05 times more likely to be physically abused and 2.38 times more likely to experience unwanted sex.

3. Methods

The latest German nationally representative study on violence against women with various disabilities (physical, intellectual, visual, hearing, mental disabilities, as well as severe chronic diseases) is one of the first broad national studies to focus on violence against disabled women using specific methods that were able to reach and interview a broader group of disabled women than earlier studies. It fills some of the gaps in existing research described above and provides a relevant contribution to the questions of prevalence, risk factors, and contexts of violence against disabled women.

In 2010 and 2011, a total of 1,561 disabled women aged 16 to 65 years living in households and institutions were interviewed – alone in standardized face-to-face interviews – about their living situation, stress, discrimination, and experiences of violence in childhood, youth, and adulthood.

3.1. The Samples

Three samples were collected: (1) a representative sample of disabled women living in private households, (2) a representative sample of disabled women living in residential institutions, (3) an additional non-representative sample of blind, deaf, or severely physically disabled women. Furthermore, thirty-one women who had experienced violence were interviewed for a qualitative study.

3.1.1. Disabled Women Living in Private Households

The representative sample of 800 women living in private households was recruited using screening interviews in 28,000 randomly selected households (random route sampling procedure),[3] in order to identify women in the

3 In "Random Route" sampling interviewers are sent to randomly selected starting addresses and select households on the basis of a fixed random route plan (every 2nd, 3rd, or 4th household).

defined age group who reported having severe long-term movement, hearing, visual, cognitive, and/or psychological impairments, and/or long-term-impairments resulting from chronic diseases.[4] Most of these women had multiple impairments and thus could not be placed in specific disability categories. The most common impairments found in this group were physical (92 percent) and psychological (68 percent), or a combination of both. Besides that, 19 percent had hearing impairments, 14 percent visual impairments, 17 percent cognitive impairments, and 8 percent speaking impairments. Three quarters of the women reported more than one impairment (Schröttle et al. 2013; Schröttle et al., forthcoming).

3.1.2. Disabled Women Living in Residential Institutions

In the residential institutions sample, 420 women with disabilities were randomly selected for interview. First of all, lists of all residential homes for disabled people in twenty randomly selected regions were compiled, including the number of residents in each institution. Using these lists, twenty-five interviewees were randomly selected per region, proportionately to institutions and numbers of residents.[5]

Three quarters (76 percent) of the interviewed women living in residential institutions had intellectual disabilities and were interviewed by specially trained interviewers in simplified language using a similar questionnaire. 20 percent of the interviewed women living in institutions had mental disorders and 5 percent severe and/or multiple physical disabilities; both latter groups were interviewed with the standard questionnaire.

3.1.3. Non-representative Sample of Blind, Deaf, or Severely Physically Disabled Women

In a supplementary non-representative quantitative sample, 128 blind, 83 deaf, and 130 severely physically disabled women living in private households were interviewed using the standard questionnaire. These additional samples were required in order to include an adequate number of women with these more severe disabilities (which might be connected with greater or specific vulnerabilities). These women were recruited through newspaper announcements, NGOs for people with disabilities, and multipliers.

3.1.4. Qualitative Interviews

For the additional qualitative study, thirty-one women who had taken part in the quantitative survey and reported different forms of violence and abuse (psychological, physical, and/or sexual) were contacted for an additional qualitative interview to explore more deeply their experiences of violence and their efforts and experiences with help-seeking, support, and intervention. These guided interviews with physically, mentally, intellectually, and/or sensory disabled women were conducted in both private households and institutions.[6]

3.2. Interview Methods

All women were interviewed face-to-face by female interviewers in the household, institution, or another place where the woman could feel safe. Specific interview training was given to all interviewers in order to provide a sensitive and safe atmosphere for both interviewees and interviewers (for ethical standards in research on violence against women, see WHO 2001 and Martinez et al. 2007).

Reaching women with intellectual disabilities is very important for violence prevalence research, as they tend to be more vulnerable. For the current research, specific methods were developed to allow valid investigation of the experiences of this group and comparability with the experiences of other groups. Words and sentences had to

4 Further criteria for inclusion in the sample were: using services for disabled people and/or official registration of disability.

5 If for example three women had to be selected from one institution, this institution was contacted and asked to arrange contacts to the three residents whose birthdays were next.

6 The reconstructive-hermeneutical analysis focuses on agency, processes of positioning, and the subjective meaning of the experiences (Bethmann et al. 2012; Helfferich 2004). Rather than asking a series of questions, the interviewer invited the interviewee to narrate, emphasizing that the focus was on her experiences and explained: "The focus of these interviews is on the possibilities of support and help for women with disabilities, on support needs, and on the need for change. We would like to ask you what happened to you and what could have helped you. [Interviewer mentions the reason why the interviewee was asked for an interview, for example because of partner violence.] Could you please tell us what happened?" The complete interviewer instructions are published in Kavemann and Helfferich 2013.

be simplified and shortened,[7] the interviewers had to pay more attention to comprehension and possible manipulation. A higher degree of flexibility in the interview sequence was also necessary.

Interviews with deaf women were conducted in sign language by a team of deaf interviewers (trained by deaf researchers who intermittently joined the research team). The method of interviewing deaf women by deaf interviewers using sign language was necessary in order to ensure full understanding and trust and to minimize hierarchies between interviewers and interviewees with respect to hearing impairments, all of which might undermine the disclosure of violence.

These specific methods provided more trust and a barrier-free setting, especially for disabled women who are usually hard to reach for surveys.

3.3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was similar to the large scale German national representative survey on violence against women in the general population (Health, Well-being and Personal Safety of Women in Germany, N=10,264, Schröttle and Müller 2004)). Questions on violence used behaviour-related item lists for physical violence, sexual violence, and sexual harassment as well as for psychological violence. There were separate questions for violence in childhood and youth and for violence in adulthood (from the age of 16).[8]

Physical violence was operationalized by a list of twenty-one items ranging from less severe forms of violence (like being pushed away angrily or a light slap in the face) to severe and very severe forms (punching, beating up, strangling, severe threat or use of weapons). The item list is a modified form of the Conflict Tactic Scales further developed and modified within German and European prevalence research contexts (see Martinez et al. 2006, 2007; and Schröttle and Müller 2004). Sexual violence was operationalized by a list of six items addressing forced acts like: "somebody has forced me to have sexual intercourse", "somebody has forced me to engage in sexual acts or practices that I did not want". Questions on sexual harassment comprised a list of fourteen items addressing acts ranging from verbal harassment and gazing, up to unwanted touching, kissing and stalking. Psychological violence was measured by a list of eleven items with various acts from verbal aggression and severe insults over severe threat and continued hassling up to psycho terror. The item lists for violent acts were followed by questions on the type of perpetrators, frequency of acts in different time frames and consequences of the violence experienced (like injuries, fear, use of institutional services and interventions). Respondents who reported acts of violence after the age of 16 were asked whether these acts had also happened since they became disabled, and which acts had been experienced within the past 12 months.

Experiences of childhood violence (up to the age of 16) were divided between sexual abuse (by any kind of perpetrator) and parental psychological and physical abuse. Parental psychological and physical abuse before the age of 16 was measured by a twelve-item scale that included psychologically violating behaviour (such as having been humiliated, pulled down, or emotionally violated) as well as physical harm and punishment (like being slapped, beaten up, beaten with something). Sexual violence in childhood was measured by a five-item scale that included being forced or pressured to touch one's own or another person's intimate parts as well as other forced/pressured sexual acts up to the age of 16 (asked separately for adult perpetrators and children or adolescents as perpetrators).

A respondent was defined as victimized by a form of violence when at least one act from the item list had been experienced. Severe forms of violence were defined by the

7 For example, the question of life satisfaction with respect to the family situation was not based on a differentiated scale as in the everyday -language questionnaire. Instead the answer categories were "rather satisfied" / "rather dissatisfied". The question "How satisfied are you with your family?" was explained by the interviewer if necessary: "Are you fine with your family? Or are you not fine with your family? For example with your mother [pause], your father [pause] or your siblings?"

8 The survey was based on international VAW prevalence research methods developed within the European prevalence research context (see Martinez and Schröttle et al. 2006, 2007).

severity of acts, the consequences of acts (physical injuries), and the perceived fear or threatening character of situations.

Besides these questions on violence, further questions on discrimination, living situation in institutions, barriers and burdens in daily life, and dependence on care were included in order to investigate the specific problems and life situation of disabled women. These additional questions were very important for acquiring a better understanding of the connections between disability, discrimination, and violence.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data was analysed with SPSS. For the first report mainly uni- and bivariate descriptive analyses were conducted. For comparisons between groups significance tests (predominantly chi-square and t-tests) were used.

4. Findings

4.1. Quantitative Study: Prevalence and Risk Factors

The prevalence rates obtained in the representative general population sample (Schröttle and Müller 2004) were used as a basis for comparison between disabled women and the general female population. Prevalence rates of psychological, physical, and sexual violence are alarmingly high among women with disabilities.

4.1.1. Prevalence Rates for Violence in Adulthood and Intimate Partner Violence

Table 1 shows that women with disabilities experienced physical, sexual, and psychological violence to a great extent and by different kinds of perpetrators in their adult lives. Violence by current and/or former intimate partners was experienced at about two to five times higher prevalence rates than in the general female population.[9]

Table 1: Prevalence of psychological, physical, and sexual violence in adulthood (since the age of 16)

	Case basis: All respondents (multiple responses possible)						
	Representative household and institution survey				Non-representative supplementary survey		
	General population (BMFSFJ 2004) N=8,445 (%)	Households N=800 (%)	Institutions/ everyday language N=102 (%)	Institutions/ simplified language N=318 (%)	Deaf women N=83 (%)	Blind women N=128 (%)	Severely physically disabled women N=130 (%)
Psychological abuse*	45	77	90	68	84	88	78
Psychological abuse by intimate partner	13[1)]	25	28[2)]	(4)[2)]	45[2)]	33[2)]	28[2)]
Physical violence*	35	62	73	58	75	66	59
Physical violence by intimate partner	13[1)]	29	36	(6)	41	22	25
Sexual violence*	13	27	38	21[2)]	44	29	29
Sexual violence by intimate partner	4[1)]	13	20	(6)[2)]	19	13	14

* Including violence by all kinds of perpetrators (unknown or known persons, family members, intimate partners, friends/acquaintances, neighbours, perpetrators from school, education and work, from institutions as well as other persons, measured by a detailed perpetrator list).

() parentheses: small number of cases (<=5)

1) Data on partner violence refers only to oral questionnaire to maintain compatibility with current study with disabled women

2) Higher rates of non-response than in other groups.

9 Depending on different groups of disabled women and the different types of violence. Prevalence rates reflect the proportion of persons who reported at least one of the acts of the item lists for physical, sexual and psychological violence. The age limitation for violence in adulthood was after the age of 16.

13 percent of women in the general population,[10] but 25 percent to 45 percent of disabled women – depending on the sample – reported psychological abuse by intimate partners (lifetime prevalence). With respect to physical violence, 13 percent of women in the general population reported physical violence by intimate partners compared to 22 to 41 percent reported by disabled women, which is a two- to more than threefold higher risk of violence). While 4 percent of the general female population reported forced sexual acts by intimate partners, this was the case for 13 to 20 percent of disabled women, which represents a three- to fivefold higher risk of sexual violence through intimate partners for disabled women. With respect to physical and sexual violence by intimate partners, deaf women and women with mental disabilities living in residential institutions were the most seriously affected groups. Psychological abuse by partners was reported most often by deaf and blind women. Women with intellectual disabilities experienced violence by different perpetrators to a high degree, too, but they reported intimate partner violence less often. This might be explained by the fact that they are less often partnered (65 percent of them had at least one intimate partner during their life, which was the case for 81 to 96 percent of women in other reference groups). Furthermore, women with cognitive disabilities had higher rates of non-response to these questions. Besides that the differences in intimate partner violence between women of the general population and disabled women living in private households cannot be explained by these factors as rates of partnered women (and rates of nonresponse) were similar for the household samples.

4.1.2. Violence in Childhood and Youth as Risk Factor

The high prevalence of intimate partner violence, as well as the high prevalence of sexual violence since the age of 16 reported by disabled women seem to be connected with earlier experiences of violence in childhood and youth. Table 2 shows a significantly higher rate of psychological abuse from parents as well as a two- to three times higher rate of sexual abuse in childhood and youth for women with disabilities compared to women in the general female population.[11] Except for intellectually disabled women who often could not remember experiences in childhood and youth, all women with disabilities reported high rates of psychological abuse by parents (52 to 63 percent vs. 36 percent in the general population) and sexual abuse by adults (20 to 34 percent vs. 10 percent in the general population) and/or by child and adolescent perpetrators (9 to 36 percent; no comparison with general population possible). When lifetime experiences of sexual violence before and after the age of 16 are taken together, more than every second to third disabled woman had experienced sexual violence during her life; deaf women and women with mental disabilities were, again, affected most often.[12]

10 Referred to the data from the oral questionnaire of the former prevalence study, which is comparable with the current study on violence against women with disabilities.

11 Significance tests (t-test) were conducted for differences between the general population and the representative household and institution samples. Significant differences were found for all forms of violence in childhood between non-disabled women and women with cognitive disabilities; for the other two groups of disabled women significant differences to the general population were found with respect to psychological and sexual violence by adults.

12 Men with disabilities might be a vulnerable group, too. A new study conducted by our research team with disabled men living in households found higher overall rates for physical and psychological abuse in adulthood, but no higher rates for intimate partner violence, sexual violence, or violence in childhood and adolescence (Hornberg et al. 2013).

Table 2: Prevalence rates of physical, psychological and sexual violence in childhood and youth[1)]

	Case basis: All respondents (multiple responses)						
	Representative household and institution survey				Non-representative additional survey		
At least one act experienced	General population (BMFSFJ 2004) N=8,445 (%)	Households N=800 (%)	Institutions/ everyday language N=102 (%)	Institutions/ simplified language N=318 (%)	Deaf women N=83 (%)	Blind women N=128 (%)	Severely physically disabled women N=130 (%)
1. Physical or psychological abuse by parents							
Physical and/or psychological violence by parents	83	88	93	58	90	83	82
Physical violence by parents	81	85	90	55	83	77	74
Psychological violence by parents	36	53	61	34	59	63	52
2. Sexual child abuse							
By children, adolescents or adults	--[2)]	30	36[3)]	25[3)]	52	40	34
By adults	10	24	31[3)]	20[3)]	34[3)]	34	25
By children and/or adolescents	--[2)]	11	10[3)]	9[3)]	36[3)]	17	14

[1)] Different case basis. Paragraph 1: all respondents that grew up with their parents. Paragraph 2: all respondents.
[2)] Question not asked in general population survey.
[3)] 10 to 16 percent non-response.

4.1.3. Living Situation and Type of Disability as Risk Factors

The quantitative study found differences in the affectedness and character of violence experienced referring to living situation, duration of disability and type of disability. Women living in institutions rarely experienced violence by current partners as most of them (58 to 66 percent) were not living together with a partner. Here, violence perpetrated by other disabled residents or staff in institutions plays a more significant role and is the form of "domestic violence" they experience. Women with mental disorders living in institutions reported high prevalence of violence in childhood and adolescence (see Table 2), as well as high prevalence of violence by former intimate partners that might have contributed to mental disorders.

The risk of intimate partner violence, the level of violence (with respect to the severity and the consequences of violence such as injuries), and the levels of fear of violence also depended on the severity of the disability and the current living situation.[13] The more burdened and dependent the current living situation was, the higher were the rates of intimate partner violence. Furthermore perceived threat, feelings of defencelessness, and higher levels of fear of violence in everyday situations were most pronounced for deaf, blind, and severely physically impaired women in the supplementary survey. These women linked violent experiences significantly more often with their disability. In addition, women in the supplementary survey were not only affected by intimate partner violence to a high degree, but also experienced violence to

13 Severity of disability was measured by questions on the degree of restriction with respect to several life situations (such as housework, employment, leisure, social activities, family, partnership, or vital activities such as eating, drinking, using the toilet alone). Further indicators were specific disabilities like being blind or deaf, as well as a high level of dependency on assistance in daily life.

a greater extent in all other contexts – by unknown or barely known perpetrators in public places as well as by persons in the workplace and the neighborhood, and by friends and acquaintances. These circumstances could have created a perception of the environment as potentially violent and threatening, and represent further factors that encourage these women to remain in violent partnerships.

4.2. Qualitative Study: Relationship Dynamics, Disability, and Violence

In the additional qualitative study (Kavemann and Helfferich 2013) thirty-one guided interviews were conducted with women with disabilities who had experienced psychological, physical, and/or sexual violence. They talked about multiple experiences of different forms of violence through their lives. The women's narratives about their experiences, relationship dynamics, ambivalences, problems of separation, traumatic violence, and traumatic bonding are very similar to the experiences of women without disabilities, but the context of disability gives them a particular colouring. Additionally, disability-specific aspects of relationship dynamics and violence experiences were found. For this article some interview quotes (ibid.) have been abridged and translated.

Women who experienced intimate partner violence described it as a kind of continuation of experiences from childhood and adolescence. For some women, violence in childhood was regarded as normality. Sometimes the violence was excused: "My mother often beat me, because she was overwhelmed with the situation. I think she just couldn't bear that I was blind. And when I was clumsy, she felt guilty and couldn't come to terms with that" (ibid. 32). This made the women themselves feel guilty about being disabled. One described the feeling of rejection: "I loved my mother, but I just didn't please her and that was bad. That was really terrible" (ibid., 73). In later life, these women felt that their partners treated them in the same way their parents had. The disabled daughters' experience that their parents felt ashamed of them, that they were perceived as a disappointment and as a burden led to feelings of guilt and shame. This was intensified when the parents taught their daughters to be modest and grateful for any attention.

The women's great emotional neediness was a recurring theme in the interviews, especially their desire for affection, caring, intimacy, and bonding. It seems to be connected with deprivation and experiences of discrimination and emotional violence during childhood accompanied by the development of low self-esteem. The neediness and the feeling of worthlessness led to elevated vulnerability to partner dominance and violence, to dependence, and to the feeling that there is no alternative to the situation:

> "I couldn't get away from him. Probably because my mother had rammed the idea into me that I had to take what I got because I was disabled." (ibid., 46)
>
> "My father always told me I only had a right to be in a kennel." (ibid.)
>
> "If I left him [the perpetrator], I would be very lonely, so I keep on walking a fine line." (ibid., 47)

Dependencies and self-esteem problems also had negative effects on seeking help and support. Low self-esteem as a result of education and socialization hinders both disabled and non-disabled women from making demands on or leaving a partner. But the disabled interviewees described this experience as directly linked with their disability. The isolating effects of disability and violence made it even more difficult for the disabled women to seek help. This is aggravated by the fact that most support services are not accessible for disabled women. Particular difficulties in seeking help became obvious regarding women living in institutions. They had no possibilities for actively seeking help and claiming their rights by themselves. Furthermore, women with intellectual or mental disabilities are often regarded as less credible and reliable.

5. Discussion

The findings show that women with disabilities experienced psychological, physical, and sexual violence and abuse by different perpetrators two to three times more frequently than women in the general population. Differences in life situation, type of disability, and discrimination shape the structure and background for greater vulnerability. Violence experienced in childhood and adolescence and disempowering constructions of disabled girls and women also play an important role.

5.1. Risk Factors and Causal Contexts

5.1.1. Destructive and Weakening Childhood Experiences

Research on violence against women has described the destructive influence of childhood abuse on the victimization of women in their adult lives (Abramsky et al. 2011; Schröttle et al. 2006; Stith et al. 2004). Some studies have found that the risk of victimization through intimate partner violence is increased two- to threefold when women have experienced violence in childhood and youth (Schröttle and Müller 2004). The very high levels of parental violence and sexual abuse against women with disabilities in childhood and youth seems to be one of the key risk factors for greater vulnerability and greater incidence of intimate partner violence and sexual violence (by partners or other persons) in adulthood.

Moreover, deaf (38 percent) and blind women (14 percent) often spent their childhood and youth in institutions, especially in residential schools and homes for disabled people. In these groups, very high levels of sexual violence in childhood and youth (40 to 52 percent) were found.[14] Both the early time spent in institutions as well as early childhood experiences of sexual violence heightened the risk for later intimate partner violence.

The qualitative interviews with victimized women with disabilities showed how experiences of discrimination, neglect, and violence in childhood tend to undermine the ability to set boundaries. Their early experiences led to a great emotional neediness and low self-esteem. This contributed to an increased vulnerability for partner dominance and violence, to dependency, and to the feeling that there is no alternative.

5.1.2. Discriminatory and Disempowering Social Constructions

These results are consistent with earlier research about discriminating experiences and practices increasing the vulnerability of disabled girls and women. Chenoweth (1996) for example showed that overprotection and containment of disabled women as eternal children interferes with the development of a realistic expectation of the risk of violence (which could be helpful in facing violence when it occurs or avoiding getting into violent situations; ibid.: 404). Referring to Sobbey (1994), she emphasizes that women with disabilities are often taught unquestioning compliance, which hinders their ability to draw appropriate boundaries. Curry et al. (2001, 74) argue that for "women with disabilities, leaving may mean risk of losing their independence and the risk of institutional care". Hassouneh-Phillips and McNeffs (2005, 227) emphasize that the perception of disabled women as sexually inadequate and unattractive and their desire to be partnered increase women's vulnerability to staying in abusive relationships for a long duration.

Deaf women, who were affected by intimate violence to a high degree were mostly living together with deaf intimate partners and embedded in social relationships with deaf friends and deaf acquaintances. Here additional risk factors could be relevant, like isolation from, and a lack of assistance and support by, hearing people. A further influencing factor that was discussed by parts of the deaf community and also reflected in the results of the current study: More traditional gender constructions within the deaf communities might contribute to higher levels of intimate partner violence. Especially the construction of deafness as weakness and the construction of dominant masculinity and aggression might contribute to role conflicts and aggression that should be analysed more thoroughly.

Another factor that tends to disempower disabled women – in contrast to women without disabilities – is desexualization and the construction of disabled women as not being attractive partners for intimate relationships. With respect to women with cognitive disabilities, the hypothesis of Chenoweth (1996) is important. She argues that the social construction of disabled women as asexual and simultaneously promiscuous and depraved increases their vulnerability.[15] Sexual violence against an asexual being who would "never

14 Cognitively disabled women were also institutionalized in childhood and youth (15%) but could often not remember early experiences of violence. 10 to 16% did not respond to the questions on sexual abuse before the age of 16.

15 This argument is often expressed by practitioners working with intellectually disabled women and men but it was seldom reflected that promiscuity might be a consequence of early and ongoing experiences of violence and/or the lack of sexual education.

attract a sexual partner" and/or who has "no feelings" seems to be less important in the perspective of society and perpetrators. The common failure to offer adequate sex education for intellectually disabled people seems to be based on the assumption that disabled women do not need to know about sexuality, which is not and should not be part of their lives, because if they were informed, they would be uncontrollably promiscuous (Chenoweth 1996, 405). For women who do not know about sex, it is much more difficult to talk about sexual violence and to turn to others for help. Moreover, if these women are seen as promiscuous they can be accused of having provoked the sexual violence, which can save the perpetrator from (legal) accusation.

5.1.3. Interdependence of Violence, Disability, and Health

Childhood experiences of violence can contribute not only to experiences of violence in adult life but also to severe health problems,[16] psychological problems, and disabilities in later life. Even disabled women who were not disabled in childhood reported higher rates of parental psychological and sexual abuse in childhood and adolescence in comparison to the general population. This suggests that disability might often be a consequence of earlier childhood experiences of violence and vice versa: both violence in childhood and youth as well as disabilities can contribute to a higher vulnerability to intimate partner violence in the adult lives of disabled women. Thus, the current study reflects the high relevance of violence for girls' and women's health, which was found in several studies (Campbell 2002; Martinez et al. 2006; Schröttle et al. 2009) and stressed by the World Health Organization (WHO 2001). Moreover, the current study highlights the interdependence of violence and disability which has to be taken into account in studies on violence against disabled women. Thus, it is not only disability that makes women more vulnerable to violence, but also violence that makes people more vulnerable to health impairments, disability and continued victimization. These correlations may be exacerbated by the isolation and discrimination that many women with disabilities experience, thereby making them more dependent on violent partners.

In their study with disabled women, experts, and organizations Hague and colleagues (2008b, 3) argue that current definitions of domestic violence are too narrow to encompass the range of experiences of disabled women. Their interviewees stressed that the disability made the abuse worse and made it more difficult to escape. Hague and colleagues found a high extent of sexual, physical, financial, and verbal abuse that was directly connected with women's impairments, reinforcing control by and dependency on their abusive partners (ibid.).

5.2. Consequences for Prevention and Intervention

The greater vulnerabilities of disabled women will have to be taken into account more carefully in the ongoing development of prevention and intervention strategies without stigmatizing disabled women as victims. The results of the current study underline the findings of Hague and colleagues (2008a) with respect to barriers to help-seeking, which are a consequence of the lack of adequate barrier-free services for disabled women on the one hand. On the other hand inner barriers formed by discriminatory perceptions of disabled women weaken their self-esteem and limit the belief to have the right to live without violence and the right to get support.

The poor service situation is especially alarming given that disabled women experience violence more often and are affected by even more severe abuse. Thiara et al. (2012, 33) describe a vicious circle: Disabled women experience more severe abuse because they stay longer in abusive relationships, and the longer duration of abusive relationships is due to the paucity of appropriate and knowledgeable service provision.

Several central recommendations for good practice and strategic development of support, counselling, and other

16 Psychological problems were not only mentioned by women living in institutions because of mental disabilities, but also by a high percentage of women in households with other disabilities (58% to 75%).

sectors have been formulated by Hague and colleagues (2008a, 83ff). Their suggestions include more comprehensive services for disabled women experiencing domestic violence in all sectors; training and awareness-raising in all relevant sectors (to counter myths about disability and domestic violence, challenge prevailing attitudes, and overcome fear, anxiety, and lack of commitment among service providers); improving awareness of the high affectedness of disabled women experiencing violence by several perpetratrors (through intimate partners, but also through other perpetrators like personal assistants, other carers, and family members); and allocating dedicated resources and involving disabled women in service and policy development.

5.3. Consequences for the Political Discussion

Women with disabilities are not victims per se, but the social constructions of disability and gender that lead to discrimination increase their vulnerability. In this sense, improving the life situations of disabled women not only means improving support and services (including a differentiation in need assessment according to the type of disability) and reducing barriers, but reflecting on the categorizations and social, cultural, and symbolic constructions underlying violence against women with disabilities that have contributed to their exclusion and discrimination.

For a long time women with disabilities have been "voiceless", and their experiences of violence have been largely invisible in both the disability and the women's movements (Chenoweth 1996; Thiara et al. 2012). This is changing, and women with disabilities have established political lobbies to assert their rights and to draw attention to discrimination and violence against disabled women. This may contribute to changing the perception of disabled women as passive victims and strengthening concept of disabled women as subjects of the discourse and as political actors.

5.4. Reflections on Methods: Success and Limitations of the Current Study

The current study is one of the first to succeed in including a broad range of women with different disabilities in different life situations – most of them by random sampling – and interviewing them about lifetime experiences of violence in a similar and sensitive way. Therefore specific methods to reach different groups of women were developed that could reach disabled women who are usually not included in surveys. The method of interviewing deaf women by deaf interviewers was methodologically very successful. Producing valid and comparable structured interviews with women with intellectual disabilities is still rare in empirical research but, as the example of the current research shows, it is possible and promotes the inclusion of intellectually disabled women by taking them seriously in empirical research. Of course, this is limited to respondents who can give informed consent and follow a simplified version of the interview. The experiences of more seriously intellectually disabled women will have to be investigated by other methods (such as expert interviews and/or interviews with trusted contact persons.

By sensitive questioning and thorough training of interviewers, a respectful and non-harming, boundary-keeping manner of interviewing could be provided. This was effective in ensuring the confidence of interviewees and uncovering an unexpectedly high rate of violence against these women in childhood and youth that leads to severely increased risks of victimization for women with disabilities.

The methodological considerations built a framework that provided more differentiation than in earlier studies. It allowed us not only to compare disabled to non-disabled women but also to differentiate between women with various types of disabilities. Thus, we were able to investigate differences with respect to type and seriousness of disability, housing, discrimination, and exclusion that are basic preconditions for different experiences of latent and manifest violence by partners and/or other potential perpetrators. With respect to differentiation and risk factors, the analyses of the available data of the study have still not been completed. Further secondary analyses in national and international research would be useful.

The methodology of this study was successful in exploring in greater depth the life situations of women with disabilities. The study has limitations in terms of represen-

tative sampling of deaf, blind, and severely physically and/or multiply disabled women. These women could not be found to a sufficient extent by random route sampling in households because the prevalence of these disabilities in the population is very low. The attempt to reach these women with the support of the relevant social security agency (Versorgungsamt) was not successful due to a low response rate. Therefore a supplementary convenience sample was necessary, which produced selections, e.g. of more educated women . To achieve representative samples from these groups, greater financial resources are necessary.

Reflecting on the methodology adopted in our study, it can also be concluded that interviewers in research into violence against women should be female and specifically trained for their task to gain the skills for sensitive and safe interviewing and to overcome uncertainty and prejudice. Methods for the safety of interviewers and interviewees should be taken: interviews have to be conducted alone and face-to-face without the presence of family members or other third persons. Interviewers should be prepared to avoid too much stress for respondents during the interviews and provide information on counselling for interviewees in case they need or want further information or assistance. Additional qualitative studies can deepen the understanding and interpretation of the quantitative data.[17]

One of the central problems of current prevalence research is that it is often not suited for reaching vulnerable groups and investigating their experiences of violence within the societal framework of specific forms of exclusion and discrimination in a comparative, sensitive, and respectful way.[18] We hope that this study of violence against disabled women in Germany may contribute to the ongoing development of methodology and inspire scientific discussion of this aspect.

17 Further methodological requirements are described by Nosek, Howland, and Hughes (2001).

18 This has been discussed with respect to research on violence against women from ethnic minority groups (see Thiara, Condon, and Schröttle 2011).

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An experimental study of perceptions about gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic violence in Sweden. Undergraduate students (N = 1009) read one of eight fictitious scenarios of domestic violence in married couple relationships, where sexual orientation, sex of victim and batterer, and severity of violence were varied. Perceptions of seriousness of the described incident and attitudes toward women, gays and lesbians were measured. Domestic violence was perceived as more serious in cases where: the respondent was a woman, the batterer was a man, the victim was a woman, or the battering was severe. Wife-battering in a heterosexual relationship was considered the most serious case in both the less and more severe battering scenario. Where battering was less severe, domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships was perceived as more serious than heterosexual husband-battering; this difference disappeared in the severe battering scenario. Negative attitudes toward gays, lesbians, and women were associated with less concern about domestic violence in all types of relationships. The findings suggest that stereotypes about gays, lesbians, and women affect perceptions of domestic violence, but mainly when violence is less severe.

While there is a significant body of research on public attitudes toward, and perceptions of, domestic violence in heterosexual relationships (Capezza and Arriaga 2008; Harris and Cook 1994; Locke and Richman 1999; Pierce and Harris 1993; Sorenson and Taylor 2005; Taylor and Sorenson 2005), the literature on perceptions of domestic or intimate partner violence in gay and lesbian relationships is limited to only a handful of studies (Brown and Groscup 2009; Harris and Cook 1994; Poorman, Seelau, and Seelau 2003; Seelau and Seelau 2005; Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003; Sorenson and Thomas 2009). The lack of such research means that policy-makers and other decision-makers lack the basic knowledge and understanding about domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships required for designing evidence-based interventions to prevent domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships and to support men and women who are victims of domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships. This study seeks to expand this knowledge. As is conventional in the literature, we use the term "gay" for homosexual men and "lesbian" for homosexual women.

The purpose of this study is to examine perceptions of domestic violence in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual married couple relations. Sweden is an interesting place to study this issue. Swedish public opinion about gay and lesbian relationships is among the most liberal and tolerant in the world (Gerhards 2010). Compared to many other countries, gay and lesbian people can live their lives openly in Sweden, where the law gives them the same privileges and opportunities as others. There has, therefore, been a growing interest in studying the lives of gay and lesbian people

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in Sweden (see, e.g., Ahmed, Andersson, and Hammarstedt 2008, 2011a, 2011b, 2013a, 2013b; Ahmed and Hammarstedt 2009, 2010; Andersson et al. 2006; Bergmark 1999; Rydström 2008; Röndahl, Innala, and Carlsson 2004). In 1995, gay and lesbian couples in Sweden were allowed to enter into civil unions and since 2009 gay and lesbian couples have been allowed to marry, which gave them the same legal rights and obligations as married heterosexuals. This cultural and legal environment is advantageous for studying perceptions of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic violence, since the concept of gay and lesbian marriage is broadly accepted, and thus the possibility of gay and lesbian domestic violence is understood.

The study addressed four research questions:

I. Are perceptions of gay and lesbian domestic violence different from perceptions of heterosexual domestic violence?
II. Are there gender differences in the perception of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic violence?
III. Do perceptions of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic violence vary in relation to the severity of the assault?
IV. Are perceptions of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic violence affected by attitudes toward gays, lesbians, and women?

An experimental methodology was used. Participants were randomly assigned to read one of eight fictitious scenarios about domestic violence in married couple relationships. The specific information was tailored to answering the research questions. After participants had read the story, they answered a set of questions that measured their perceptions of the domestic violence described. Finally, their attitudes towards women, gays, and lesbians were measured, followed by some demographic questions. This analysis focuses on heterosexual perceptions since the present sample consisted predominantly of heterosexual individuals.

1. Background and Hypotheses

1.1. Prior Findings

Based on previous findings on intimate partner violence in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual relationships, we expected that the sex of the respondent, the sex of the victim, and the sex of the batterer would affect perceptions of domestic violence (Brown and Groscup 2009; Harris and Cook 1994; Poorman, Seelau, and Seelau 2003; Seelau and Seelau 2005; Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003; Sorenson and Thomas 2009). Harris and Cook (1994) were the first to examine perceptions of domestic violence in both heterosexual and gay relationships. They studied college students' reactions to domestic violence in three cases: a husband battering his wife, a wife battering her husband, and a gay man battering his lover (but excluded the case of a lesbian relationship). Their results showed that respondents regarded wife-battering as more serious than husband-battering. The reactions to domestic violence involving gay lovers were somewhat less clear and were ranked between the reactions to wife-battering and husband-battering. Their results also showed that female respondents reacted more negatively than male respondents to domestic violence, regardless of the sex of batterer and victim.

Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman (2003) asked undergraduate students to read a story about a domestic violence case, in which the sex of victim and batterer was varied and included domestic violence in a lesbian relationship. They found that the participants considered battering of women to be more serious than battering of men regardless of the batterer's sex and the sexual orientation of the couple. Again, female participants showed greater levels of concern than male participants.

Poorman, Seelau, and Seelau (2003), Seelau and Seelau (2005), and Sorenson and Thomas (2009) all found that the victim's sex affected respondents' perceptions of domestic violence more than their than sexual orientation. The case where a man battered a woman was considered most serious by respondents in studies by Poorman, Seelau, and Seelau (2003) and Seelau and Seelau (2005), while the case where a woman battered a man was considered least serious by respondents in the study by Sorenson and Thomas (2009). Brown and Groscup (2009), however, report that crisis center staff considered domestic violence in same-sex relationships less serious than domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships.

1.2. Hypotheses

Previous research has consistently shown that women are more likely than men to sympathize with the victim, regardless of the sex of batterer or victim (Harris and Cook 1994; Home 1994; Pierce and Harris 1993; Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003; Stalans 1996; Summers and Feldman 1984). We therefore predicted that the perceiver's sex would influence perceptions of domestic violence in all types of relationships, with female respondents finding domestic violence more serious than male respondents (Hypothesis 1).

Gender-role stereotypes that regard men as stronger and more likely to be batterers and women as more vulnerable and more likely to be victims should lead to perceptions of domestic violence being more serious when the batterer is a man, the victim is a woman, or both (Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003). We predicted that perceived seriousness should be greatest when both elements are present (male batterer, female victim), and least when neither are present (female batterer, male victim). Accordingly, we predicted that respondents would perceive domestic violence as most serious when a husband abuses his wife (Hypothesis 2). This has been a consistent finding in studies on domestic violence in heterosexual relationships (Feather 1996; Gerber 1991; Harris and Cook 1994; Home 1994; Willis, Hallinan, and Melby 1996). We further predicted that domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships would be perceived as more serious where one of these elements (male batterer or female victim) is present than in heterosexual relationships where a wife abuses her husband (Hypothesis 3).

Capezza and Arriaga (2008) found that the level of physical aggression significantly affected participants' perceptions of domestic violence. We included two levels of domestic violence in our study: a more severe and a less severe situation. We predicted that any differences in perceptions based on sex or sexual orientation of batterer and victim would be smaller in the case of more severe abuse (Hypothesis 4). We expected that when the violence is less severe, respondents will find it serious in only certain cases (in particular husband battering wife). However, if the violence is more severe, involving brutal battering, the batterer's behavior will be perceived as serious regardless of the sex of the victim or the batterer.

Finally, we expected that prejudices against gay and lesbian people would be associated with lower perceived seriousness of domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships compared to heterosexual relationships. Accordingly, respondents would perceive domestic violence as more serious in a heterosexual relationship than in a gay or lesbian relationship. This is a competing prediction to those based on gender-role stereotypes presented earlier (Hypotheses 2 and 3). In order to evaluate these competing predictions we therefore also measured our respondents' attitudes towards gays and lesbians. We predicted that people with negative attitudes to gays and lesbians would perceive domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships to be less serious than domestic violence in heterosexual relationships (Hypothesis 5).

1.3. Contribution

Our study makes several contributions to the literature. It is to our knowledge the first study to address perceptions about domestic violence within *married* gay and lesbian couples. Since the concept of gay and lesbian marriage is unfamiliar in many countries, previous research has compared perceptions of domestic violence in non-marital gay and lesbian relationships with domestic violence in heterosexual marital relationships (Harris and Cook 1994). This type of comparison and analysis obviously confounds gender constellation and legal status of the relationship. Other studies have therefore focused on intimate partner violence (rather than domestic violence) in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual relationships (Poorman, Seelau, and Seelau 2003; Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003; Seelau and Seelau 2005; Sorenson and Thomas 2009; Taylor and Sorenson 2005). Second, as far as we know this is the first study on perceptions pertaining to domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships in Sweden. As mentioned before, Sweden is comparatively tolerant of gay and lesbian lifestyles. Conducting research on domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships in a more tolerant country is important for future cross-cultural comparisons. Third, this study examines how severity of violence influences perceptions of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic viol-

ence. And finally, the study also examined the role of attitudes towards gay and lesbian people in forming perceptions about domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

A total of 1,074 undergraduate students at Linnaeus University in Sweden were recruited to participate in the study. Sixty-five cases had to be excluded due to missing data. Hence, the analysis is based on 1,009 participants, of whom 575 were female and 434 were male. Participants' age ranged from 18 to 59 years ($M = 25$, $SD = 8.11$). Four hundred and fifty-eight participants were single and 551 had a partner. One hundred and fifty-three participants were parents. The vast majority, 990, were heterosexuals; two were gay or lesbian, twelve were bisexual, and five reported other sexual orientations. One hundred and ninety-seven participants reported that they had experienced some form of abuse in their life, while sixty-seven reported that they had been perpetrators in an incidence of abuse. A preliminary analysis of participants' characteristics showed that besides sex, none of the other characteristics were significantly related to our dependent variable and the composition of participants in different experimental conditions was not statistically different. These characteristics will, therefore, not be analyzed further. Descriptive statistics and composition of participants in different experimental conditions are presented in Table A1 in the Appendix.

2.2. Scenarios and Instruments

All materials used in this study were pre-tested on seventeen faculty administrators to optimize for wording, clarity, appropriateness, feasibility, and time.

2.2.1. Domestic Violence Scenarios

Each participant read a fictitious domestic violence scenario adapted from the work of Kristiansen and Giulietti (1990). Information about the victim's sex (male or female), the batterer's sex (male or female), and the severity of the violence (less and more severe) was varied. Each participant was randomly assigned to read one of eight possible versions. The scenario was written so that it would be consistent with any of the eight situations. The text of the scenario for the case in which a lesbian woman abuses her wife with less severe violence is cited by way of illustration:

> On March 17, 2010, the police received a telephone call reporting an incident of marital violence. Upon arrival at the residence where the violence had occurred, police conducted interviews with the two married women. It became clear that Anna, a 48-year-old saleswoman in the electronics industry, had come home from work around 7 p.m. Her 46-year-old wife, Maria, was already home, but no children. Maria had come home from her work as an accountant at 6 p.m., about one hour later than normal. As Maria had got home from work late and had not had time to shop on the way, she had chosen to prepare the leftovers from the previous day's dinner. After setting the table and putting the food in the oven, Maria went into the living room to watch TV. When Anna came home at 7 p.m., she asked Maria what she had prepared for supper. Maria replied that she had been delayed at work, had not had time to do the shopping, and had therefore prepared the leftovers from the previous day's dinner. When Anna heard this, she became upset and said that Maria should begin to prioritize the family and should not always put her work first.
>
> Maria then went into the kitchen to continue preparing the evening meal. Anna came after her and talked to her in an even angrier tone. In the kitchen Anna grabbed Maria's arm and gave her two sharp slaps, the second of which knocked Maria to the floor. Anna left the house, but returned just before the police arrived.

In the more severe case of violence the last paragraph was replaced by the following:

> Maria then went into the kitchen to continue preparing the evening meal. Anna came after her and talked to her in an even angrier tone. In the kitchen Anna grabbed Maria's arm and gave her two powerful punches, the second of which knocked her to the floor. Anna gave her a couple of kicks when she was already down and then took the floor lamp and used it to repeatedly hit Maria's upper body. When Maria eventually stood up, Anna threw a glass bowl that cut a large gash in Maria's forehead and smashed on the kitchen floor. Anna then screamed that she would kill Maria and chased her out of the house. Maria was forced to seek protection in the neighboring house. When the police arrived, however, both Maria and Anna had returned to their house, where the next-door couple was now present as well.

After reading the scenario, participants responded to nine items measuring their perceptions about the domestic violence, adapted from Pierce and Harris (1993). The measures

were translated into Swedish and adjusted in wording and formulation to accommodate the Swedish context and our participants. The nine items comprised three concerning the incident itself, three concerning the batterer, and three concerning the victim. They were all rated on a scale ranging from (1) to (7). The complete texts (translated into English) appear in Table A2 in the Appendix. Total scores ranged from 9 to 63 with higher scores reflecting respondents perceiving the scenario as more serious and being more concerned about the situation described. The total score of these nine dependent measures was used as the main dependent variable in our analysis. We called this the Opinion of Domestic Violence Scale (ODVS). The internal consistency for the ODVS was .79.

2.2.2. Attitude Measures

After completing the items that measured perceptions of the domestic violence scenario, participants completed a survey packet that contained the short version of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS) adapted from Spence and Hahn (1997), the short version of the Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ATLG) adapted from Herek and Capitanio (1995), and some demographic and other questions. Both the AWS and the ATLG were translated into Swedish and then back into English and compared with the original version in order to avoid discrepancies. The AWS contained fourteen items on a scale from (1) to (7).[1] Items included statements such as "Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than a man." The AWS also included some reverse-coded items, such as: "Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men." The total scores ranged from 14 to 98, with higher scores reflecting more negative attitudes about women. For the present sample, the internal consistency was .79.

The ATLG comprised six items on a seven-point scale. Three items were about gays and three about lesbians. The items about gays (lesbians) were: "Sex between two men (women) is just plain wrong," "I think male (female) homosexuals are disgusting," and "Male (Female) homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men (women)." Total scores ranged between 6 and 42, with higher scores reflecting more negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians. The internal consistency for the ATLG was .87.

2.3. Procedure

The experiment was conducted during spring 2011 at Linnaeus University in Växjö. The Scientific Review Board of the Swedish Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority approved the procedures. Subjects volunteered to participate and were informed that the purpose of the study was to study perceptions of domestic violence. Sessions were conducted in a classroom with approximately twenty-five to fifty participants per session. Participants were seated in such a way that that concerns about being observed would not affect their responses. After an introduction, participants were given a questionnaire packet that contained all the survey materials. They were told to read the story and complete the questionnaire at their own pace. Sessions lasted up to 45 minutes. After the session, the experimenters thanked, paid, and debriefed the participants. All participants received cinema vouchers, worth 300 Swedish Krona, as compensation.[2] Confidentiality was ensured.

3. Results

3.1. Perceptions of Domestic Violence

The possible range for the dependent variable ODVS, perceived seriousness of domestic violence, was 9 to 63 and the mean for the total sample was 54.36 ($SD = 7.21$). Higher scores reflected perception of a scenario as more serious and greater concern about the described situation. Data were submitted to a 2 (respondent's sex) × 2 (batterer's sex) × 2 (victim's sex) × 2 (violence severity) analysis of variance (ANOVA). The means and standard deviations from this analysis are presented in Table 1. The analysis revealed eight significant results.

1 The original AWS in Spence and Hahn (1997) contained fifteen items. We excluded one that did not apply to the Swedish context: "It is insulting to women to have the 'obey' clause remain in the marriage service."

2 SEK 300 was equivalent to about €32 or $43 at the time of the experiment.

Table 1: Mean Opinion of Domestic Violence Scale (ODVS) scores, standard deviations, and Ns for participants in different conditions

		Female respondent		Male respondent	
		Female victim	Male victim	Female victim	Male victim
Low severity	Female batterer	*M* = 52.29	*M* = 49.62	*M* = 48.18	*M* = 45.63
		SD = 5.93	*SD* = 6.53	*SD* = 5.94	*SD* = 6.60
		N = 78	*N* = 66	*N* = 50	*N* = 59
	Male batterer	*M* = 56.18	*M* = 51.31	*M* = 53.08	*M* = 48.22
		SD = 4.65	*SD* = 5.74	*SD* = 5.54	*SD* = 6.89
		N = 77	*N* = 75	*N* = 52	*N* = 50
High severity	Female batterer	*M* = 57.20	*M* = 58.00	*M* = 54.21	*M* = 56.83
		SD = 6.68	*SD* = 5.13	*SD* = 7.98	*SD* = 5.48
		N = 71	*N* = 72	*N* = 52	*N* = 58
	Male batterer	*M* = 60.74	*M* = 57.66	*M* = 60.75	*M* = 56.77
		SD = 3.30	*SD* = 5.45	*SD* = 2.42	*SD* = 6.89
		N = 65	*N* = 71	*N* = 60	*N* = 53

Note: Total ODVS scores ranged from 9 to 63, with higher scores reflecting respondents perceiving the scenario as more serious and being more concerned about the situation described.

First, all four main effects were statistically significant. The perceived seriousness was significantly higher among female respondents ($M = 55.32$, $SD = 6.54$) than among male respondents ($M = 53.09$, $SD = 7{,}86$), $F(1, 993) = 42.95$, $p < .001$, supporting Hypothesis 1. The perceived seriousness was significantly lower when the batterer was a woman ($M = 52.98$, $SD = 7.56$) than when the batterer was a man ($M = 55.75$, $SD = 7.56$), $F(1, 993) = 59.46$, $p < .001$. The perceived seriousness was significantly higher when the victim was a women ($M = 55.54$, $SD = 6.70$) than when the victim was a man ($M = 53.18$, $SD = 7.52$), $F(1, 993) = 39.71$, $p < .001$. In combination, these findings are consistent with Hypotheses 2 and 3. Not surprisingly, the last main effect showed that the perceived seriousness was significantly higher in the more severe case ($M = 57.86$, $SD = 5.90$) than in the less severe case ($M = 50.89$, $SD = 6.70$), $F(1, 993) = 381.85$, $p < .001$.

Second, four interaction effects were statistically significant. There was a significant interaction between respondent's sex and violence severity, $F(1, 993) = 9.86$, $p = .002$. Closer inspection of this interaction revealed that this result was driven by the difference in perceived seriousness between female and male respondents being larger in the less severe scenario than in the more severe scenario, which supports Hypothesis 4. In the less severe scenario, the mean ODVS score for female respondents ($M = 52.46$, $SD = 6.18$) was 3.78 units higher than for male respondents ($M = 48.68$, $SD = 6.81$), $t(505) = 6.50$, $p < .001$. In the more severe scenario, the mean ODVS score for female respondents ($M = 58.35$, $SD = 5.46$) was only 1.09 units higher than for male respondents ($M = 57.26$, $SD = 6.37$), $t(500) = 2.06$, $p = .040$.

The other three significant interactions were between the batterer's sex and the victim's sex, $F(1, 993) = 25.77$, $p < .001$, between the victim's sex and violence severity, $F(1{,}993) = 14.73$, $p < .001$, and between the batterer's sex, the victim's sex, and violence severity, $F(1, 993) = 4.09$, $p = .043$. A detailed inspection of these interaction effects showed, first of all, that the case in which a man battered his wife was always perceived as more serious in terms of ODVS scores ($M = 57.79$, $SD = 5.15$) than when a woman battered her husband ($M = 52.70$, $SD = 7.80$), a man battered his husband ($M = 53.66$, $SD = 7.20$), or a woman battered her wife ($M = 53.26$, $SD = 7.30$), $F(3, 1005) =$

28.53, $p < .001$. This was true regardless of whether the violence was less, $F(3, 503) = 29.86$, $p < .001$, or more severe, $F(3, 498) = 16.26$, $p < .001$. This further confirms Hypothesis 2.

Secondly, the scenarios where a man battered his husband or a woman battered her wife were not perceived differently by respondents in terms of the ODVS; neither in the less severe case, $t(251) = .78$, $p = .439$, nor in the more severe case, $t(245) = 1.57$, $p = .119$. Thirdly, the less severe scenarios where a man battered his husband ($M = 50.07$, $SD = 6.38$) and where a woman battered her wife ($M = 50.69$, $SD = 6.25$) were perceived as more serious in terms of the ODVS than the less severe scenario where a woman battered her husband ($M = 47.74$, $SD = 6.83$), $F(2, 375) = 7.24$, $p = .001$. The combination of these results further confirms Hypothesis 3.

And finally, in the more severe case there were no significant differences in perception of the domestic violence between the scenarios where a man battered his husband (M = 57.28, $SD = 6.10$), where a woman battered her wife ($M = 55.93$, $SD = 7.38$), and where a woman battered her husband ($M = 57.48$, $SD = 5.30$), $F(2, 374) = 2.22$, $p = .110$, further confirming Hypothesis 4.

In other words, violence in a heterosexual relationship where a man batters his wife was always considered the most serious case regardless of the level of violence. Further, violence in gay relationships was not perceived differently from violence in lesbian relationships. And finally, violence in gay and lesbian relationships was perceived as more serious than violence in heterosexual relationships where a women batters her husband, but only when the nature of the violence was less severe.

3.2. Attitudes Toward Women, Lesbians, and Gay Men and Perceptions of Domestic Violence

The AWS ranged from 14 to 98, with higher scores reflecting more negative attitudes about women. The mean for the total sample was 23.59 ($SD = 9.61$). The ATLG ranged from 6 to 42, with higher scores reflecting more negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians. For the ATLG, the mean for the total sample was 16.31 ($SD = 8.37$). The means and standard deviations for AWS and ATLG are given in Table 2, according to couple types. The AWS and ATLG were strongly and positively correlated, $r = .487$, $p < .001$, while the ODVS was negatively correlated with both AWS, $r = –.298$, $p < .001$, and ATLG, $r = – .173$, $p < .001$. We performed a median split on both AWS and ATLG to transform them into categorical dummy variables and use them in ANOVAs.

To study the impact of attitudes towards women on perceptions of seriousness, we performed a 2 (respondent's sex) × 2 (batterer's sex) × 2 (victim's sex) × 2 (median divided AWS) ANOVA. First, the main effect of the AWS was significant, $F(1, 993) = 38.60$, $p < .001$. Participants scoring below the median of AWS considered the domestic violence significantly more serious ($M = 56.04$, $SD = 6.17$) than participants with AWS scores above the median ($M = 52.75$, $SD = 7.76$). Second, the interaction between the batterer's sex and the AWS was statistically significant, $F(1,993) = 6.03$, $p = .014$. Further inspection showed that this interaction was due to the fact that the significant difference in perceptions of domestic violence when the batterer was a male compared to when the batterer was a female decreased with increasingly negative attitudes about women. Participants with attitudes below the AWS median had a mean ODVS score of 57.64 ($SD = 4.89$) and 54.25 ($SD = 6.92$) when the batterer was a man and a woman, respectively, resulting in a mean ODVS difference of 3.39 units, $t(491) = 6.33$, $p < .001$. Participants with attitudes above the AWS median had a mean ODVS score of 53.72 ($SD = 7.49$) and 51.89 ($SD = 7.91$) when the batterer was a male and a female, respectively, resulting in a mean ODVS difference of 1.83 units, $t(514) = 2.69$, $p = .007$.

Table 2: Mean scores, standard deviations, and Ns for the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS) and the Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ATLG) for participants in different conditions

	Husband batters wife	Wife batters husband	Husband batters husband	Wife batters wife
AWS	*M* = 23.07	*M* = 24.19	*M* = 23.38	*M* = 23.72
	SD = 9.33	*SD* = 9.90	*SD* = 9.73	*SD* = 9.49
	N = 254	*N* = 255	*N* = 249	*N* = 251
ATLG	*M* = 16.53	*M* = 15.73	*M* = 16.35	*M* = 16.63
	SD = 8.92	SD = 8.03	SD = 8.11	SD = 8.42
	N = 254	N = 255	N = 249	N = 251

Note: The total scores for the AWS ranged from 14 to 98, with higher scores reflecting more negative attitudes toward women. Total scores for the ATLG could range from 7 to 42 with higher scores reflecting more negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians. There were no significant differences in AWS, $F(3, 1005) = .63$, $p = 0.594$, and ATLG, $F(3, 1005) = .59$, $p = 0.623$, across the different conditions.

A parallel analysis was conducted for attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. In a 2 (respondent's sex) × 2 (batterer's sex) × 2 (victim's sex) × 2 (median divided ATLG) ANOVA only the main effect of the ATLG was statistically significant, $F(1, 993) = 19.03$, $p < .001$. Respondents with less negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians perceived the domestic violence as more serious in all domestic violence cases ($M = 55.49$, $SD = 6.54$) than respondents with more negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians ($M = 53.17$, $SD = 7.69$). Hence, we found no support for Hypothesis 5 (that negative attitudes towards gays and lesbians would lead to lower seriousness scores for domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships than in heterosexual relationships).

4. Discussion

In this experimental study from Sweden examining undergraduates' perceptions of domestic violence in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual relationships, participants were asked to read domestic violence scenarios which varied in terms of batterer's sex, victim's sex, and violence severity. Perceptions of seriousness constituted the dependent variable. In line with Hypothesis 1, the results of our study showed that female respondents perceived domestic violence as more serious than male respondents regardless of sex and sexual orientation of batterer and spouse. This difference in male and female respondents' perceptions of domestic violence was, however, larger in cases where the violence was less severe, supporting Hypothesis 4. Consistent with Hypothesis 2 and 3, the scenario where the batterer was a man was considered more serious than the scenario where the batterer was a woman, and the scenario where the victim was a woman was perceived as more serious than when the victim was a man. Furthermore, closer inspection of the interaction effects related to violence severity and sex of batterer and victim revealed interesting patterns regarding perceptions of domestic violence. The case when a husband battered his wife was always seen as more serious than any other gender constellation, both in the less and more severe scenarios, further confirming Hypothesis 2. Domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships was perceived as more serious than violence in a heterosexual relationship where a wife battered her husband, but only in the less severe case, confirming Hypothesis 3 and 4. There were no differences in perceptions of domestic violence in gay compared to lesbian relationships (independently of violence severity). Finally, our results showed that negative attitudes toward gays, lesbian, and women were associated with lower seriousness scores irrespective of the gender constellation of victim and perpetrator. Thus, we found no support for Hypothesis 5.

Our results are in line with the prediction made on the basis of gender-role stereotypes. The domestic violence scenario that involved both a male batterer and a female victim was perceived as the most serious case regardless of violence severity. Also, as predicted, the domestic violence cases that involved at least a male batterer (gay couple) or a female victim (lesbian couple) were perceived as more serious than the case that involved neither a male batter nor a female victim (i.e. the case where a wife battered her husband). This was true at least in the less severe case of

domestic violence. These results are largely consistent with prior findings on gay, lesbian, and heterosexual domestic violence (Harris and Cook 1994; Poorman, Seelau, and Seelau 2003; Seelau and Seelau 2005; Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003; Sorenson and Thomas 2009).

We found limited support for the competing prediction, based on prejudices against gays and lesbians, that domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships would be perceived as less serious than domestic violence in heterosexual relationships. Although the case where a husband battered his wife was considered the most serious case, the fact that gay and lesbian domestic violence was considered more serious than the case where a wife battered her husband (in the less severe case) and the fact that the interaction effect between negative attitudes toward gay and lesbian people and sexual orientation of the couple was not statistically significant provides little support for the alternative prejudice-based hypothesis.

The prediction that female respondents would perceive situations as more serious than male respondents was supported in our data, confirming previous findings in the literature (Harris and Cook 1994; Home 1994; Pierce and Harris 1993; Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman 2003; Stalans 1996; Summers and Feldman 1984). We also found some support for the prediction that greater severity of domestic violence would reduce the differences in perceptions of domestic violence in gay, lesbian, and heterosexual relationships. First, differences across scenarios involving gays, lesbians, and a wife battering her husband disappeared in the more violent case. Second, sex differences in perceptions of domestic violence were smaller when the violence was more severe. One should, however, remember that the difference between the two levels of severity was quite large: two slaps versus a brutal beating. Our findings show that when violence and battering become very severe and brutal, various differences in perceptions found at the lower level of violence severity virtually disappear. This is true for all cases except for the one where a man batters his wife, which is always perceived as the most serious scenario.

There are some limitations to our study that need to be mentioned. First, the reader should bear in mind that 98 percent of our sample consisted of heterosexual individuals. Perceptions of domestic violence documented in this paper, therefore, reflect perceptions of heterosexual individuals. Second, the means of the seriousness measure were all at the high end of the response scale. This implies that while violence severity and the sex of respondent, batterer, and victim affected perceptions, respondents considered all scenarios as quite serious. Third, the means of both the attitudes toward lesbians and gay men scale and the attitudes toward women scale were at the low end of the response scale, which indicates that respondents in our experiment overall rejected negative statements about gays, lesbians, and women. This means that the perceptions of domestic violence reported here are based on a sample that overall had positive views of gay and lesbian people, held gender equality values, and reacted negatively to domestic violence. This might explain why we did not find support for Hypothesis 5 in our data. Fourth, this study was conducted with undergraduate students, which limits our ability to generalize our results to a broader population since a study's population can influence its conclusions (Sears 1986). Students differ, for example, in education, age, and attitudes from the rest of the population, which might affect perceptions of domestic violence. Finally, the very high scores on the ODVS and very low scores on the AGLS and the AWS may also indicate socially desirable responding.

Future studies should seek to circumvent the limitations of the current study. Experimental studies with samples more representative of the general population would be useful to determine the generalizability of findings based on undergraduate students. Moreover, studies on perceptions of domestic violence are often limited to the views of heterosexuals. Researchers should collect data that make it possible to examine differences in perceptions of domestic violence based on respondents' sexual orientation. Future studies should also examine findings from different countries with different laws, different acceptance of violence in heterosexual, gay, and lesbian relationships, and different attitudes toward gays, lesbians, and women. Finally, in the current study the abuse studied was physical, as is the case in most of the literature on domestic violence. Future work should therefore put some effort into examining perceptions of domestic violence involving psychological and sexual abuse.

Appendix

Table A1: Information about participants by experimental condition

	Experimental condition				
	Husband batters wife	Wife batters husband	Husband batters husband	Wife batters wife	All participants
Female	55.9%	54.1%	58.6%	59.4%	57.0%
Single	45.7%	45.9%	45.4%	44.6%	45.4%
Parent	15.4%	17.3%	14.1%	13.9%	15.2%
Heterosexual	98.0%	97.2%	98.8%	98.4%	98.1%
Gay or lesbian	0%	0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%
Bisexual	1.6%	2.0%	0.4%	0.8%	1.2%
Other sexuality	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%
Victim	18.1%	21.6%	16.9%	21.5%	19.5%
Perpetrator	6.7%	6.7%	6.4%	6.8%	6.8%
Age	25.5 years	25.3 years	25.4 years	24.9 years	25.3 years
Number of participants	254	255	249	251	1,009

Note: Results of one-way ANOVAs showed no significant differences between participants in the different experimental conditions, implying a successful randomization.

Table A2: Items in the Opinion of Domestic Violence Scale (ODVS)

Item	Average score	
	M	*SD*
How serious was the incident?	5.86	1.24
If you had witnessed this incident as a third person, how likely would it have been that you would have called the police?	6.16	1.82
How violent was this incident?	5.46	1.41
How responsible was the batterer for the incident?	6.72	0.73
The batterer's actions were justified.	6.62*	1.13
Overall how much do you sympathize with the batterer?	6.62*	0.97
How responsible was the victim for the incident?	6.47*	1.06
The victim suffered serious abuse from the batterer.	5.34	1.69
Overall, how much do you sympathize with the victim?	6.11	1.34

Note: N = 1,009. Range = [1, 7]. High scores indicate that respondents were more concerned and perceived the situation in the scenario as more serious. Asterisk denotes reverse coding.

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College Students' Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence: A Comparative Study of Japan, China, and the United States

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An investigation of cross-cultural differences between the United States, Japan, and China in perceptions of male to female intimate partner violence, and in the extent to which gender and traditional attitudes toward women related to these perceptions. College students (n = 943) read two fictitious scenarios describing marital and dating violence. MANOVA results showed gender differences in the perceptions of violence between the three countries. Male participants had more traditional attitudes toward women and placed more blame on female victims. The magnitude of the difference between women's and men's scores was much smaller for Japanese students than for American and Chinese students. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses demonstrated that the effects of respondent gender were reduced when traditional attitudes toward women were taken into account. Differences in beliefs about appropriate gender roles still exist among college students in these countries and may be related to socially tolerant attitudes toward violence against women.

Violence against women and girls continues to be one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It occurs in various forms including physical, sexual, psychological, structural, and economic abuse, and cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth, and geography. It takes place in the home, on the streets, in schools, at the workplace, in the fields, in refugee camps, during conflicts and crises (see Denmark et al. 2006 for more information on these issues). A report from the World Health Organization (WHO) (Garcia-Moreno et al. 2006) suggested that up to 70 percent of women globally experience physical or sexual violence from men in their lifetime – the majority by husbands, intimate partners, or others they know. The effects of violence can be devastating to a woman's reproductive health as well as to other aspects of her physical and mental well-being (Heise, Ellberg, and Gottemoeller 1999). These consequences can lead to hospitalization, disability, or death.

When designing and implementing intervention programmes or prevention activities, it is important to understand the context of violence and social construction in which partner violence against women occurs. It is also critical to consider societal perceptions of violence against women (Bui 2005; Kolawole and Uche 2005; Kulkarni, Racine, and Ramos 2012; Walker 1999). Although cross-cultural studies have been undertaken on prevalence, pat-

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terns, causes, and consequences of violence against women, little research has been conducted on the perception of violence against women across varying and diverse cultures (Nayak et al. 2003, Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown 2009). The purpose of our study is thus to examine college students' perceptions of violence against women. In particular, we investigate both men's and women's perceptions of intimate partner violence in marital and dating scenarios, and whether these judgments are related to nationality and attitudes toward women's roles.

1. Background and Literature

1.1. Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States, Japan, and China

In the United States, according to a national intimate partner and sexual violence survey conducted in 2011 with 16,507 adults (Black et al. 2011), more than three in ten women (35.6 percent) have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner. Victims reported that the violence negatively impacted them in a variety of ways (for example, made them feel fearful or concerned for their safety, resulted in an injury or need for services, or caused loss of days at work or school). Thus, it is clear this is an important problem in the United States.

In Japan, a survey conducted by the Gender Equality Bureau in 2011 with 1,751 Japanese women with current or former intimate partners found that 32.9 percent reported suffering physical assaults, psychological threats, or sexual coercion by a partner. This finding is consistent with the results of two earlier surveys, conducted in 2005 (Gender Equality Bureau 2005) and 2008 (Gender Equality Bureau 2008).

In China, building on earlier surveys conducted in 1990 and 2000, the All-China Women's Federation and the National Bureau of Statistics in 2011 conducted a representative national survey involving 105,573 adults aged 18 and over and 20,405 adolescents aged between 10 and 17. Results indicated that 24.7 percent of Chinese women have encountered domestic abuse, including beating, rape, and confinement during their marriages (China Daily 2011). These results indicate that the United States, Japan, and China have high rates of intimate partner violence that deserve further attention.

1.2. Effect of Gender on Victim Blame Attribution and Attitudes Toward Women

1.2.1. Effect of Gender on Victim Blame Attribution

It has been suggested that women are victimized twice in the case of intimate violence; first in the actual incident of violence, and second in the perception that they are blamed for their victimization by the police, emergency services, or the public (Summers and Feldman 1984, Fehler-Cabral, Campbell, and Debra 2011). This perception that women are at fault for their own victimization is called "victim blame attribution". Researchers have examined how observers judge victims of violence. Summers and Feldman (1984) had 120 undergraduate students viewed a videotape depicting a violent interaction between a heterosexual couple whose relationship was described as either married, living together, or acquainted. They found that as the intimacy of the relationship increased, observers made increasingly internal attributions blaming the female victim for the abusive behaviour.

Hillier and Foddy (1993) suggested that men were much more likely than women to blame a female victim of violence. Thus, both men and women appear to be more likely to be sympathetic toward the person of their own gender within a situation of male violence toward a female partner. This suggestion was confirmed in studies in the United States (Bryant and Spencer 2003, Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown 2009) and in Japan (Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown 2009). Further, there is also evidence in U.S. studies that women are more likely than men to support female victims of intimate partner violence (Frieze 2005), and blame the male perpetrator (Sugarman and Cohn 1986). Although we have no Chinese data regarding gender differences, we would also expect this to be the case in China. Thus, we propose that in all three countries, women will be less likely than men to blame female victims of violence.

1.2.1. Effect of Gender on Attitudes Toward Women

"Some people believe that intimate partner violence occurs because the victim provokes the abuser to violent action, while others believe the abuser has a problem managing anger" (Bragg 2003). Values within the culture may relate to more specific views about responsibility for intimate partner violence. One of the most consistent predictors of

perceptions that support violence against women is gender role attitudes, defined as beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women (McHugh and Frieze 1997).

Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) conducted detailed interviews with IBM employees in seventy-six countries using five dimensions of culture (power, self, gender, predictability, time). A key cultural dimension that emerged from these interviews is *masculinity versus femininity*. This dimension focuses on the degree to which "traditional" gender roles are assigned in a culture; for example, men are considered aggressive and competitive, while women are expected to be gentler and concerned with home and family. They found that the United States, Japan, and China were all masculine societies, where "sense of responsibility", "decisiveness", "liveliness", and "ambitiousness" were considered characteristics more found in men, while "caring" and "gentleness" were seen as being more found in women (Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov 2010). Considering the effect of gender on victim blame attribution and attitudes toward women, we propose:

Hypothesis 1. In all three countries, women will be less likely than men to blame female victims of violence. Additionally, compared to men, women in all three countries will hold less traditional gender role attitudes (attitudes toward women).

1.3. Assessment of Attitudes Toward Women's Roles

The most popular and well-validated measures of attitudes toward gender roles is Spence and Helmreich's Attitudes Toward Women scale (ATW) (McHugh and Frieze 1997). Although developed in the United States in the early 1970s, this scale is still widely used in contemporary studies (e.g., Dasgupta and Rivera 2006; Forbes, Adams-Curtis, and White 2004; Whitley and Ægisdóttir 2000; Wyer 2003) including studies in China (Chia et al. 1994), Slovenia and Croatia (Frieze et al. 2003), and Pakistan (Khalid and Frieze 2004). The scale includes statements about the rights and roles of women and men in five major areas in society: (1) "vocational, educational, and intellectual activities"; (2) "the freedom and independence rights of women compared to men in society"; (3) "the acceptability of various dating and etiquette behaviours for men and women"; (4) "the acceptability of drinking, swearing, and joke-telling behaviours"; and (5) "attitudes toward marital relationships and obligations" (Loo and Thorpe 1998). The ATW scale is relevant because it focuses on traditional beliefs about gender roles on a wide range of dimensions.

1.4. Effects of Country on Traditional Attitudes Toward Women and Victim Blame Attribution

We also considered possible differences between the three countries in relation to traditional attitudes toward the role of women. Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010) used the Masculine Index to assess the traditional gender-role dimension. Masculine Index values were calculated based on the country's factor score in a factor analysis of the fourteen work goals (for example, earnings, recognition, cooperation, etc.). The factor scores for the masculine dimension were multiplied by 25 and a constant number of 50 points was added. This process put the scores in a range from close to 0 for the most feminine country to close to 100 for the most masculine one. Among the 76 countries that were scored, Japan scored very high (with a score of 95) and ranked second, China (66) ranked eleventh, and the United States (62) ranked nineteenth. All three countries were above the average score of 50 with clearly distinct gender roles. However, Japan had a much higher score than the United States or China. Also, Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown (2009), who conducted a cross cultural study between Japan and the United States investigating the relationship between traditional gender roles and domestic violence found that Japanese students demonstrated greater adherence to traditional gender roles (negative attitudes toward women) and that Japanese students tended to blame victims more than American students. Based on these results, we propose:

Hypothesis 2. Students in Japan will have more traditional attitudes toward women than students in China and the United States. Additionally, Japanese students will blame the victim of intimate partner violence more than Chinese and American students.

1.5. Relationship Between Attitudes Toward Women and Victim Blame Attribution

As proposed in hypotheses 1 and 2, the main effects of gender and country on victim blame attribution might be

at least partially due to differences in attitudes toward women among men and women across the three different countries. Therefore, we also test the hypothesis that victim blame attribution is explained by attitudes toward women. Operationally, when attitudes toward women are included in hierarchical multiple regression with victim blame attribution as the outcome, we predict that the gender effect and country effect will decrease significantly when the attitudes toward women variable is added in a later step.

Hypothesis 3. The effects of gender and country on victim blame attribution will be diminished when attitudes toward women are taken into account.

2. Method

2.1. Participants and Procedures

A total of 1,034 questionnaires were distributed to undergraduate students in three different countries. The researchers introduced the project to the students, answered questions, and assured students that their participation was completely voluntary and nonparticipation would not have any academic impact. Participants completed the questionnaire in approximately fifteen minutes. The classroom setting in Japan and China, and the voluntary group setting in the United States helped to produce 100 percent response rates in all three countries. Seventy-nine respondents who failed to complete all the items or gave identical answers to many items were excluded from analysis, as were twelve respondents aged under 18 or over 30. The final sample comprised 943 participants (278 American, 481 Japanese, and 184 Chinese). Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of the participants in the study.

In the United States, the survey was administered at a large urban university in 2011. Rather than completing the survey in the classroom, participants, who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course, received course credit for voluntarily coming to a specified location and taking the survey in groups no larger than thirty students. The participating university's ethical review board approved the study.

Table 1: Sample

		The United States (N = 278)		Japan (N = 481)		China (N = 184)	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender	Male	155	55.8	155	32.2	65	35.3
	Female	123	44.2	326	67.8	119	64.7
Age	18–20	263	94.6	397	82.5	81	44.0
	21–22	13	4.7	78	16.2	102	55.4
	23–30	2	0.7	6	1.2	1	0.5
Years in college	1st	207	74.5	359	74.6	1	0.5
	2nd	52	18.7	27	5.6	183	99.5
	3rd	12	4.3	63	13.1	–	–
	4th	6	2.1	28	5.8	–	–
	5th	1	0.4	4	0.8	–	–
Excluded from analysis							
Suspect responses		9		27		15	
Missing values		11		17		–	
Under 18 or over 30		5		5		2	

The data from Japan came in two parts. Because female students outnumbered male by more than three to one in the first sample, a second sample was sought. Controlling for gender, there were no significant differences between the two samples on any of the scales, so the two datasets were combined for analysis.

The English version of the questionnaire was translated into Japanese and back into English by two collaborators proficient in both Japanese and English. The Japanese version was administered at four different universities in introductory psychology classes. Questionnaires were ethically reviewed and approved by a participating university. The survey was administered in 2011 and 2012.

The Chinese sample was the smallest. The survey was translated and back-translated by two collaborators proficient in both Chinese and English. The survey was conducted in 2011 in agriculture, computer science and humanities classes at a large urban university. Since there were no ethical review boards in China at that time, this type of ethical approval could not be obtained.

2.2. Stimulus Materials and Measures

Participants were asked to read two fictitious scenarios focusing on attitudes towards male violence in marriage and dating. The scenario in the marriage condition (developed by Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown 2009) described a marital violence situation in which a husband hit his wife (see scenario 1). The sentence "He got irate when her breath smelled strongly of alcohol" was omitted since women drinking at party with friends might be condemned and considered as violating traditional gender roles (see McDonald 1994). For the dating condition, we developed a scenario based on Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown (2009). This scenario described a dating violence situation of a man hitting his girlfriend (see scenario 2). The details in this scenario were changed, but the injury level was kept similar.

Scenario 1

Steve and Marci have been married for about four years and have two young children. Steve works hard to support his family, while Marci stays at home with the children. One day, Marci went out with her friends to a party and came back home at one o'clock in the morning. While Marci was partying, Steve took care of the children, put them to bed, and finished all the chores. When Marci came home, Steve was already very angry at her. He could not control his anger, so he hit her. Marci then lost her balance and hit her forehead on the edge of the kitchen cabinet. From this impact, Marci received a wound that was deep enough that she required three stitches at the hospital emergency room.

Scenario 2

Michael and Susan have been dating for about four years. Both are students at the university. One day, Susan went out with her friends and then came over to see Michael. Michael had been working hard on a project for one of his classes. He had wanted her help with this and was very angry at Susan for going out with her friends. He was quite upset with her and slapped her fairly hard. She fell and broke a bone in her hand. This required a visit to the emergency room to reset the hand and to get pain pills.

In the Japanese and Chinese scenarios the names were changed to fit each culture.

Measure of victim blame attribution (Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown 2009). After reading each of the scenarios, participants were asked to respond to items assessing victim blame attribution. This measure consisted of five items: (a) Marci/Susan had some fault in this incident; (b) Marci/Susan provoked this incident; (c) Marci/Susan has some responsibility for creating this situation; (d) Marci/Susan should be blamed for being hit; (e) Marci/Susan should be punished because she behaved badly. Participants were asked to rate these items on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores on this measure indicate more blame attribution to the female victim of intimate violence. The internal consistency of the victim blame attribution measure was adequate to proceed with the main analyses. Cronbach's alpha for the victim blame attribution scale in the United States, Japan, and China, respectively, was .77, .82, .71 in scenario 1 and .76, .89, .78 in scenario 2. The victim-blame attribution score for each scenario was computed by dividing the sum of item scores by the number of items.

Measure of attitudes toward women. The fifteen-item ATW scale was developed by Spence and Helmreich (1978). Participants indicate their level of agreement with statements about the roles of women and men, with reponses coded

on a scale from 1 to 5 where higher scores represent greater conservatism. Analyses of the internal consistency conducted using Cronbach's alpha indicated that internal consistency improved if the item "It is insulting to women to have the 'obey' clause still in the marriage service" was excluded. Thus, this item was omitted, resulting in alpha values of .83, .72, and .73, for the United States, Japan, and China respectively. Two examples of the fourteen items used in our scale are "Under modern economic conditions, with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing laundry" (reverse coded) and "There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted."

2. Results

2.1. Preliminary Analysis

Preliminary descriptive statistics were run for all scales in each sample to identify whether there was missing data. The analysis revealed that seventeen cases had missing values in the Japanese dataset and eleven in the U.S. dataset (see Table 1). Missing data were most common for items belonging to ATW scales. We excluded these cases from analysis.

The assumption of univariate normality was assessed by calculating the distribution skewness and kurtosis of each scale used in the analysis, which yielded measures of skewness that ranged from -.01 to .44 and measures of kurtosis that ranged from -.72 to 1.01. These results suggested that all scales used could be considered approximately normally distributed. Preliminary assumption testing was also conducted to check for multivariate normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multi-collinearity, and no serious violations were noted.

2.2. Country and Gender Effects

Gender and country effects were examined in a 3 (country: United States, Japan, China) × 2 (gender: male, female) between-subjects MANOVA with three dependent variables: victim blame attribution for scenario 1, victim blame attribution for scenario 2, and attitude toward women (Table 2). These data were relevant for testing hypotheses 1 and 2.

Table 2: MANOVA results for country and gender scores on Victim-Blame Attribution Scale and Attitudes Toward Women scale

							MANOVA		
							Main effects		
Variables	The United States		Japan		China		Gender	Country	Interaction
	M(SD)		M(SD)		M(SD)		F(1,937)	F(2,937)	F(2,937)
Scenario 1									
Victim-blame attribution							17.37***	44.23***	5.22**
Male	2.28	(.69)	2.59	(.73)	2.65	(.65)			
Female	1.96	(.69)	2.58	(.64)	2.39	(.51)			
Scenario 2									
Victim-blame attribution							34.05***	34.89***	3.00 †
Male	1.96	(.67)	1.64	(.68)	2.17	(.67)			
Female	1.63	(.60)	1.51	(.55)	1.87	(.49)			
Attitudes Toward Women							159.14***	23.04***	24.79***
Male	2.50	(.53)	2.52	(.41)	2.59	(.36)			
Female	2.00	(.45)	2.41	(.40)	2.03	(.35)			

Note: †p < .10, *p < .05, ++p < .01, +++p < .001
Items were scored using a five-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree")

This analysis found a statically significant multivariate main effect for country (F (6, 1870) = 43.24, p <. 001, partial eta squared = .12), for gender (F (3, 935) = 54.90, p <. 001, partial eta squared = .15), and a statistically significant Country x Gender interaction effect (F (6, 1870) = 8.66, p <. 001, partial eta squared = .03).

Main effect of gender. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni t test revealed that female respondents' scores were significantly lower than male respondents' on all three variables (see Table 2). This result is consistent with Hypothesis 1.

Main effect of country. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test showed different patterns of results for the three variables (see Table 2). For the victim blame attribution scale in scenario 1, American respondents scored significantly lower than Japanese and Chinese respondents, who had comparable scores. This result supports hypothesis 2. For the victim blame attribution scale in scenario 2, Chinese and American respondents scored significantly higher than Japanese respondents. Between Chinese and American respondents, Chinese respondents scored higher than American respondents. This result is not consistent with hypothesis 2. For the ATW scale, Japanese respondents scored significantly higher than American and Chinese respondents, who had comparable scores. This result supports hypothesis 2.

Interaction of gender and country. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni t test revealed a gender difference for the United States and China on all three outcome measures, but not for Japan (see Table 2). Men in the United States and China blamed the victim more for her behaviour in both scenarios and had more traditional attitudes toward women.

2.3. Model Predictions of Victim Blame Attribution

Two five-stage hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine whether attitudes toward women significantly predict victim blame attribution in both scenarios. The country variable was dummy-coded into two dichotomous variables, one called C1 (United States, 1, versus China, 0, and Japan, 0)) and the other called C2 (China, 1, versus United States 0 and Japan 0). As such, Japan served as the reference group. Also, the attitudes toward women score was mean-centered (see Aiken and West (1991). Victim blame attribution served as the outcome variable in all stages of the regression. The country variables were entered at stage one of the regression, the gender variable at stage two, mean-centered attitudes toward women at stage three, all two-way interactions of country and gender, gender and attitudes toward women, and country and attitudes toward women at stage four, and a three-way interaction of country, gender, and attitudes toward women at stage five. Summary statistics for the complete model are presented in Table 3 for scenario 1 and Table 4 for scenario 2.

Table 3: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for variables predicting Victim-blame attribution in Scenario 1

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
C1 (The United Stades vs. Japan)	-.29***	-.32***	-.26***	-.22 †	-.24 †
C2 (China vs. Japan)	-.07 †	-.07*	-.02	-.03	-.08
Gender (Male =1, Female = 2)		-.15***	-.06	-.04	-.05
Attitudes Towards Women			.24***	.08	.01
C1 x Gender				-.05	-.02
C2 x Gender				.01	.03
C1 x Attitudes Toward Women				.11*	.11
C2 x Attitudes Toward Women				.06	.29
Gender x Attitudes Toward Women				.07	.13
C1 x Gender x Attitudes Toward Women					.01
C2 x Gender x Attitudes Toward Women					-.24
R^2	.08***	.10***	.14***	.15	.15
ΔR^2		.02	.05	.01	.00

Notes: †p <10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Scenario 1. As shown in Table 3, when the two country contrasts (United States versus Japan, and China versus Japan) were added on the first step, the contrast between the United States and Japan was significant, with the United States having lower victim blame attribution scores. When gender was added on the second step, the two country contrasts were significant, as was gender, with female respondents having lower victim blame attribution scores than male respondents. When attitudes toward women were added on the third step, its beta was significant and explained an additional 5 percent of the variance in victim blame attribution. The United States versus Japan contrast remained significant, but the China versus Japan contrast and gender were no longer significant once attitudes toward women entered the equation. Adding interactions on later steps did not produce any significant betas or explain more variance.

Scenario 2. As shown in Table 4, the hierarchical multiple regression revealed that the best fitting model for predicting victim blame attribution is a linear combination of both country contrasts, gender, and attitudes toward women. Addition of all two-way and three-way interactions did not significantly improve prediction. These results provide a full confirmation for hypothesis 3.

Table 4: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis for variables predicting Victim-blame attribution in Scenario 2

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
C1 (The United Stades vs. Japan)	.17***	.13***	.21***	.28*	.25*
C2 (China vs. Japan)	.24***	.24***	.30***	.30*	.25 †
Gender (Male =1, Female = 2)		-.18***	-.08*	-.06	-.08
Attitudes Towards Women			.28***	-.26 †	.05
C1 x Gender				-.08	-.07
C2 x Gender				.00	.04
C1 x Attitudes Toward Women				.02	.13
C2 x Attitudes Toward Women				.03	.24
Gender x Attitudes Toward Women				.00	.20
C1 x Gender x Attitudes Toward Women					-.11
C2 x Gender x Attitudes Toward Women					-.22
R^2	.06***	.09***	.16***	.16	.16
ΔR^2		.03	.07	.00	.00

Notes: †p <10, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

3. Discussion

3.1. Gender and Country Differences in Victim Blame Attribution Scores and Attitudes Toward Women Scores

As predicted, when responses were combined across countries, women reported more liberal gender role attitudes than men. The gender differences in attitudes toward women in the current study were consistent with the findings of previous studies (Nelson 1988; Twenge 1997). Similarly, when responses were combined across countries female respondents blamed the victim of violence less than male respondents in both scenarios. These findings are consistent with the work of Bryant and Spencer (2003) and Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown (2009). An explanation can be found in the defensive attribution theory (Shaver 1970), which suggests that women who perceive themselves as similar to a female victim of intimate partner violence attribute less responsibility to the victim. Interpretation of these findings is incomplete without also considering respondents' country. The gender differences reported above were found with Chinese and American respondents, but were non-existent or much smaller for Japanese respondents.

MANOVA using post hoc comparisons with the Tukey HSD showed that Japanese respondents had more traditional attitudes toward women than American and Chinese respondents. However, American respondents did not differ from Chinese respondents in attitudes toward

women. Our results partly support Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov's findings (2010), which suggested that Japan had the most traditional gender roles, followed by China and the United States. Our finding is also consistent with Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown's (2009) findings regarding the mediating influence of traditional gender roles, ambivalent sexism, victim injury, and frequency of assault on perceptions of marital domestic violence. They found that Japanese respondents had more traditional gender roles and tended to blame, and excuse domestic violence more than did American respondents.

Our results also showed differences in how students from the three countries perceived marital and dating violence. In the marital violence situation (scenario 1), we found that Japanese and Chinese students scored the same on victim blame attribution, and that their scores were higher than those of American students. This result could be explained in terms of how students in the three countries differed in perceiving the role of wife/mother in comparison to the role of a normal woman in scenario 1. As noted earlier, Chinese and American respondents were more liberal in their attitudes toward women than Japanese respondents. However, Chinese respondents tended to blame the victim in the marital scenario to the same extent as Japanese respondents, for which one possible explanation is that Chinese and Japanese respondents might regard the women in the scenario as having broken the moral obligation of a "good wife/mother" (partying with her friends until late at night, leaving her children for the husband to take care of) implied by the strong influence of Confucian norms (Wolf 1972). In other words, there is an inconsistency between Chinese respondents' perceptions of the mother role and their attitudes toward women, which is inexplicable to us.

In the dating violence situation (scenario 2), Chinese students tended to blame the victim the most, followed by American students. Japanese students blamed the victim least. This result does not support our hypothesis. A cross-cultural study examining Japanese and American students' perception of the role of romantic love as a basis for marriage indicated that Japanese students are less likely than American students to consider love as a basis for marriage (see Ting-Toomey 1991). In another cross-cultural study between China and the United States on beliefs about love, Sprecher and Toro-Morn (2002) found that both Chinese and American students believed that love was important for marriage. However, American students considered love to be more important for entering marriage, while Chinese students considered love to be more important for maintaining marriage. Additionally, to the Chinese, the term "romantic relationship" or "dating relationship" often implies "seriousness" and "long-term commitment" (Gao 2001). Moreover, in Chinese culture, "the feeling of love between romantic partners is normally presented as a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the family" (Tzeng and Gandarillas 1992). Based on these reasons, in a dating relationship, Chinese tended to be more committed and accommodating to the partners than American and Japanese. As such, Chinese respondents in our sample might perceive the four-year dating relationship of the couple in our scenario as more serious (as though they were engaged) than American and Japanese respondents would. This contributes to explaining why Chinese respondents blame the female victim in the dating scenario more than American and Japanese respondents.

We did not expect an interaction between gender and country. However, it emerged that American and Chinese female respondents tended to have more egalitarian views toward women and place less blame on the victim of violence in both scenarios, compared to male respondents. However, we found no difference for Japanese male and female respondents in all three outcome measures. Since both male and female Japanese respondents tended to support traditional gender roles, it might be important for Japanese to behave according to their gender role expectations. This explains why both Japanese male and female respondents scored high on victim blame attributions in scenario 1 because the married woman there had deviated from the role expectations of a wife (child-rearing, housework). Conversely, both Japanese male and female students blamed the girlfriend least in scenario 2 because the girlfriend's role expectations were not viewed as seriously as those of a wife/mother. Perhaps, further research might discover whether violation of women's roles might have effects on victim blame attribution.

3.2. Relationship Between Attitudes Toward Women and Victim Blame Attribution

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses suggested that neither two-way nor three-way interactions were significant and that attitudes toward women is an important predictor of victim blame attribution across the three countries in both scenarios. Our results are generally consistent with Yamawaki and Tschanz (2005), and Yamawaki, Ostenson, and Brown (2009), which found that traditional gender roles mediated the difference in victim blame between Japanese and American undergraduate students. Interestingly, although there were differences in attitudes toward women due to country (American versus Japan, China versus Japan) and gender (male versus female), two-way (country × gender, country × ATW, gender × ATW) and three-way interaction effects (country × gender × ATW) on victim blame attribution were not found. This indicates that attitudes toward women have the same impact on attributions of blame regardless of the effects of country and gender. Thus, as noted in the introduction, gender inequality might still exist because some respondents in our sample did perceive gender roles in a traditional way, preferring male roles over female. And this might be related to tolerant attitudes toward violence against women.

3.3. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

There are, certainly, limitations to this study, the foremost of which is the validation of the ATW scale we used. Unlike Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (2010), we used the ATW scale devised by Spence and Helmreich (1978) to examine whether adult endorsement of traditional gender roles predicts victim blame attribution across three countries. Since there have been significant changes in male and female gender roles during the past twenty to thirty years, the scale might no longer be valid for measuring attitudes toward women. Considering that there are differences among cultures in gender role perceptions, future research should use another more recent, validated instrument, for example the Social Roles Questionnaire by Barber and Tucker (2006) or the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory by Glick et al. (2000).

Second, the scenario in this study focused only on the perception of male violence against women. However, according to a cross-national study on dating violence conducted with college students in Japan, Taiwan, and the United States (Morinaga et al. 2011) , women were more likely to express non-violent forms of aggression toward men (insulting, sulking, doing or saying something to spite their partners) and they expressed their aggression more often than men did. This suggests that women could be as aggressive as men if verbal aggression is included. Research is needed that assesses male and female perceptions of women's agression against men.

Third, attitudes about women's alcohol consumption vary across cultures. Thus, our depiction of a married woman going out with her friends to party until midnight might have caused participants to blame her more than they would have if she had not been drinking – especially in Asian cultures. We highly recommend that further research consider this issue.

Finally, our sample might not be representative of college students in each country, which might leads to bias of our results. Moreover, there might be some differences in perceptions of intimate partner violence and gender roles between student populations and other populations (older, less affluent, rural). The primary reason for the belief that violence against women occurs more often in urban than rural areas is that violence against women in rural areas is vastly underreported. Moreover, according to Carlson and Worden (2005), residents in rural areas are usually described as traditional and conservative in their social attitudes; legal and criminal justice responses to intimate violence are typically described as limited (Carlson and Worden 2005). As such, battered women in rural areas suffer the same problems as battered women everywhere, and even worse due to lack of resources for women (McCue 2007). Based on these reasons, people in rural areas might blame the victim of violence more than those in urban areas. Hence, additional studies using multi-mode sampling are needed to confirm the results.

This study focused only on intimate violence in marital and dating relationships. Since same-sex marriage has been legalized in many countries, more gay couples are allowed to get married. A homosexual person in a same-sex relationship who experiences dating violence or domestic viol-

ence may face many of the same issues as an abused heterosexual person. Also, victim blame attribution towards homosexuals who are victims of intimate partner violence might vary across countries depending on heterosexuals' attitudes toward homosexuals.

In conclusion, victim-blaming can have many negative effects on the innocent victims of violence. In additional to experiencing distress, they may fear secondary victimization through blame from those from whom they seek help and thus may be less likely to report future abuse (George and Martinez 2002). Our findings that traditional gender role attitudes correlate significantly with victim blame attributions in Japan, the United States, and China confirm the findings of other studies. Our findings support the need to consider cultural factors (such as Confucianism) to better understand the psychological processes of victim blame attributions.

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Self-efficacy in Anger Management and Dating Aggression in Italian Young Adults

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An examination of the influence of self-efficacy regarding anger management on psychological and physical dating aggression using an agentic perspective of individual functioning. The investigation applied both the individual perspective (Study 1) and the interactional perspective (Study 2). The sample comprised 470 Italian young adults (223 females) (mean age across genders = 19.10; ds = 1.30) in study 1, and 62 couples in study 2 (mean age for males = 22.34; ds = 2.59; mean age for females = 19.58; ds = 1.50). The first study found that individuals' efficacy regarding anger management affect dysfunctional behaviors toward the partner via couple conflict. The second study found that one partner's efficacy regarding anger management affected couple conflict, which in turn affected the other partner's psychological aggression. Results are discussed within an agentic framework of human development, where young adult partners are proactive agents of their own and their partners' behaviors, contributing actively to their intimate relationship adjustment rather than just re-acting to their partners' behaviors.

Studies on marital and dating relationships have long recognized the central role of negative affect in partner aggression (Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Ellis and Malamuth 2000; Follingstad et al. 1991; Hettrich and O'Leary 2007; Margolin, John, and Gleberman 1988; Mu oz-Rivas et al. 2007; Swan et al. 2005; Yelsma 1996; Wekerle and Wolfe 1999). Following to an agentic perspective of individual functioning (Bandura 1997), the present study focuses on the active role young adults may play in managing their own and their partners' aggression, in the sense of effectively exercising control over their anger affect and emotions through their beliefs. We will address direct and indirect effects of perceived self-efficacy in anger management on psychological and physical dating aggression in two studies, assuming an individual perspective in the first study and an interactional perspective in the second.

Efficacy beliefs constitute the most pervasive and central mechanism of personal agency: they influence individual standards of behavior, how much effort is invested in performing activities, how individuals persevere in the face of difficulties, and what types of choices they make (Bandura 1997). Within an agentic perspective, self-management of emotional life is closely tied to individual beliefs related to affect regulation. Self-efficacy beliefs affect the nature, frequency and strength of emotional experience through the exercise of control on cognitions, affect, and actions (Bandura 1997). A growing body of studies indicates the relevance of perceived self-regulatory efficacy in regulating the impact of negative affect on different outcomes, such as prosocial behavior, antisocial conduct, depression, and well-being (see Bandura et al. 2003).

The present study extended this line of research to the role of affective self-regulatory efficacy in conflict and aggression management in dating relationships. Considering the motivational role that negative affect plays in intimate aggression, we focus on self-efficacy regarding anger management, defined as "beliefs regarding one's capability to ameliorate negative emotional states once they are aroused in response to adversity or to frustrating events and to avoid being overcome by emotions such as anger, irritation" (Caprara et al. 2008, 230).

Negative affect characterizes everyday life and is particularly relevant in the context of intimate relationships. Situational difficulties, provocations, and stressors such as external pressure, loss of initial warmth or affection, jealousy, and infidelity can potentially elicit strong negative affect. Individuals who are not sufficiently capable of modulating their negative emotions may externalize negative behaviors through conflict escalation and hostile interactions that, in turn, can lead to aggression (Capaldi and Gorman-Smith 2003; Ellis and Malamuth 2000; Feld and Straus 1989; Foran and O'Leary 2008; Gelles and Straus 1979; Margolin, John, and Gleberman 1988; Riggs and O'Leary 1989; Yelsma 1996). Several studies documenting the impact of anger on intimate aggression have conceptualized negative affect as a personality trait, as an expression style, or as a mechanism responsible for anger control (Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Follingstad et al. 1991; Foran and O'Leary 2008; Hettrich and O'Leary 2007; Mu oz-Rivas et al. 2007; Riggs and O'Leary 1989; Swan et al. 2005; Wekerle and Wolfe 1999). Few of these studies directly compared the predictive role of anger on partner aggression in males and females, and the majority were conducted separately for one gender group or the other. Although we know that anger escalation is more severe in males (Gottman and Levenson 1992) and that men are encouraged to be more overt in expressing their anger, the literature also suggests that anger in relationship conflict is related to partner aggression perpetrated by both males and females (Ellis and Malamuth 2000); besides, there is evidence that in females anger and retaliation for emotional hurt are the most important motivations for perpetrating aggression toward the partner (Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Follingstad et al. 1991; Hettrich and O'Leary 2007; Mu oz-Rivas et al. 2007). For example, women reported using physical violence due to anger/jealousy more often than men did (Harned 2001), and they were also more likely to report wishing to show anger through physical aggression (Follingstad 1991). Anger is one of the most common reasons given for the physical aggression perpetrated by females in different types of samples – ranging from dating adolescents and college students to clinical samples (Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Hettrich and O'Leary 2007; Wolfe, Wekerle, and Scott 1997).

To our knowledge, no studies have yet analyzed the impact of affective self-regulatory efficacy on partner aggression management. Although several studies underlined the role of anger control conceptualized as a feedback control system aimed at error correction, the proactive contribution of self-efficacy regarding anger management emotions has not yet been evaluated. According to the agentic perspective of social cognitive theory, we propose that individuals who believe they can exercise control over their anger will be more successful in their self-regulatory efforts than individuals who believe that they have no control over their emotional states. Self-efficacy in anger management was expected to affect dating aggression through direct and indirect effects. For the indirect effect we will consider one of the main relational processes to explain partner aggression: relationship conflict.

1. Relationship Conflict

Moving from an individual to an interactional perspective, the literature on intimate aggression showed that a considerable proportion of physical aggression and other aggressive acts occur as a consequence of an argument or a communication conflict (Capaldi and Owen 2001; Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Hotaling 1980; O'Leary 1999; Pan, Neidig, and O'Leary 1994). Conflictual interactions between partners can provoke or reinforce aggressive behaviors within dyads: reciprocal aversive behaviors and conflict escalation lead to a coercive spiral that each partner contributes to and maintains. Several studies confirmed the reciprocal involvement of both partners in aggression (Capaldi and Crosby 1997; Johnson 1995; Hamby 2005; Gray and Foshee 1997; Menesini et al. 2011; Nocentini, Pastorelli, and Menesini 2010; Wekerle and Wolfe 1999), and this is especially true in adolescence where both male and female partners are frequently found to be involved as perpetrators and victims (see Menesini et al. 2011). Mutual aggression usually implies mild forms of aggression, however more severe forms can also be found occasionally (Johnson 1995; Olson 2002; Williams and Frieze 2005). All these data suggest that intimate aggression can be conceptualized and modelled as a property of the couple rather than of each partner. Within this theoretical framework no gender differences were found concerning the perception of conflict and the predictive role that conflict has within couple aggression (Connolly et al. 2010; Riggs, O'Leary, and Breslin 1990; Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz

1980). Gender differences were found instead concerning the physiological reaction to couple conflict, where men are characterized by quicker and more severe reactions than women (Gottman and Levenson 1992).

Individual characteristics of both partners, such as irritability and impulsivity, criticism or rejection sensitivity, or low self-efficacy beliefs in conflict resolutions, facilitate these aggressive exchanges and their escalation. We hypothesize that the perceived capability to manage anger can have a relevant role in this process. Individuals who believe they can exercise control over their anger emotions will be less likely to respond to partner relational provocation with violence, thus avoiding conflict escalation.

Following to an interactional perspective that takes into account reciprocal influences between partners, our study aims to extend this model focused on individual processes to an interactional model where one partner's behavior and socio-cognitive processes can affect the other partner's behavioral outcome. Within reciprocal conflictual exchanges, each partner can act as "circuit actor" or "circuit breaker," thus contributing to escalation or de-escalation processes (Feld and Straus 1989; Fincham and Beach 2002). When one partner opts out of the reciprocal cycle of escalating aggression, the other should be less likely to engage in aggressive behaviors; therefore we expect that one partner's self-efficacy beliefs reduce dysfunctional personal and partner's behavior contributing to the positive functioning of the dyad.

2. Hypothesized Model

Consistent with previous research, we hypothesize that individuals who believe they can exercise control over their anger will be less likely to engage in aggressive behaviors toward the partner, directly and through the mediating effect of behavior in conflict situations. In particular we hypothesize that: (a) self-efficacy regarding anger management will be linked to the frequency and experience of relationship conflict, psychological dating aggression, and physical dating aggression; (b) conflict experiences and behavior will mediate the association between self-efficacy beliefs and psychological and physical dating aggression. In relation to gender differences, we hypothesize the same predictive path from couple conflict to dating aggression in both genders. Furthermore, given that literature suggests that anger during relationship conflict is related to partner aggression perpetrated by both males and females (Ellis and Malamuth 2000), we also hypothesize that self-efficacy regarding anger management affect dating aggression in both genders.

The hypothesized model was tested in two different studies. The first assumes an individual perspective: we evaluated whether the proposed processes affect individual perpetration of dating aggression. The second study assumes an interactional perspective: using reports from both partners, we hypothesized that one partner's self-efficacy regarding anger management affect the other partner's perpetration of dating aggression, directly and indirectly through behavior in conflict situations. In this case, predictors are the measures of Partner A's beliefs and behavior; the outcome is the aggressive behavior toward Partner A reported by Partner B.

3. Study 1: Individual Perpetration

3.1. Materials and Methods

3.1.1. Participants and Procedure

Participants in this study were drawn from an ongoing longitudinal study (LU.LO.SA) started in 2002 to evaluate different dimensions of psycho-social adjustment in participants who were still attending high school at the start of the study in Lucca, a city in Tuscany, Italy. Thirteen schools were selected using a self-selection inclusion in the study but also trying to balance sample composition in relation to school type. All participants agreed to take part in the study and received parental permission at the first data wave (T1). Trained staff administered questionnaires in class during the school day in two different sessions of about one hour each. Participants were assured of confidentiality. For the present study we consider the fourth wave (T4: 2006/2007). Participants were 470 late adolescents and young adults (247 males and 223 females): age ranged from 18 to 23 years, 90 percent were younger than 20 (mean age = 19.10; ds = 1.30). The majority of the participants were from Italian backgrounds (97 percent) and lived in two-parent families (84 percent). 76.6 percent of both parents reported graduation from high school, and

23.4 percent of at least one of the two parents reported a university degree or post university education. The mean length of dating relationship was 18.98 months (sd=16.07).

3.1.2. Measures

Psychological dating aggression: Five items with a five-point response scale from 0 (never) to 4 (daily) assessed psychological abuse defined as "coercive or aversive acts intended to produce emotional harm or threat of harm" (Murphy, Hoover, and Taft 1999). A short scale was composed from two different scales: the Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Abuse (Murphy, Hoover, and Taft 1999) and the Abusive Behavior Inventory (Shepard and Campbell 1992). Three items assessed the construct of Hostile Withdrawal *("Refused to have any discussion of a problem"; "Intentionally avoided the other person during a conflict or disagreement"; "Gave angry stares or looks")* and two items assessed the construct of Restrictive Engulfment *("Tried to keep her/him from doing something she/he wanted to do [e.g. going out with friends]"; "Checked up on her/his activities [e.g.: listened to her/his phone calls, checked the mileage on her/his car]"* (the first two items come from the Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Abuse, the last three from the Abusive Behavior Inventory). In the present study we considered only the perpetration reports, which means the self-report of Partner A of his/her own behavior perpetrated on Partner B. The Cronbach's alphas were .70 for males and .71 for females. A mean frequency score for psychological dating aggression was computed by averaging responses across the five items.

Physical dating aggression: A revised version of the Conflict Tactic Scale was used to measure physical dating aggression (Nocentini et al. 2011). The scale consisted of nine items rated on a five-point Likert-type scale (0 = never, 4 = always). The items *"Spitting"* and *"Choking, punching, or beating"* were deleted because of their low frequency (lower than 2 percent in females). We considered only the perpetration reports. The Cronbach's alphas were .90 for males and .86 for females. Again, a mean frequency score was computed by averaging across the nine items.

Self-efficacy regarding anger management: Perceived self-efficacy in managing anger emotions in response to adversity and frustrating events was assessed by the self-efficacy in anger management sub-scale from the Regulatory Emotional Self-Efficacy Scale (Caprara et al. 2008; Caprara, Di Giunta, Pastorelli, and Eisenberg, 2013). The sub-scale comprises four items (e.g. *How well can you …: " … manage negative feelings when reprimanded by others?"; " … avoid getting upset when others keep giving you a hard time"*) rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = *not well at all;* 5 = *very well*). The Cronbach's alphas for males and females were .75 and .74 respectively. Mean scores were computed across the four items.

Couple Conflict: The Conflict Scale of the Network of Relationships Inventory was used (Furman and Buhrmester 1992). This scale consists of six items assessing the intensity of negative interaction and non-physical conflict within dating relationship on a five-point Likert scale (from 1=never true to 5=always true) (e.g. *"My boyfriend/girlfriend and I get on each other's nerves"; "My boyfriend/girlfriend and I hassle or nag one another"*). The Cronbach's alphas were respectively .76 for males and .81 for females. Responses were averaged across the six items to arrive at a measure of relationship conflict.

3.1.3. Data Analyses

Preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the role of gender and age in relation to psychological dating aggression and physical dating aggression. Path analyses with multi-group approach across gender were used to test the proposed direct and indirect models. The models tested whether self-efficacy regarding anger management were linked to psychological and physical dating aggression through level of relationship conflict (Study 1) and whether one partner's self-efficacy regarding anger management and level of conflict affected the other partner's perpetration of dating aggression (Study 2). Alternative models were tested; in particular we examined an effect of couple conflict on psychological dating aggression and physical dating aggression through self-efficacy beliefs in anger management.

All the analyses were conducted via Mplus 4.0 (Muthen and Muthen 2006). Given that psychological and physical dating aggression mean scores presented high skewness

and kurtosis, the MLR robust estimator was used. To avoid bias due to missing data (15 percent of participants have some missing data), we estimated all models using the direct maximum likelihood procedure available in Mplus. Given that estimated models were saturated models with zero degrees of freedom, fit indices were not reported. All models estimated direct and indirect paths. The significance of the indirect paths was analyzed by the test of the indirect effect in Mplus (Muthen and Muthen 2006).

3.2. Results and Discussion

3.2.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

No significant effects of gender were found for conflict, or for psychological or physical dating aggression. Significant gender differences were found for self-efficacy in anger management ($F_{(2,444)}$ =32.964; p<.001; η^2=.07), with males reporting higher levels than females. Age does not significantly affect any variables. Table 1 presents the correlations, means, and standard deviations of the variables.

Table 1: Correlations, means, and standard deviations of the measures for the full sample in Study 1

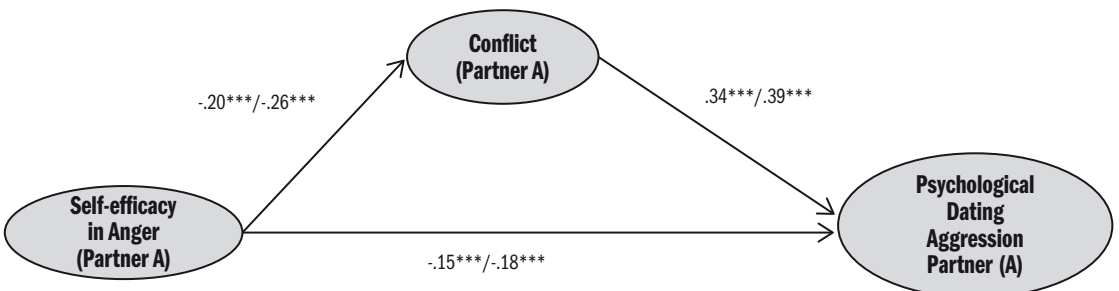
	1	2	3	4	Mean (SD)	
1. Physical dating aggression		.29	-.04	.27	.36	(1.00)
2. Psychological dating aggression	.23		-.22	.38	.60	(.60)
3. Self efficacy in anger	-.12	-.28		-.21	3.15	(.82)
4. Relationship conflict	.20	.44	-.26		2.08	(.65)
Means (SD)	.25 (.77)	.71 (.64)	2.75 (.71)	1.98 (.66)		

Note: Data for males appear above the diagonal and data for females appear below the diagonal.

3.2.2. Models with Psychological Dating Aggression and Physical Dating Aggression

For psychological dating aggression, the multi-group model showed a negative path from self-efficacy in anger management to couple conflict for both gender groups, which in turn was a positive predictor of psychological dating aggression. The direct path from self-efficacy in anger management to psychological dating aggression was also significant (see Figure 1). The indirect path was significant in both genders: self-efficacy in anger management affects psychological dating aggression via conflict. The model explains 16 percent (male) and 22 percent (female) of psychological dating aggression variance.

Figure 1: Path analyses of obtained relations among self-efficacy regarding anger management, conflict, and psychological dating aggression

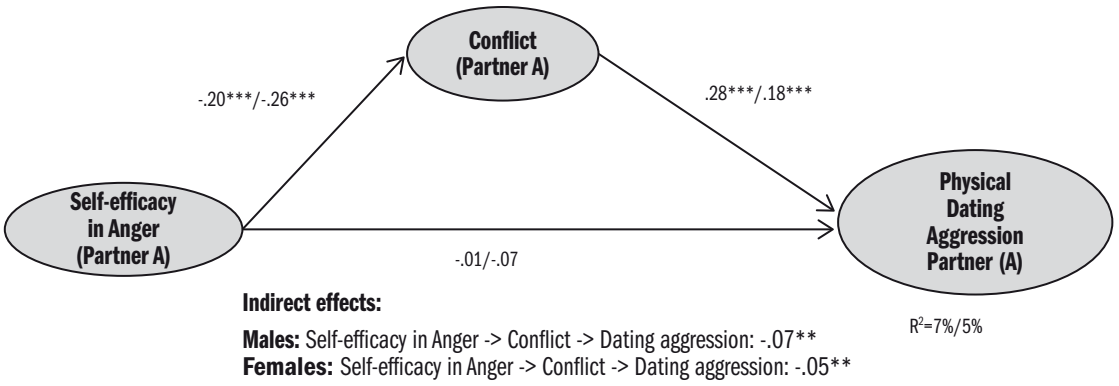


Note: The first path coefficient on each of the structural links is for males; the second coefficient is for females Estimates are standardized path coefficients.

For physical dating aggression, the multi-group model showed a negative path from self-efficacy regarding anger management to couple conflict for both genders, which in turn showed positive links with physical dating aggression. The direct path from self-efficacy in anger management to physical dating aggression was not significant (see Figure 1). The indirect path was significant in both genders: self-efficacy in anger management affected physical dating aggression via greater relationship conflict. The model explains 7 percent (male) and 5 percent (female) of physical dating aggression variance.

Overall, the indirect effect of self-efficacy in anger management on psychological and physical dating aggression through conflict was confirmed in both genders. However, self-efficacy in anger management plays a direct and relevant role in psychological dating aggression but not in physical dating aggression.

Figure 2: Path analyses of obtained relations among self-efficacy regarding anger management, conflict, and physical dating aggression



Note: The first path coefficient on each of the structural links is for males; the second coefficient is for females. Estimates are standardized path coefficients.

3.2.3 Alternative Models

The cross-sectional nature of our data did not permit a test of the assumed causal direction from self-efficacy to relationship conflict. To corroborate this directional hypothesis, alternative models were tested in which the order of self-efficacy and relationship conflict were reversed. For psychological dating aggression, the indirect paths in the alternative model (Conflict -> Self-efficacy in anger management -> Psychological dating aggression) were slightly weaker (males: $\beta = .03^*$; females: $\beta = .05^*$); likewise the percentage of total variance explained (males: 13 percent; females: 22 percent).

For physical dating aggression, the path from self-efficacy regarding anger management and physical dating aggression was non-significant in both genders: thus, no indirect path from relationship conflict to physical dating aggression via self-efficacy in anger management was found. Overall, considering all these results together, we conclude that our theoretical model provided a better fit to the empirical data than the alternative model.

4. Study 2: Interactional Perspective

As already mentioned, the second study assumes an interactional perspective: using both partners views, we hypothesize that one partner's self-efficacy beliefs in anger management affect the other partner's perpetration of dating aggression, directly and indirectly through behavior in conflict situations. In this case, predictors are the measures reported by Partner A of their own beliefs/behavior; the outcome is the aggressive behavior toward Partner A reported by Partner B.

4.1. Materials and Methods

4.1.1. Participants and Procedure

Participants in this study were 62 couples. The age range was 19 to 31 years for males (mean age=22.34; SD=2.59),

and 15 to 26 for females (mean age = 19.58; SD = 1.50). The mean length of dating relationship was 28.0 months (SD = 20.06). The couples were recruited during the fourth wave of data collection of the longitudinal study (individual data collection was presented in Study 1). The sample for Study 2 excluded participants in Study 1. For the couple study, if one of the two partners had participated in one of the three previous waves, they were asked to invite their partner to take part in the study. Data for this study were collected in 2006 and 2008. Participants were contacted by telephone and invited to participate in the study with their current partner, if they had one. Both partners received a small gift in return for participation. Both partners (Partner A and Partner B) filled in the same self-report questionnaire.

In order to evaluate possible differences on study variables between participants whose partners participated in the study versus the remaining participants in the longitudinal study who did not participate, we conducted several ANOVAs on the main variables. Results did not show any significant difference (psychological dating aggression: $F(1,425) = 3.714$, $p = .06$; conflict: $F(1,425) = .213$, $p = .64$; self-efficacy in anger: $F(1,425) = .026$, $p = .87$).

4.1.2. Measures and Data Analysis

Psychological dating aggression: The same scale used in Study 1 was employed. The Cronabch's alphas were .75 for male and .74 for female participants.

Self-efficacy in anger management: The same scale used in Study 1 was employed. The Cronbach's alphas for the male and female sample were.72 and .83 respectively.

Relationship conflict: The same scale used in Study 1 was employed. The Cronbach's alphas were .85 for male and .85 for female.

The same modeling strategy used for Study 1 was employed.

Since our model considers perspectives of both male and female partners, we assumed a non-independence of observations. Therefore, we computed standard errors and a chi-square test of model fit taking into account the non-independence of observations due to couple sampling. Using Mplus 4.1, this approach can be realized by specifying TYPE=complex in conjunction with the cluster command. We tested the model only for psychological dating aggression, given the very small number of participants who reported physically aggressive behaviors towards the partner (only one male and nine females). The model was tested as a multiple-group analysis for gender. To avoid bias due to the limited attrition in the sample, we estimated all models using the direct maximum likelihood procedure available in Mplus.

4.2. Results

4.2.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

A significant effect of gender on self-efficacy in anger management was found ($F_{(1,120)} = 4.324$; $p < .05$; $\eta^2 = .04$), with males reporting higher levels of self-efficacy regarding anger management (see Table 2 for descriptive data). Age did not significantly affect any variables. Table 2 presents the correlations, means, and standard deviations of the variables.

Table 2: Correlations, means, and standard deviations of the measures for the full sample in Study 2

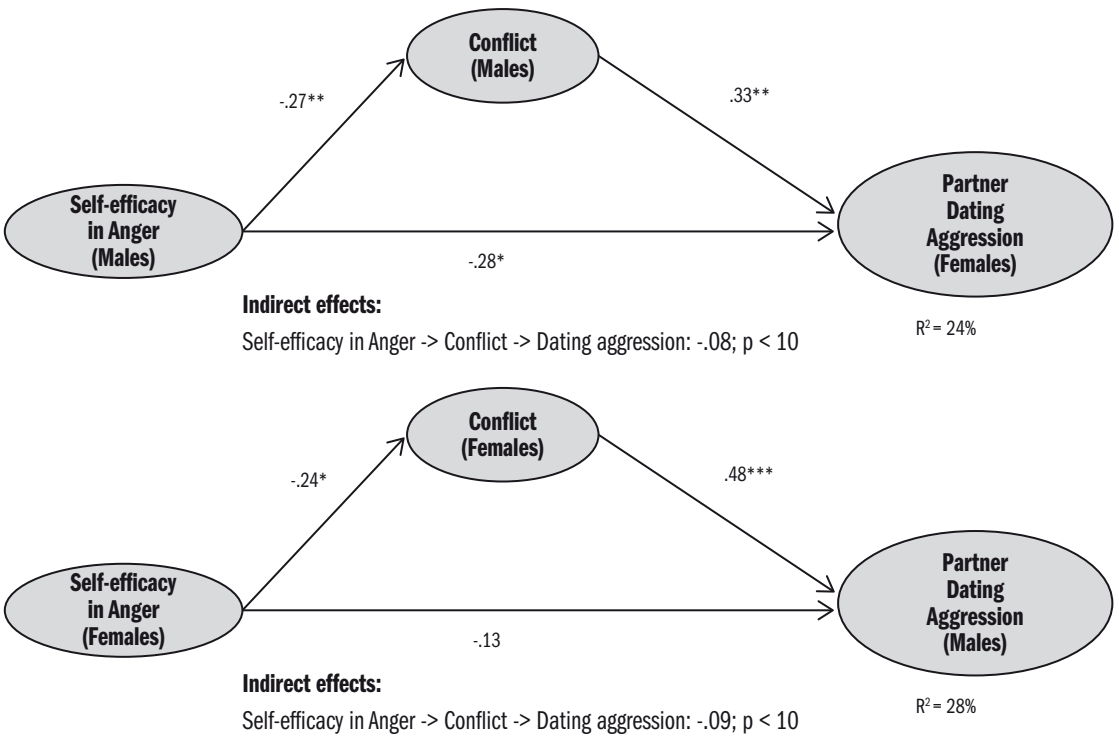
	1	2	3	Mean (SD)
1. Psychological dating aggression (Partner B)		-.37	.35	.70 (.65)
2.Self-efficacy in anger (Partner A)	-.24		-.27	3.08 (.74)
3.Relationship conflict (Partner A)	.48	-.20		2.07 (.76)
M (SD)	.51 (.59)	2.77 (.72)	2.00 (.77)	

Note: Predictors are the measures reported by Partner A referred to his/her own beliefs/behavior; outcome is the aggressive behavior toward Partner A reported by Partner B. Data for males appear above the diagonal and data for female appear below the diagonal.

4.2.2. Models with Partner Psychological Aggression

The multi-group model predicting partner-reported psychological dating aggression showed similar results for both genders, except for the direct path from self-efficacy in anger management to partner dating aggression (see Figure 3). In both genders, a negative path from self-efficacy in anger management to relationship conflict emerged, which in turn positively predicted psychological dating aggression as reported by the partner. Additionally, male self-efficacy regarding anger management significantly predicted partner-reported psychological dating aggression. The indirect paths were only marginally significant: self-efficacy in anger management affected partner-reported psychological dating aggression via relationship conflict. The model explains 24 percent (male) and 28 percent (female) of partner-reported psychological dating aggression variance. Overall, female psychological dating aggression was predicted by male self-efficacy in anger management directly, but by contrast, male psychological dating aggression was not directly predicted by female self-efficacy in anger management. The indirect path through relationship conflict was only marginally significant in both genders. The present study confirmed the relevance of self-efficacy in anger management for conflict escalation dynamics in both genders. By contrast, its direct role in dyadic processes seems to be confirmed only in explaining female psychological aggression toward the partner.

Figure 3: Path analyses of obtained relations among self-efficacy regarding anger management, conflict, and partner-reported psychological dating aggression



Note: Estimates are standardized path coefficients.

5. General Discussion

The current investigation examined the contribution of self-efficacy regarding anger management to handling psychological dating aggression and physical dating aggression within an individual and interactional perspective on mutual couple aggression. In the first study, individuals' efficacy regarding anger management predicted dysfunctional behaviors toward the partner via their effect on

relationship conflict. In the second study, one partner's efficacy regarding anger management affected the other partner's psychological aggression directly (in predicting female psychological aggression) and indirectly via couple conflict (in predicting both male and female psychological aggression).

Men and women who believe they can exercise some form of control over their negative emotional life are more successful in their self-regulatory efforts than others who believe they do not have such control. If people do not believe they can successfully manage anger in intimate relationships, they are unlikely to make efforts to reduce negative emotional states once they have been aroused. Therefore, they will be more likely to escalate their anger state into more severe and intense affective reactions, engaging in more hostile and conflictual interaction exchanges. Finally, they will be unlikely to engage in conflict resolution discussions and may then employ negative resolution styles including psychological and physical dating aggression. This individual process also has relevant effects on partner behavior. Male and female beliefs in the personal ability to effectively manage anger assume a relevant role in breaking the cycle of aggression, contributing to the de-escalation of conflict and in turn to the de-escalation of the other partner's aggression.

The role of couple conflict has been confirmed as very relevant within reciprocal partner aggression. This result stresses the conflictual nature of aggression in dating relationships where, at least in the context of nonclinical samples and mutual couple aggression, physical and psychological intimate aggression are likely to occur during conflict escalation and are perpetrated by both partners, male and female alike (Capaldi and Crosby 1997; Cascardi and Vivian 1995; Gray and Foshee 1997; Hamby 2005; Hotaling 1980; Johnson 1995; Nocentini, Menesini, and Pastorelli 2010; O'Leary 1999; Pan, Neidig, and O'Leary 1994; Wekerle and Wolfe 1999). The present study supports the mediating effect of relationship conflict in relation to the association between self-efficacy in anger management and aggressive behaviors. Individuals who believe they can exercise control over their anger will be likely to respond to relational provocation with constructive discussions and reasoning, avoiding escalation in conflictual exchanges.

In line with this focus on reciprocal effects between partners, the second study extended the model centered on individual processes to an interactional model where one partner's processes influence the other partner's aggressive behavioral outcome. According to a systemic view of dyadic processes, aggressive behaviors are affected not only by individual characteristics, but also by partners' characteristics and their interaction (Capaldi and Gorman-Smith 2003; Fincham and Beach, 2002; Robins, Caspi, and Moffitt 2002). Our results suggest that in the context of mutual couple aggression either partner can potentially diminish the level of psychological aggression in the dyad. The higher the individual is on anger self-efficacy, the less likely he or she is to perpetrate psychological aggression. However, the mechanism seems to be different for males and females: male self-efficacy in anger management affects directly female aggression toward the partner, but female self-efficacy only indirectly affects male aggression toward the partner, via conflict. Individual processes explained about 25 percent of variance in partner psychological aggression. These findings, together with the results on the comparable percentage of psychological aggression variance explained by individual processes in Study 1, suggest the relevance of these theoretical models in explaining dyadic aggression between partners. Future studies integrating both individual and partner processes in explaining one partner's behavior should evaluate the interactive role played by both partners. Although the prevalence of physical dating aggression in the present study was too low to produce useable findings, a similar mechanism can also be expected in the case of physical dating aggression. In relation to the role of gender in these processes, results supported a general model where anger self-efficacy and conflict predict psychological and physical dating aggression in both genders (Study 1). Study 2 also supported the hypothesis that both male and female beliefs in managing anger affect the perception of couple conflict, which in turn affects the other partner's psychological aggression. The only difference lay in the direct role that male self-efficacy in anger management had on female psychological dating aggression, which was not found for female self-efficacy. This finding needs further study but,

according to Gottman and Levenson (1992), we can hypothesize that in males low self-efficacy in anger management can elicit a quicker and more severe expression of anger, which is directly related to individual perpetration of aggression and in turn to partner-perpetrated aggression. This mechanism may not be so severe and quick in females; when females perceived low level of self-efficacy in anger management they can use more indirect strategies to express their anger, therefore raising the couple level of conflict and in turn the level of partner's dating aggression. However, this reasoning remains speculative and needs to be examined in future research.

The development of intimate and romantic relationships is an important psycho-social task for adolescents and young adults. With age, dating involves a series of new requests, decisions, expectations, and behaviors requiring increasing cognitive, emotional and social skills on the part of the adolescent. Perceived efficacy in managing these skills and particularly in managing negative emotional life plays a relevant role in intimate relationships. Within an agentic conceptual framework of human development, individuals are both producers and products of their social system (Bandura 1997). Accordingly, young adult partners are proactive agents of their individual behavior and of their partner's behavior contributing actively to their intimate relationships adjustment rather than just re-acting to their partner's behavior.

The present study extends the growing body of research on the contribution of self-efficacy regarding anger management to handling conflictual and aggressive interactions in dating relationships. Further studies are needed in order to clarify some issues that are not yet fully explained. First, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the testing of mediated effects over time. Longitudinal designs can also highlight the prospective role of self-efficacy regarding anger management on aggression between partners. Second, systematic research on the role of negative affectivity on intimate aggression in both genders may contribute theoretically and practically to designing intervention or prevention programs. Third, results from Study 2 need to be cross-validated given the small number of couples involved, and extended to physical dating aggression. Finally, studies in different cultural contexts would contribute to the generalizability of the results.

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Reactions to Provocation and Feelings About Aggression in an Indian sample

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Western studies have found that men tend to view their aggression as instrumental whereas women tend to view it in expressive terms. A preliminary qualitative study on an Indian sample found low internal consistency for these measures, and that men viewed their aggression in both instrumental and expressive terms. The present study used scenarios to examine feelings about aggression in 300 males and females in India, aged 16 and 26 years. Males were more likely to view aggression in terms of loss of control, shame for family, and acceptability, while 16-year-olds were more likely to feel shame and embarrassment following aggression. These robust findings indicate that for this sample feelings about aggression are more complex than the two constructs, instrumental and expressive, can capture.

Research into beliefs and feelings about aggression was initiated in the West by Campbell and Muncer (1987), who set out to examine "social representations" of aggression in the conversations of men and women. They found sex differences in the way people viewed their aggression, with men tending to have instrumental and women expressive views. While an instrumental view serves to justify an aggressive action, an expressive view excuses the action by emphasising loss of control (Campbell, Muncer, and Coyle 1992). Campbell, Muncer, and Coyle (1992) developed the Expressions of Aggression Scale (Expagg), consisting of twenty forced-choice items measuring instrumental and expressive "social representations" of aggression, which has been expanded and refined since then (Archer and Haigh 1997a; Campbell et al. 1999; Muncer and Campbell 2004).

Most of the studies that have used the Expagg have been conducted in the United Kingdom (Archer and Haigh 1997a, 1997b; Archer and Latham 2004; Campbell, Muncer, and Coyle 1992; Campbell and Muncer 1994; Campbell et al. 1999; Driscoll et al. 2006; Holland, Ireland, and Muncer 2009; Thanzami and Archer 2005) or the United States (Campbell, Muncer, and Gorman 1993), with studies also in the Slovak Republic (Baumgartner 1995), and the Philippines (Puyat 2001). Cross-national studies have compared French and American students (Richardson and Huguet 2001) and Spanish and Japanese samples (Ramirez, Andreu, and Fujihara 2001). All these studies have shown consistent sex differences in the way men and women view their aggression, in accordance with the first study by Campbell, Muncer, and Coyle (1992).

To explore the extent to which previous findings on aggression from individualist cultures such as the United Kingdom and the United States generalized to a collectivist culture, Thanzami and Archer (2013) used the Expagg on sixteen- and twenty-six-year-old males and females in eastern India. The instrumental (I) and expressive (E) scales showed low internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha: I = .50, E = .29), and males endorsed both instrumental and expressive views significantly more than females.

The low reliabilities found for the Expagg suggest that the items on these scales do not hold the same meaning for the sample used. Based on the methodology used by the authors of the Expagg (Campbell and Muncer 1987), Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan (2011) conducted a qualitative study among a similar Indian sample. The findings

indicated that although there were instrumental and expressive components involved in the way this sample viewed their aggression, there were other equally important issues, such as gender role conformity and the way the respondent would be perceived by members of their ingroup. One of the characteristics of a collectivist sample such as this is the importance members pay to ingroup norms. Thus the way the particular sample viewed their aggression was very much associated with their cultural beliefs and perceptions.

Feelings of shame with respect to their own aggression appeared to be a particularly important part of the belief system of this sample. This is what we might expect from a collectivist culture, as self-conscious emotions such as shame arise as a result of self-evaluations, and the type of self-evaluations a person has will be linked to their experience of these emotions. Because collectivist cultures tend to hold interdependent self-construals (Markus and Kitayama 1991), people from these cultures will be more likely to experience shame than those from individualist cultures. For example, in a study comparing young adults from India and Italy, Anolli and Pascucci (2005) found that the Indian sample reacted more intensely to shame and had higher levels of shame-proneness.

The aim of the present study was to use scenarios involving situations to which people from a collectivist sample would be able to relate. The scenarios were based on findings from the qualitative study examining views and feelings about aggression among a similar sample (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011). Although not widely employed, scenarios have been used as a measuring device in research into adult aggression. For example, van Goozen, Frijda, Kindt, and van de Poll (1994) used provoking scenarios to measure women's emotional responses to provocation. O'Connor, Archer, and Wu (2001) also used provoking scenarios, to measure aggression in men. The use of this method enables participants to "put themselves" in the described situation, allowing them to respond more precisely about how they feel or would feel like reacting. Responses to questionnaires on aggression usually ask what the person typically does, which may differ from real situations due to the absence of a provocation (which is usually the main initiator for an aggressive response in real life).

In the present study, scenarios involving a variety of provocations were used to assess a range of different hypothetical responses, and participants were also asked how they would feel if they had responded with physical aggression in order to evaluate how they viewed their own physical aggression. We therefore investigated first, the range of responses to provocation (behavior), and second how people would view their aggression once it had occurred (their feelings about their aggression).

Although this was to some extent an exploratory study, certain hypotheses were formulated based on the themes identified in the qualitative study (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011), and from the consensus in previous studies involving Western samples, particularly in relation to sex differences. In the first part of the scenario, concerned with behavior, it was predicted: (i) that males would show more direct forms of aggression than females (Archer 2004); and (ii) that females would endorse responses that were indirect and internalised more so than males. In the exploratory study (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011) both men and women emphasised the importance of remaining in control: hence another aim of this study was to examine whether there was a sex difference in remaining in control and not responding with aggression when participants were faced with scenario-based situations involving a provocation.

In the second part of the scenario, concerned with feelings about aggression, it was predicted that males would report a more instrumental view of their behaviour, as found in studies using the Expagg (Archer and Haigh 1997a, 1997b; Campbell, Muncer, and Coyle 1992; Campbell, Muncer, and Gorman 1993; Puyat 2001; Ramirez et al. 2001). This was expected because men show more direct aggression than women do (Archer 2004) and studies have shown a strong association between instrumental beliefs and direct forms of aggression (Archer and Haigh 1997a, 1997b). In the qualitative study (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011), feelings of shame and embarrassment (self-conscious emotions) were emphasised when the respondents

talked about their aggression. We therefore examined whether there were any sex or age differences in endorsement of these feelings.

In summary, the overall aim of this study is to understand and obtain a clearer view of how people in this culture respond to a range of hypothetical provocations, and how they viewed their aggression once it had occurred.

1. Method

1.1. Construction of the Scenarios

Twelve scenarios were constructed based on the findings of a previous qualitative study (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011) that investigated how a similar sample viewed their aggression. Each scenario consisted of a provoking situation, followed by a list of nine responses asking participants how they would react in that particular situation (i.e. their behavioral responses). The second part of the scenario instructed participants to imagine they had responded with physical aggression in the previously described situation. They were asked to assess how they would feel afterwards in terms of nine response categories derived from the exploratory study (i.e. their feelings). Like the Expagg, these responses included instrumental and expressive feelings, but also the emotions of shame, embarrassment, and guilt (see the Appendix for all the scenarios and responses).

The scenarios were identical for the two age groups, except in four cases where the situation and the provoking opponents were modified to be more appropriate for the particular age group: for example, a scene involving an employer as an authority figure was used for the older age group whereas a teacher was used for the younger age group. The following example is one of the scenarios for the sixteen-year-olds:

> Imagine this: you are in the school playground and you see a group of students standing together looking at you and laughing. You know they don't like you and that they are talking about you. What would you do?

Responses to each scenario consisted of two parts. In the first part, concerning behavior, the participant was asked to rate his or her responses to the provoking situation along a five-point scale (ranging from 1 = most unlikely to 5 = most likely) for each of the following nine behaviours:

1. Get angry and respond with physical aggression (physical aggression)
2. Yell at the person (verbal aggression)
3. Let those around you know you are angry (overt expression of anger)
4. Express your anger towards an object by kicking a wall or slamming a door (explosive act directed away from provocation)
5. Cry (expression of upset)
6. Feel like crying but wait until you are alone (delayed expression of upset)
7. Leave and sulk (avoid the situation)
8. Spread rumours about him/her (indirect aggression)
9. Control your feelings and remain calm (control of feelings)

The second part (concerned with feelings) asked participants how they would feel if they had responded with physical aggression in the described scenario. The following instructions were given:

> Imagine that you became extremely outraged and you responded with physical aggression, like hitting out at one of them. How would you feel afterwards?

Participants were then presented with nine feelings and were asked to choose as many responses as was appropriate for them by ticking alongside them (listed here are the feelings they were intended to measure):

1. It would be ok or acceptable (instrumental)
2. I would feel the other person asked for it (instrumental)
3. I would feel ashamed of myself (shame)
4. I would feel ashamed for my family (shame)
5. I would feel embarrassed for my family, or myself (embarrassment)
6. It would have been wrong to do so (guilt)
7. I would feel guilty and regret my actions (guilt)
8. I would feel that I had lost control (expressive view of aggression)
9. Any other feelings

1.2. Participants

The sample consisted of participants from the north-eastern Indian state of Mizoram, with two age groups, sixteen-and twenty-six-year-olds. There were 300 participants in all: seventy-five sixteen-year-old males, seventy-five sixteen-year-old females, seventy-five twenty-six-year-old males, and seventy-five twenty-six-

year-old females. The 16-year-old participants were recruited from schools in the city of Aizawl, the state capital of Mizoram. Participants filled out the questionnaires in a classroom setting and the completion rate was 83 percent. For the older age group, participants were recruited by going to workplaces such as offices, colleges/universities, schools, and social gatherings where members of the relevant age group could be expected to be found. The completion rate for this group was 100 percent as questionnaires were handed out only to participants who belonged to the required age group and were willing to participate in the study. The sample was English-speaking, so the scenarios were presented in English. Similar samples have been used for other studies (Archer and Thanzami 2007, 2009; Archer, Fernández-Fuertes, and Thanzami 2010).

2. Results

2.1. Internal Consistency of Measure

Cronbach's alphas for each of the nine responses to the twelve scenarios were acceptable, ranging from .73 to .87. Cronbach's alpha for the eight feelings experienced after reacting with physical aggression were also acceptable, ranging from .72 to .84. This shows a degree of consistency across the situations for both measures, and for this reason the values were combined from the twelve scenarios for each of the behaviours. The behaviors and feelings were not combined as single scales as they are not intended to measure single concepts.

2.2. Correlations Between Responses and Feelings

Correlations between the responses to the scenarios and feelings after responding with physical aggression were computed and are presented in Table 1. Significant positive correlations were found between the direct forms of aggression, such as physical and verbal aggression, and the instrumental view of physical aggression as acceptable (physical aggression: $r = .22$; $p < .001$, verbal aggression: $r = .19$; $p < .005$). There were significant negative correlations between self-conscious emotions (such as embarrassment) and physical aggression ($r = -.12$; $p < .05$) and expressing anger ($r = -.13$; $p < .05$). Responding to the scenarios by remaining calm and in control was negatively and significantly associated with all the direct forms and expressions of anger and aggression, such as physical aggression ($r = -.32$; $p < .001$), verbal aggression ($r = -.25$; $p < .001$), overt expression of anger ($r = -.23$; $p < .001$), and expressing anger ($r = -.21$; $p < .001$), as well as with the view that physical aggression was acceptable ($r = -.13$; $p < .05$). Viewing acts of physical aggression as a loss of control was significantly and positively associated with the self-conscious emotions of shame ($r = .29$; $p < .001$), shame for the family ($r = .26$; $p < .001$) and embarrassment ($r = .14$; $p < .05$).

Table 1: Zero-order correlations between some responses to scenarios and feelings after responding with physical aggression

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Physical aggression	–								
2. Verbal aggression	.41**	–							
3. Overt expression of anger	.34**	.42**	–						
4. Explosive act directed away from provocation	.45**	.38**	.38**	–					
5. Control of feelings	-.32**	-.25**	-.23**	-.21**	–				
6. Instrumental (acceptable)	.22**	.19*	.11	.04	-.13*	–			
7. Shame	-.09	-.01	-.09	-.02	.07	-.06	–		
8. Shame for family	-.02	.08	-.03	.03	.07	.01	.51**	–	
9. Embarrassing	-.12*	-.03	-.08	-.12*	.02	.29**	.29**	.40**	–
10. Expressive (lost control)	-.003	-.07	.06	-.11*	.04	.29**	.29**	.26**	.14*

Note: ** – $p < .01$; * – $p < .05$
1 – 5: Responses to scenarios; 6 – 10: Feelings experienced after responding with physical aggression

2.3. Sex and Age Differences in Responses to Scenarios

A factorial MANOVA (sex x age) was conducted to examine the effects of age and sex on each of the nine responses across the twelve scenarios combined. A MANOVA was used as the specific items for both the behavioral responses and the feelings were not intended to measure overall concepts. This approach was used previously where response items were relatively loosely associated (Thanzami and Archer 2013). The means and standard deviations for males and females and the sixteen- and twenty-six-year-olds for each of the nine responses to the scenarios are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Means and standard deviations for males and females and 16– and 26-year-olds in responses to the 12 scenarios

Variables	Male		Female		16 years old		26 years old	
	n = 75		*n* = 75		*n* = 75		*n* = 75	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Physical aggression	26.51***	4.47	22.03	7.73	25.88**	8.80	22.65	7.69
2. Verbal aggression	28.77	9.32	28.15	8.46	28.41	7.96	28.52	9.77
3. Overt expression of anger	34.36	9.02	34.94	9.64	33.73	9.71	35.57	8.85
4. Explosive act directed away from provocation	22.81	9.25	21.03	7.84	21.51	8.81	22.33	8.40
5. Expression of upset	17.58	9.36	25.39***	9.50	20.56	8.95	22.41	9.46
6. Delayed expression of upset	22.89	9.86	33.01***	10.62	25.85	10.13	30.05**	12.26
7. Avoid the situation	27.75	7.67	29.99*	7.77	29.37	7.56	28.37	8.00
8. Indirect aggression	28.39	8.82	29.19	9.23	27.29	9.68	30.30**	8.07
9. Control of feelings	41.65	8.87	42.93	8.98	42.00	9.95	42.57	7.81

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

2.4. Sex and Age Differences Concerning Feelings after Responding with Physical Aggression

The means and standard deviations of feelings after responding with physical aggression for males and females and for the sixteen and twenty-six-year-olds are presented in Table 3. A factorial MANOVA (sex x age) was also used to investigate each of the feelings following responding to the scenarios with physical aggression, again because the responses were not intended to measure a single concept.

There was an overall main effect for both sex [$F(1,296) = 4.44$; $p < .001$] and age [$F(1,296) = 3.59$; $p < .01$] but no significant interaction [$F(1,296) = 1.54$; $p = .14$]. Table 3 indicates that males were more likely than females to endorse feelings that physical aggression was "OK" ($d = .34$, $t = 2.89$; $p < .005$), that physical aggression would be shameful for their families ($d = .40$, $t = 3.45$; $p < .005$), and that responding with physical aggression would make them feel they had lost control ($d = .23$, $t = 2.03$; $p < .05$).

Table 3 also indicates that the sixteen-year-old participants significantly endorsed feelings of shame ($d = .36$, $t = 2.91$; $p < .005$), shame for their families ($d = .39$, $t = 3.40$; $p < .005$), and embarrassment ($d = .47$, $t = 4.05$; $p < .0001$) more than the twenty-six-year-olds. On the other hand, twenty-six-year-olds were more likely to endorse feelings that the other person asked for it ($d = -.25$, $t = -2.14$; $p < .05$) than the sixteen-year-olds.

Table 3: Means and standard deviations for males and females and 16– and 26-year-olds in feelings experienced after responding with physical aggression

Feeling after responding with physical aggression	Male *n* = 75		Female *n* = 75		6 years old *n* = 75		26 years old *n* = 75	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1. Instrumental (acceptable)	2.53**	2.62	1.72	2.19	2.06	2.36	2.19	2.54
2. Instrumental (asked for it)	1.83	2.32	1.90	2.25	1.59	2.05	2.15*	2.47
3. Shame	4.59	3.20	4.25	3.02	4.93**	3.17	3.90	2.97
4. Shame for family	1.95**	2.50	1.09	1.75	1.95**	2.48	1.10	1.78
5. Embarrassing	1.74	2.46	2.29	2.55	2.59***	2.87	1.44	1.95
6. Guilt (regret)	4.10	3.33	4.08	3.36	4.23	3.41	3.95	3.27
7. Guilt (wrong)	3.29	2.85	3.33	2.88	3.36	2.89	3.26	2.84
8. Expressive (lost control)	5.84*	3.37	5.04	3.46	5.71	3.43	5.17	3.42

Note: Asterisks indicate significant (* = p < .05; ** = p < .005; *** = p < .0001) main effects in a 2x2 MANOVA (2 sex x 2 age) for responses to scenarios and feelings after responding with physical aggression. There were no significant interactions.

3. Discussion

The aim of the present study was to examine how participants from an Indian, collectivist sample viewed their aggression by using scenarios constructed using the findings of an exploratory study with a similar sample. The scenarios consisted of provoking situations that participants were likely to encounter in their daily lives, with responses in two parts: the first part consisted of typical behaviors in response to the situation while the other consisted of how they would feel after having responded with physical aggression. Examining thoughts and feelings associated with having engaged in physical aggression would indicate how they viewed their own aggression, an issue addressed by the Expagg in Western samples.

As predicted, males reported significantly more physical aggression than females in response to the provoking scenarios. The difference applied in both age groups, although effect sizes were larger for the younger group. The pattern of sex difference is similar to that found in past research measuring physical aggression, mostly but not exclusively in Western samples, where males score significantly higher than females in self-reported and scenario measures of aggression (Archer 2004; 2009; Archer, Ireland, and Power 2007; Reinisch and Sanders 1986). There was also a significant age difference for physical aggression, with the younger sample scoring higher than the older sample. This supports previous findings that physical aggression decreases with age during young adulthood (e.g. Archer and Haigh 1997a; Harris 1996; O'Connor, Archer, and Wu 2001).

Females of both ages showed significantly higher scores than males for both "cry" and "cry when alone", which is again consistent with past research (Lombardo et al. 1983; Williams and Morris 1996). The present finding that in response to a provoking situation, women report crying more than men is likely to be due at least partially to the gender role socialization, in that the masculine role includes suppression of the expression of negative emotions, which are associated with girls or women (Archer 1992). Thus, men become more practiced at suppressing their feelings due to the social pressures to not cry that they experience (Scheff and Bushnell 1984). Borgquist (1906) found that amongst students, crying occurred as a result of three mood states, namely, grief or sadness, anger, and joy. Vingerhoets, van Geleuken, van Tilburg and van Heck (1997) also found that amongst women, one of the common situations that resulted in crying was being faced with a conflict situation.

There was also a significant age difference for crying when alone, with the older respondents scoring higher than the younger respondents. One possible explanation is that their

social roles as adults included the expectation that they should not display public crying; there is greater pressure for them not to be seen crying in front of others, as that could damage their self-image. This explanation is supported by a series of studies (Frey 1985; Williams and Morris 1996; Vingerhoets and Becht 1997; Vingerhoets et al. 1997) finding that adults often cry when alone. The Expagg (Campbell et al. 1999) includes an item involving crying on the instrumental scale. From an instrumental viewpoint, crying is a more negative response than hitting an opponent in an argument. Because men endorse instrumental beliefs about aggression to a greater extent than women do, they are more likely to be annoyed if they cried rather than hit the person with whom they were arguing.

Females showed higher scores than males on "leave and sulk", which is consistent with the finding of Campbell and Muncer (2008) that women are more likely than men to engage in "defusing" non-injurious angry behaviour as a result of their greater inhibitory control. Girls show greater effortful control than boys from early in life (Else-Quest et al. 2006). Few studies have examined sulking as a response to provocation. In their study on indirect aggression amongst children, Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, and Kaukiainen (1992) included sulking as a response to feelings of anger. They found that girls sulked more than boys (d = -.51), and that the sex difference was greater at eleven and fifteen years of age than at age eight.

Spreading rumours is a central feature of the category described as indirect or relational aggression (Archer and Coyne 2005). In our study, the older participants scored higher than the younger participants although there were no overall sex differences. This direction of finding is interesting as it would be expected from previous research that the younger participants would indulge more in this type of behaviour (Owens 1996; Bjorkqvist 1994), although previous studies did not involve the age groups used in the present study. In our study, younger females showed lower mean scores than the other three groups for this response, which is contrary to previous findings where adolescent girls reported more instances of this behaviour than male adolescents (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, and Kaukiainen 1992; Owens 1996). However, in the preceding qualitative study (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011) the most common response to conflict among sixteen-year-old girls was confrontation rather than an indirect response such as spreading rumours.

Although there were no sex or age differences in "remain calm and in control", it was the most frequent response, indicating that overall these respondents attached greatest importance to remaining calm and in control when faced with a provoking situation. It should be kept in mind that respondents were able to choose more than one response for each scenario, so that although the response of remaining in control was the most frequently chosen option, it may have been accompanied by others.

The second section of the scenarios asked how the respondent would feel afterwards, had they responded with physical aggression. It had been predicted that males would endorse instrumental feelings to a greater extent than females would. There was a sex difference in the male direction for feeling that responding with physical aggression was "OK and acceptable", which is consistent with the higher male scores for physical aggression. The correlations between physical aggression and feeling that it was "acceptable" was positive and significant but small. Viewing aggressive behaviour as "acceptable" corresponds to some extent with the instrumental view of aggression, whereby aggression is seen as an acceptable response, which in turn is positively associated with physical aggression (Archer and Haigh 1997a,b).

There were age differences, but no sex differences in feelings that the opponent had "asked for it", which corresponds closely with instrumental beliefs measured by the Expagg. The 26-year-olds showed higher scores than the sixteen-year-olds, although the effect size was small. This was unexpected, as instrumental responses were expected to occur to a greater extent in the younger group, as they are usually more directly aggressive, as was the case in this sample. However, this unexpected finding can be supported by the lack of significant age difference for feeling that physical aggression was "OK and acceptable", another instrumental response. In the exploratory study (Thanzami, Archer, and Sullivan 2011) the older group had

talked about it being wrong to react physically, but if the other person started the fight or if the subject was doing it for a reason (such as getting back at someone), they would then think the other person asked for it. Thus the opponent and the situation to which they were responding influenced the response in this age group. We should also note that there were no sex differences in this response.

There was a sex difference in the male direction for feelings of shame for the family. This is consistent with the role of men as family protectors, where one aspect of protection would involve ensuring that the family's name is not tarnished. This is a common theme in societies where traditional values prevail and can be exaggerated as the culture of honour (Cohen and Nisbett 1996). The younger age group reported more feelings of shame for the family than the older age group.

The younger group also scored higher than the older group for feelings of shame and embarrassment. Feelings of shame are associated with perceptions of being criticised, devalued, and disapproved by others for actions that others find undesirable or unattractive (Gilbert 1998; Tangney 1996). This implies that shame is closely associated with behaving in a way that is held to be undesirable. In the present case, responding with physical aggression is associated with being disapproved of and devalued by others, and therefore leads to shame. Because the sixteen-year-olds endorsed more physical aggression, it is likely that they would report greater feelings of shame, as behaving aggressively would be a behaviour that is disapproved by others.

There was a small sex difference in the male direction for the feeling of having lost control. This is inconsistent with previous findings using the Expagg – mainly in individualist cultures – that women were more likely to view their aggression as an expression of loss of control (Campbell, Muncer, and Gorman 1993; Campbell et al. 1999; Campbell and Muncer 1994; Archer and Haigh 1997a, 1997b, 1999). In the present sample, it is possible that men are more likely to feel the need to be in control, due to the pressure of responsibility, and will hence have a tendency to view their aggression as stemming from a loss of control. The tendency for males to hold more expressive beliefs is consistent with the findings of the preceding study (Thanzami and Archer 2013) where males scored significantly higher than females on the expressive scale as well as on the instrumental scale. For these samples, instrumental and expressive beliefs are likely to be related and form part of a single belief system, particularly for males, which involves both the justification of physical aggression in certain circumstances, yet a feeling that it also involves guilt and a sense of loss of control.

These results show certain patterns consistent with those found previously in Western studies, and others that are inconsistent. Also, in line with previous evidence, the present study showed that males endorsed feelings closely related to expressive beliefs (e.g. feeling that they had lost control) alongside feelings closely resembling instrumental beliefs (that physical aggression was "OK" and acceptable). The explanation for these findings probably lies in the requirements of the male role in this culture. Here, the roles and responsibilities of a man are given greater importance than is the case in Western samples. The participants in this study belong to a patrilineal society where the role of the male is one of authority. But authority and power come with responsibility that means they have to be more cautious about their actions. Because of this, the issue of control has greater weight for them, and they more readily view their aggression as a form of loss of control. On the whole, the pattern of responses is robust and explains much about how this population view their aggression. Although instrumental and expressive views are clearly present in the ways this sample views their aggression, other-focussed beliefs also form an integral part of the way they view their aggression.

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Appendix

The 12 scenarios used in the study

1. Imagine this: you are in the school playground [you come into work] one morning and you see a group of students [your colleagues] standing together looking at you and laughing. You know they don't like you and that they are talking about you. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:
   1 = very unlikely
   2 = quite unlikely
   3 = neither likely nor unlikely
   4 = quite likely
   5 = very likely

1) Get angry and respond with physical aggression, like hitting out at them	1	2	3	4	5
2) Yell at them	1	2	3	4	5
3) Leave and sulk	1	2	3	4	5
4) Cry	1	2	3	4	5
5) Control your feelings and remain calm	1	2	3	4	5
6) Feel like crying but wait until you are alone	1	2	3	4	5
7) Let those around you know you are angry	1	2	3	4	5
8) Express your anger towards an object, such as kicking a wall or slamming a door	1	2	3	4	5
9) Go and tell your friends bad things about them	1	2	3	4	5

   Imagine that you became extremely outraged in the situation described, and you responded with physical aggression, like hitting out. How would you feel afterwards? Please tick one or more of the following alternatives:
   1) That it would be ok or acceptable
   2) I would feel ashamed of myself
   3) I would feel ashamed for my family
   4) I would feel that I had lost control
   5) I would feel embarrassed for myself/family
   6) I would feel the other person asked for it
   7) It would have been wrong to do so
   8) I would feel guilty and regret my actions
   9) Any other feelings

2. Imagine this: you are on a night out with friends and a stranger who appears to be drunk walks up to you and starts verbally abusing you. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

3. Imagine this: you and a friend[colleague] are working on a project at school[work] when another student [colleague] challenges you to a physical fight and calls you a "coward" when you try to back out. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

4. Imagine this: your mother has asked you to tidy your room for the past week but you still haven't got around to doing that. You are watching TV and she comes in and switches it off and asks you again to tidy your room. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

5. Imagine this: you are hanging out with your friends and having a good time when they start teasing you about some issues they know you are sensitive about, and you start getting annoyed. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

6. Imagine this: a group of people you don't like much have been verbally harassing your close relative for some time and threatening physical harm. One evening you are hurriedly summoned and told that your relative was in a fight with this gang. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

7. Imagine this: you are at a social gathering having a great time when you overhear a group of people you know (but don't really like much) saying nasty things about you, what would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

8. Imagine this: you are at school [work]when your teacher [boss]accuses you of doing something wrong when it wasn't you. How would you react? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

9. Imagine this: you and your friends are hanging out and having general discussions about different things when the conversation leads onto one of your relatives. Your friends start being insulting towards your relative. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

10. Imagine this: you are in school [work] and your teacher [boss] tells the whole class [your colleagues] about a mistake you made in your test [project] implying that you are silly and careless. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

11. Imagine this: you are at a family get-together and your mother starts comparing you to some of your successful cousins and tells everyone how you would never be successful as you are too lazy to succeed. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

12. Imagine this: your parents have accused you of doing something wrong when you know that it wasn't you. What would you do? Rate how likely or unlikely you are to respond with the following behaviors along the five-point scale provided where:

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Transitional Justice and the Quality of Democracy

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Transitional Justice and the Quality of Democracy

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Transitional Justice is a long-term process which seeks to address severe human rights abuses of the past through measures such as trials, commissions of inquiry, memorials, apologies, reforms of the legal or security sector, school textbook reforms, and reconciliation projects. These measures are usually applied by governments, but can also be initiated by civil society groups, such as victim groups, or the international community, for example the European Union or the UNHCR. Transitional justice measures are seen as catalysts for coming to terms with the past and establishing new, stable, and often democratic societies. As such, the measures are linked to the performance and efficacy of democratic institutions in the context of their accountability and responsiveness, transparency, and level of citizen participation. Thus, transitional justice is a process that aims to reconcile divided and conflict-torn societies by re-establishing (democratic) institutions. These measures can be catalysts to leverage institutional performance.

This article looks at the relationship between transitional justice measures and the quality of democracy. According to the definition used by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights this process consists of both judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, including prosecution initiatives, reparations, truth-seeking, institutional reform, or a combination of these measures. Whatever combination is chosen must be in conformity with international legal standards, including international human rights and state obligations to protect and promote them. The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) defines transitional justice as an approach seeking to achieve justice by a set of judicial and non-judicial measures implemented in order to redress the legacies of massive human rights abuses. These measures include criminal prosecutions, truth commissions, reparations programs, lustrations, memorials, and various kinds of institutional reforms.

In this context, transitional justice measures are seen over a period of time as catalysts to enhance democratic performance by increasing accountability, transparency, or participation of, among, and with democratic institutions, and consequently strengthening and legitimizing them. Nevertheless, these measures can also be misused and carried out by political leaders or interest groups with a bias or political interest. This can, in return, hamper or weaken the performance of democratic institutions through corruption, victor's justice, or trials which privilege side one over the other. I will link these dimensions and explore the possible impact that different transitional justice measures have on democracy.

1. Transitional Justice and Democracy

The main objectives of transitional justice measures are to attain peace and societal stability within a conflict-torn society through means of justice and truth. In order to do so, the country's political and bureaucratic institutions must guarantee a basic level of accountability, transparency, and free participation. When and how to apply these mechanisms depends on the context of the conflict and on the post-conflict situation. For example, seeking justification for war crimes is a central concern in war-torn societies shortly after the conflict has ended, whereas a focus on investigating the collaborative communist elite has been the focal point in post-authoritarian states in Eastern Europe over a longer period of time. Ultimately,

transitional justice measures aim to support governmental efforts to delegitimize the previous regime and political elite while legitimizing and strengthening the new regime (Priban, Roberts, and Young 2003). I focus on both parallel processes.

Recent studies have shown that when transitional justice measures are applied separately, rather than in combination with other measures or in a set, they have little impact. A combination of transitional justice measures applied over an extended period, as recommended by the UN (ten years or a generation and longer), are the most likely to impact on the quality of democratic processes and institutional performance (Van der Merwe, Baxter, and Chapman 2009; Thoms, Ron, and Paris 2010). Moreover, it is important to note that not all measures are suitable to be applied at any given time, for instance directly after a conflict has ended.

Quality of democracy is an emerging sub-field of democracy studies introduced by Morlino and IDEA in the late 1990s (Diamond and Morlino 2005). Assessment of the quality of democratic institutions focuses accountability, transparency, and participation (good governance principles) and how these principles are interlinked with measures of transitional justice (Graham, Amos, and Plumptre 2003).

Therefore, in order to assess the quality of democracy with respect to transitional justice, it is necessary to look at the reactions of political and civic institutions, organizations, and actors such as lawyers, policy makers, and civil society groups involved in the long-term process of democratization as well as the process of transitional justice. Government (executive), parliament (legislative), and the judiciary, as well as the electorate and civil society, interact through these processes and transitional justice measures can catalyze their interests and interaction with citizens.

1.1. Inter-linkage between Transitional Justice and Democratic Institutions

When we assess transitional justice measures or "tools," alongside the principles that indicate the quality of democracy and its institutions, such as accountability through responsiveness and transparency or civic trust through participation, we look for certain criteria such as trust through civic interaction with democratic institutions and the application of the rule of law through the judiciary. The conversion of these standards into policies can help determine to what extent transitional justice measures enact legal reforms to punish or purge perpetrators, compensate survivors, and acknowledge victims, bystanders, and society at large. To measure the link between transitional justice measures and quality of democracy we look at the level of accountability, for example government responsiveness to the claims and needs of citizens, victims, or perpetrators for compensation, reparation or fair trials. To identify the level of transparency, we look at the level of compliance with international human rights law, for example equity rights, during trials or vetting procedures. The level of participation and engagement by citizens and civil society in the decision-making process can indicate the level of civic trust in democratic institutions. Overall, it is the level of accountability or responsiveness of governmental institutions towards citizens' and other international demands that indicates whether democratic institutions are performing well. The level of citizens' civic trust and engagement also indicates the level of legitimacy of democratic institutions and their actors (Mayer-Rickh and Greiff 2007, 501). Transitional justice measures, such as commissions of inquiry, vetting procedures, trials, or memorials, can serve as a catalysts to channel such claims and respond to public pressure. The same applies when inaugurating a memorial, issuing laws on lustration, or setting up trials: all these measures can serve as tools to leverage democratic performance. This can increase the level of effective governance and thus the quality of democracy, for example if citizen-driven pressure persuades the government to respond by holding an open parliamentary debate about past injustice, changing laws, or engaging more of civil society in the democratic process.

By and large, we have seen governments in Germany, Chile, South Korea, and South Africa use different measures to shape their democratic institutions. Issues of past wrongdoing often come onto the political agenda during election processes or at national anniversaries, for example German or South Korean commemorations of the end of World

War II or in post-Apartheid South Africa. During such commemorations and election campaigns, political actors and stakeholders reference the past and often call for more or different transitional justice measures to deal with it. By doing so, they make concessions to dealing with the past, and open doors for first, albeit often singular transitional justice measures. Nonetheless, such concessions indicate that the past has a direct link to present political performance or culture. Some countries, like Germany, Spain, or Argentina amnestied perpetrators to gratify a certain constituency and electorate during transition. Amnesty laws are seen as a transitional justice measure of last resort. They can however, be seen as a stabilizing measure immediately after the end of dictatorship or war, as was the case in post-Franco Spain in 1976 and 1977 or in post-war Germany after 1949. The aim of amnesties is to satisfy former political elites and prevent them returning to power through military or violent means (Roehrig 2009; Frei 2002; Rigby 2000). Thus, amnesty laws are most likely to be passed if there as a real threat by the former elite – often militant – to seek power again soon after the conflict or regime has ended. Although amnesties do not necessarily hamper transitional justice processes, they can lead to a culture of impunity that in the long run makes a further transitional justice process impossible. But amnesty laws can also be overruled by constitutional court decisions, presidential decrees, or referendums, as occurred in some Latin American countries. Unsurprisingly, even decades after the conflict has ended, not all societies feel ready to abolish amnesty laws, fearing acts of vengeance or other repercussions by former perpetrators, for example in Turkey after 1980. Others, like Spain, simply fear social repercussions in society at large, if the glorious mystery of their former state leader, General Franco, and his constituency and supporters (of which many have remained in powerful positions as judges or in ministries) were to be demystified.

During early transition processes and democratic institution-building, vote-winning majorities usually dominate the political and economic discourse in a liberal democracy. These majorities are not necessarily in favor of transitional justice measures, as was seen in many post-communist countries. In consensual democracies there is a greater likelihood that victim groups will be included in the decision-making and democratization process at an earlier stage (Lijphard 1999). One of the reasons why the first years of transition challenge both transitional justice and democracy measures is that many of those actors or new political elites who appear as fully-fledged democrats overnight actually have a long anti-democratic past, having supported the previous violent or autocratic regime, and consequently fear retributive measures. Obviously they have little interest in starting a transitional justice process to which they themselves might be subject, sooner or later. Liberal democratic concepts aim to privilege majority opinions in parliament and in legislative power structures. For societies in transition, this can mean that citizens vote for the previous elites who are the most outspoken: they know the "political game," possess the largest resources for campaigning, and have an existing relationship with citizens in which voters "know what they are getting." This is a common phenomenon in transitional societies, even if it means electing those who were largely responsible for previous atrocities, injustices, and conflict. Other new political actors, sometimes victims of the previous regime or marginalized political groups, are often inexperienced in public campaigning and have little or no governance record. During ruptured transition processes, new governments oppose the inclusion of old elites and therefore advocate punitive transitional justice measures, as in Tunisia, which can lead to victor's justice practices. In pacted transitions like in Spain, where old and new political elites govern side by side, transitional justice measures are more reluctantly applied and amnesties favored over retributive measures. Consequently, the composition of the new political elites or actors will predict whether, when, and why transitional justice measures are applied. A thoughtful combination of old and new elites is more likely to succeed than a complete shift in political leadership. Political institutions in consensual democracies focus more than those than in liberal democracies on citizens' participation and inclusion, from which minorities (such as victim groups) benefit. Moreover, consensual democracies emphasize social justice, distribution of resources, long-term peace, and the common well-being of society (McGann 2006, 177). Hence, consensual democracies are more responsive to their citizens' demands and claims than liberal ones, since the latter rely more on the rule of law.

1.2. Timing of Transitional Justice in Democracies

The impact of transitional justice measures largely depends on how political elites channel processes and deal with the past, but there is no set guide on when to start the process. What is certain is that where citizens' claims exist, executive and legislative power should be responsive, as this will leverage institutional legitimacy and stability. The resulting quality of democracy also depends on how inclusive the process is. In this respect, Hazan points out that in conflict-driven societies governments should first develop symbolic bonding systems between institutions and citizens without denying the past (Hazan 2006, 46–47). One must be mindful that memory and remembrance are dynamic processes that should also permit forgetting. Equally, political actors should be aware that each generation reinterprets the events of the past. The first post-conflict generation, twenty to twenty-five years after the transition starts, is usually the first that is not afraid to institute thorough transitional justice measures. Needless to say, much of this early process depends on political leadership managing these reforms and institutions. Interestingly, we observe that after one generation, or twenty years into the democratic process, a new political generation, free from fear and responsibility for the past, raises stronger demands to come to terms with the past. This is also the time when in democratic societies at least a minimum of international human rights standards have been integrated into domestic legislation, a shift in political power has taken place through peaceful elections, and institutions have been stabilized to a certain extent. This is a period where one is most likely to see whether transitional justice measures, such as trials or vetting procedures, have impacted these societies and led to more effective institutional reforms, for example changing military security laws into more liberal ones as was the case in West Germany in the 1970s, twenty-five years after the country turned formally to democracy. Hence, it often takes at least a decade or two after the end of the abusive regime before all formal mechanisms are in place to allow democratic institutions to fully apply the whole spectrum of transitional justice measures based on international human rights law, as seen in post-World War II West Germany (Frei 2002). The first post-transition or post-conflict generation benefits most from these formal democratic reforms. They are free from guilt or fear of facing repercussions (from former military or political elites), because they do not bear any personal responsibility for the suppressive regime or war. Furthermore, authors like Hazan (2006) argue that unless there are effective monitoring procedures in place, such as an independent judiciary, transitional justice measures may prove ineffective and instead become a convenient alibi for inertia. Thus, monitoring institutions and a judiciary should be in place not only to ensure fair and open trials or commission of inquiry, but also to guarantee the safety and security of witnesses and accused. Institutional monitoring procedures, such as courts or commissions, may better facilitate democratic transition and enhance the quality of democratic institutions if they leave room for participation by societal and political actors from all sides that lead to various kinds of response by government institutions.

But in general old elites, authoritarian traditions, and bigotry dominate the political spectrum. Many of the "liberators" from the past regime, such those as in Rwanda after 1994 or in Sierra Leone after 2000, had committed war crimes or human rights violations themselves. In our contemporary understanding, war criminals on the "winning side" should also be brought to justice in the transitional period. That was not always the case, and history shows that they are often exempt from prosecution and instead hold great political power (Peskin 2005; Biddiss 1995). In fact, liberators or victors, such as Paul Kagame's government in Rwanda, often use transitional justice measures to cleanse the political arena of personal opponents and political enemies, by purging them or imposing life imprisonment or the death penalty. Those new political elites have little or no interest in setting up the kind of inclusive transitional justice process with trials and commissions that would investigate all perpetrators alike, regardless of which side they were on. By failing to do so, they establish benefits for only one side and distort the distribution of blame (Vlaming 2012).

Consequently, at the beginning of any transition process transitional justice measures are often used as tools to set political agendas. Moral responsibility for atonement is not on the political agenda at first. Therefore, we find a number of transitional justice mechanisms applied in

autocracies, oligarchies, and democracies alike, that are principally used to delegitimize the previous regime and solidify autocratic power, but completely without the aim of improving the quality of democracy or democracy. Governments in Russia and China, for example, use many of these transitional justice measures (anniversary commemorations, history commissions, or demands for apologies by former enemies) to manifest their own autocratic and anti-democratic power, based on the simple notion of good (victims) and bad (perpetrators). They use these measures to fuel hostile positions toward neighboring countries, such as Japan, in order to distract public attention from domestic problems (Andrieu 2011; Gready 2009, 184–85).

While many young, fragile democracies in transition are at risk of returning to authoritarian rule, they also have a unique opportunity to strengthen the rule of law and create strong democratic institutions by using transitional justice measures. A traumatized and fearful society is often the deciding factor for the success or failure of transitional justice processes. The process can fail if the country has little experience with democratic institutions, the transitional justice measures are not carefully applied, and/or the new political elite is not fully committed to good governance principles (Kiss 2006). Traditional domestic, political, and civic conditions have to be taken into account as well. Hazan observes that unless there is a popular, national catharsis, which allows a substantial majority of population to agree that something has to be done about the past, transitional justice measures may not lead to the desired outcome. It may be useless to even begin the process if there is no overall agreement in society about dealing with the past (Linz and Stepan 1996, 5; Diamond 1999, 68). Thus, a national catharsis is fundamental to starting any transitional justice process, because it channels the common fears and different narratives that exist in society and opens doors to dealing with the past. Through the voicing of truth and narratives, for example, a national catharsis emerges. It allows a common history and narratives to be written of mutually exclusive and antagonistic memories and identities (Hazan 2006, 26). A catharsis does not define the measures yet it helps to initiate a dialogue between the different parties and between institutions and citizens – as was the case in the post-conflict peace process since 2010 in Cote d'Ivoire in which, according to the International Center for Transitional Justice and the UN, such a dialogue was a key step in the process of national catharsis through which the Ivorian people must recognize and accept the profound moral and political causes of the past violence and human rights violations and eradicate their long-term social, cultural, and psychological consequences (UN News Service, 13 August 2013). Nonetheless, the specific measures have to be chosen by political and civic elites, who decide which best serve the interests and rights of victims and victimizers alike. Most post-conflict societies experience such a national catharsis immediately after the conflict has ended, but it often exists for only a brief period of one year or less. This "window of opportunity" is a timespan for policymakers to address past wrongdoings and utilize the catharsis as a catalyst to institute legal or political reforms, i.e. through vetting or judicial procedures, often closes long before commissions of inquiry have completed their reports, trials have started, or democratic institutions have been established. Sometimes this "window" is shorter than one year, or up to five years. Instead, new outbreaks of violence are often the result (Quinn 2009). The window usually opens again when the first post-conflict generation gains political power.

2. Transitional Justice Measures as "Catalyst" for the Quality of Democracy

In its 2006 guiding principles for transitional justice the OHCHR concluded that transitional justice measures are a substantial factor in aiding democratization processes (UN Doc GA Resolution 60/147, 21 March 2006). But in order to work as such, the basic democratic institutions have to be in place, and the safety of perpetrators and victims has to be ensured. The UN guidelines emphasize that transitional justice measures can achieve sustainable peace and justice as well as enhance democratic performance, but only if they are enforced through democratic institutions with wide civil-society participation, and that they should not be applied against the will of the citizens. Yet, I argue that many of these institutions can be re-installed and stabilized – or destabilized – while using transitional justice measures as catalysts; for instance, the South African commission of inquiry's ability to create transparency and obtain a certain level of accountability and transparency

that led to more engagement by citizens with these institutions and thus a higher level of civic trust. Other domestic circumstances, political and legal cultures, and factors such as whether an independent judiciary is already in place, must also be taken into account (Davis 2010). International and regional organizations and institutions can facilitate, but not impose this process. The UN "Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-recurrence" appointed in 2012 is one of many initiatives by the international community to monitor the implementation of transitional justice measures in post-conflict and authoritarian societies under the conditions mentioned (Greiff 2012). For example, victims who receive reparations or compensation will invariably identify themselves with the democratic institutions of the new regime and thus promote the democratic process, while victims or perpetrator groups that have negative experiences with biased trials or unfair compensation issued through institutions, feel excluded. As a consequence, they often tend to act outside legal and political frameworks, as the resistance movement of *campesinos* in Colombia or the ongoing Hutu resistance to the government in Rwanda.

As a result, measures such as commissions of inquiry, history commissions, domestic or international trials, memorials, or apologies can function as catalysts and a forum to take up violent claims or grievance wishes for vengeance. These measures hence catalyze claims and convert them, i.e. into reports, indictments, commemoration events, to which governmental institutions can respond, for example with compensation funds. By doing so, public institutions as well as the government or parliament respond and engage with citizens and vice versa. In return, citizens' involvement leverages the performance of democratic institutions. This is how transitional justice measures can contribute to the quality of democracy.

Hence, these measures can help to turn false allegations, myths, conspiracy, silence, and mistrust into facts, figures, and notions that attain truth, transparency, and trust, which add invaluably to the process of achieving justice and democracy. These measures can prevent society at large from undertaking arbitrary acts of vengeance or violence and channel those desires toward more peaceful conflict resolution and transition. Citizens (re-)learn how to make use of institutions, petition parliamentarians and expect responses, or dare to file a claim without fearing repercussions. If citizens and victims see their claims addressed responsively, they are more likely to refrain from taking justice into their own hands through violent means. This is, thus, a stabilizing factor for conflict-torn societies. In this same context, Olson, Payne, and Reiter argue that applying only particular, exclusive transitional justice measures while leaving others out may have diminishing effects on sustainable democratic development (2010, 141–45). Thus, if the demands of citizens are focused on memorials, vetting procedures, and trials, they should at least be addressed by governments and policy makers, and not ignored. But as Baxter highlights, different transitional justice measures impact different sectors of society (2009, 325–26). Expectations of these measures range from those who wish to leave the past behind to those who cannot wait to see their oppressors punished. The variety and disparity of interests must be carefully assessed and balanced, and this can pose a serious challenge to political actors when deciding what kind of transitional justice measures to apply.

Political and legal traditions as well as international and regional monitoring mechanisms, such as those operated by the Council of Europe, the Inter-American regime for human rights, or the African Union, also play an important role in this process. Just as, if there is no bottom-up approach by citizens there is no transitional justice process, the same is true where there is no external pressure and no incentives at all, either from the international community or from below from citizens' movements. The less a country in transition can count on support, initiatives, or pressure from the international community, the less likely its political elites are to start the process. The same is true for a lack of popular pressure and truth-seeking initiatives. Governments often find themselves in a situation where they have to be accountable to the international community as well as to local pressure groups (constituencies, victims' groups, or electorate), and use the same transitional justice measures to be responsive to both. Installing commissions of inquiry, for examples, is a response to the pressure and indicates that they take the unresolved issues

of the past seriously. At the same time democratic institutions indicate a certain level of responsiveness and accountability which leads to more civic trust. In this situation, transitional justice mechanisms also must comply with constitutional and international human rights norms. At the same time, international courts like the ECtHR have taken Kurdish victim groups' claims for reparations against the Turkish government as a trigger to also launch recommendations and issue sentences against the government in Ankara. The government in return had to respond to these claims and sentences domestically and internationally. Pressure groups take the decisions of an international court as an incentive to pressure their government for further reforms. Consensual democracies may contest that claims have to be dealt with immediately, as in the case of the Japanese government and the forced prostitution of the so called "comfort women" during World War II in Korea and China (Tanaka 2002). In this respect, I would argue that the pace and extent to which governments and parliaments respond to claims indicates the level of responsiveness and thus accountability. Governmental response to claims can take place at any stage of democratic development. There is no *"punto final,"* no *"Schlussstrich,"* as some politicians demanded in 1980s Latin America or post-World War II Germany (Roht-Arriaza 1998).

As the United Church of Canada's apology to the First Nation People in recent years demonstrated, crimes and injustice can be addressed decades or even centuries after they occur. The value that transitional justice measures hold for all democratic institutions, old and new, is always the same: increased legitimacy. Often it takes a second or later generation of victims and descendants or bystanders to raise the issues of the past (Schabas and Bernaz 2012). In some cases international criminal justice and customary law apply without any strict time limitations. But if governments fail to respond at all to these citizens' claims without providing sufficient rationale, this represents a lack of accountability and thus effective and qualitative governance. Then, political unrest, civil disobedience, and turmoil may occur because citizens are unsatisfied. The moment a group puts an issue from the past on the political agenda, the executive and legislative ought to respond in an open way.

Unsurprisingly, we find that transitional justice measures are more likely to be successfully applied in more stable democracies than in less stable ones. New democracies face serious constraints and political opposition that often allow them to focus on only one or two transitional justice measures and leave out others. They also fear negative consequences for their new and fragile regime. New political elites who were in some way connected to the previous regime avoid holding trials as they fear being subject to prosecution themselves one day (Spinner-Halev 2012, 164).

In Rwanda, for example, almost all transitional justice measures have been applied through a top-down approach, but the quality of democracy is rather poor. In post-World War II West Germany, after an initial top-down approach in the 1950s, most transitional justice measures shifted to a more bottom-up approach just one generation later in the late 1960s and 1970s, and this did much to enhance the quality of democracy (Herf 1997). In Spain, some of the amnesty and compensation measures put into place immediately after the death of General Franco in 1975, i.e. by granting specific pensions to former political prisoners, might qualify as transitional justice measures. In particular, the amnesty laws of 1975–76 were regarded as blueprints for many other peaceful or pacted transition processes in the following decades. But no serious transitional justice processes took place in Spain until about 2000, when the first post-Franco generation went onto the streets and into the internet and social networks to form pressure groups and NGOs to demand more extensive measures such as a commission of inquiry, trials, memorials, and so on. These participatory demands by citizens triggered governmental response and transparency, and finally resulted in a "law of historical memory" in 2007. Nonetheless, Spanish democracy is already considered to have consolidated in the 1980s, ten years after regime change. But Spanish democracy has transpired to be less resilient to political crises because old political elites kept many positions and were reluctant, for example, to pass reparation laws or listen to victims' claims. To this day, institutional flaws, deficits, and "unconsolidated" pockets in democracies such as Spain, Greece, or Chile are often connected with past wrongdoings and the unprocessed legacies of wars and dictatorships. Instead, the anti-democratic legacies and shadows of

past regimes often haunt democracies for generations and often serve to justify violent acts or terror groups such as ETA terrorism in Spain, which I call "unconsolidated pockets." This is particularly true in regimes in which institutions continue with the same personnel and actors in place, "converting" to democrats overnight, but not allowing these institutions they represent to deal with their own past. The removal of the Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzon in 2012 after his attempts to take cases of Franco era crimes to the higher courts, is just one of many examples which show the shadow that the former Franco regime casts over the current administration and judiciary. Successors of Franco's elites played a crucial role in avoiding any prosecution of past perpetrators. Continuing ETA terrorism and violent separatist movements in the Basque Country, Catalonia, and elsewhere are also a sign that the country never successfully delegitimized the past (Aguilar 2001). Such activists claim that because of Franco's unsettled legacy, they are still not "free and independent" and that "centralistic autocratic power" remains in Madrid. Those who support terrorism and separatism often justify their claims in terms of the unjust legacy that still "impacts Spanish political elites" in their decision-making processes. Here, transitional justice measures could have served as a catalyst to demystify these legacies. This could have helped to avoid the ongoing violent acts, because ETA would not receive such widespread support based on myths and false legacies.

Although the absence of transitional justice measures alone does not automatically lead to the complete failure of democratic institutions, it is linked to the level of effective performance of those institutions which, in turn, affects the legitimacy and quality of democratic institutions.

In the case of Turkey, the ECtHR has been one of the main international legal institutions pressurizing Ankara to address past crimes. Cases of disappeared and murdered Kurds in eastern Anatolia or Greeks in Northern Cyprus have come before the ECtHR. The government responded to the judgments by initiating legal and political reforms and setting up compensation funds for victims (Brems 2011). The ECtHR is by no means the only transitional justice measure for Turkey, but it has contributed to the process by ruling, for example, that Turkey must set up a reparation fund for property seized from Greek Cypriots during the conflict in 1974. Kurdish victim groups have repeatedly used the decisions of the ECtHR to pressure Ankara for more reforms. In response, the Turkish parliament launched investigative laws in the case of the disappeared Kurds. In other cases, the government appointed a Commission of Inquiry for reparations and for Greek property losses in Northern Cyprus. This took place shortly before the accession talks to the EU in 2004 (Loizidou v. Turkey Case No. 15318/89, ECtHR, 1996-VI, no. 26.). These were all responses to international pressure using transitional justice measures as a tool to leverage democratic performance. Because of this, citizens perceived a general increase in transparency and accountability of institutions, which, in turn, encouraged them to file more claims. The relatively slow progress of democracy in Turkey has, by and large, benefited from the few transitional justice measures so far (Mihr 2012). Henceforth, if international organizations, government, and civil society cooperate and apply a mix of transitional justice measures over a period of time, the impact on the performance of democratic institutions will be discernible.

3. Transitional Justice and the Quality of Democracy

Transitional justice measures can contribute to and/or serve as a catalyst for the democratic performance of institutions. Democracies that are considered to be very effective are those which have stable institutional structures that ensure the liberty of citizens through the legitimacy and functionality of their mechanisms. Thus, quality democracy is a regime that satisfies citizens' needs and has the full backing of civil society (Morlino 2010, 213). To draw further links between transitional justice and the quality of democracy, one has to see that on the one side, these measures can facilitate, catalyze, and contribute to democratic reforms, and on the other side, the more democratic a society becomes, the more likely it is to institute transitional justice measures to come to terms with its past. Thoms, Ron, and Paris found that transitional justice measures can have an impact or correlation, at least on respect for human rights, adherence to the rule of law, regime legitimacy, and diversity, and consequently the performance of democratic institutions (2010, 329–42). Indicators used by Morlino (2010) to measure the quality of

democracy can be grouped into criteria that are similar to those of the transitional justice process. For example: institutional accountability and governmental response through legal reforms, commissions and trials; transparency through memorials, commissions; assurance of freedom and equal rights through independent judicial and legislative powers; and political participation through victim groups. High levels of citizen trust through engagement and participation as well as a sincere guarantee of fundamental human rights, are further indicators. Some direct links were given in the above-mentioned examples, such as 1) the level of responsiveness and thus accountability of institutional powers towards victims, perpetrators, civil society organizations claims and needs in respect to the past; 2) the level of independence and transparency of the judiciary to uphold fundamental freedom and human rights when making decisions over past wrongdoings; or 3) the level of participation and engagement, and thus civic trust, by citizens, victims, or perpetrators in state institutions; to mention but a few (Altman and Perez-Linan 2002; Lijphart 1999; Diamond and Morlino 2005).

Parallel to any "wave of democratization" (Huntington 1991; Lipset 1959), the rise of human rights awareness and transitional justice mechanisms in the 1990s influenced the assessment of democracy in general. This has led to the idea that instead of measuring only the consolidation of democracy, the "quality of democracy" would be a better way to classify democracy and its institutions (Schmitter and Guilhot 2000; Diamond and Morlino 2005); alternatively "effective democracy" as Ingelhart and Welzel argue (2005). Knudsen adds that transitional justice measures can trigger egalitarian distribution of power over collective decision-making among citizens (2010, 111–12). Although this does not say anything about institutional quality and thus the level of accountability, transparency, or participation, transitional justice measures have to be seen again as facilitators and catalysts (but not more than this).

Meanwhile, measuring the quality of democracy has become a separate field of empirical investigation. It is assumed that quality, resilience, robustness, or simply best practices or good governance are relevant criteria to distinguish weak, stable, defective, and consolidated democracies. But although criteria and indicators for assessment have changed over the past decade, the core aspects of democratic consolidation remain and are found in the good governance principles of a high level of governmental accountability, transparency, and citizen participation (Diamond 1999; Huntington 1991; Gunther, Diamandouros, and Puhle 1995, 7; Linz and Stepan 1996; Schmitter 2005; O'Donnell, Cullen, and Iazzetta 2004). This observation by more than just a handful of researchers is pivotal because some of the "classical assessments" of consolidated democracy ignore significant issues such as "unconsolidated pockets" in their analytic framework of democracies, as explained above. It is within these "unconsolidated pockets" that minority, ethnic, religious, linguistic, or ideological groups seek a change of political regime, territorial separation, or greater autonomy through often undemocratic and violent means. What connects these "unconsolidated pockets" to transitional justice is that these groups often "justify" and legitimize their activities in terms of unsettled claims from the past – often centuries ago – and in doing so refer to past unjust and autocratic regimes that, they assert, ignored their claims or concerns. These actors and their constituencies perceive that justice has not succeeded and that the legacy of the past is still omnipresent in contemporary politics.

I therefore contest the assumption that fully consolidated democracies can have "unconsolidated pockets" over extended periods of time without affecting the general quality of the democratic regime, as in Spain for example. Old stereotypes, hatred, or mistrust towards former oppressors fuel violent groups and keep their constituencies from engaging with, and trusting, regime institutions. These groups can gain a substantial number of supporters and sympathizers, which can consequently hamper democratic development. This applies to many violent movements in both democratic and autocratic states, such as ETA in the Basque Country, the IRA in Northern Ireland, FARC in Colombia, the separatist movement in Quebec, or the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka (Aguilar 2001). To diminish such "unconsolidated pockets", transitional justice measures could catalyze these violent claims by demystifying legacies by revealing facts of past atrocities

for victimizers and victims alike. That, again, can lead to the recognition that many victims in society seek, and can, in return, prevent acts of vengeance and anti-democratic movements.

3.1. Responsiveness

As indicated earlier the level of accountability through responsiveness of state institutions is fundamental to assessing the quality of democracy. Support for democratic institutions, and thus their qualitative performance, is also based on the belief of citizens that courts and parliament protect and provide freedom and equality (Morlino 2010, 215). As Linz and Stephan note in their analysis of support for democratic institutions in respect to responsiveness, only if the great majority of a population adheres to democracy and its institutions as "the only game in town" can a democracy be called, in our terms, quality democracy (Linz and Stephan 1996). The level of executive and legislative responsiveness in liberal, consensual, or representative democracies depends on how governments balance public versus institutional interests and react accordingly. The balance among legal imperatives, public safety, and pragmatic considerations is nevertheless crucial in any transitional justice process (Olson, Payne, and Reiter 2010, 154–55). The capacity and leadership of governmental institutions also determines how they respond to the needs of citizens. It is important to follow up some of the above-mentioned dimensions and links when assessing responsiveness. For example, it is helpful to examine when and how political institutions and leaders formally acknowledge past wrongdoings. In this respect, newly democratic regimes can decide to do anything from setting up compensation funds to introducing memorial days (Kritz 2009, 17). Governments and parliaments can respond to citizens' claims by instituting restitution or reparation funds. Governments respond to citizens' or pressure groups' claims by initiating rehabilitation or compensation funds for expropriations, imprisonment and loss of family members. They can also set quotas for public offices so that former combatants, victims, or minority groups are proportionately represented. Another way to respond to domestic or international claims is by providing public funding to restore buildings, convert them into memorials, or maintain historical or religious sites. Many of these measures are already humanitarian obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and are reiterated in the 2006 UN Basic Principles. Any legal reform of the penal code should conform to international human rights norms as defined in international conventions and statues. The same applies for governmental vetting and lustration processes. Investigating public officials' records of collaboration with the former regime and taking the necessary action to restrict their influence on the new democratic regimes can be an active measure that a new regime can take to leverage accountability. By doing so, institutional powers combat impunity and launch reform of the security system. Thus, all of these varying dimensions of institutional responsiveness are dimensions of accountability and can enhance civic trust in the new democratic institutions.

Nevertheless, some of these procedures can perpetuate division within societies. They can result in unfair vetting and lustration processes (Thoms, Ron, and Paris 2010, 329–42). Olson, Payne, and Reiter, as well as Van der Merwe, Baxter, and Chapman conclude that dealing with past injustices can provide a rationale and momentum for the new government to reform institutions and ideologies, and while this may help society to move forward, it can also impede it (Olson, Payne, and Reiter 2010; Van der Merwe, Baxter, and Chapman 2009, 19). If these measures are applied in isolation, separate from other measures, without the consent of victim groups, and with the aim of installing victors' justice instead of a broader social justice, this can lead to functional failure of the institution or trigger corruption. Others, such as Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez, and Aguilar, or Wiebelhaus-Brahm, find no clear evidence (for example in case studies in Latin America or Africa) that directly links transitional justice measures to democracy, although they do not deny that they can be linked through what they call "indirect ways" and what I would call long-term spiral-correlating interlinkage (Barahona de Brito, Gozalez-Enriquez, and Aguilar 2004; Wiebelhaus-Brahm 2009).

3.2. Transparency and Independence through Transitional Justice

The more independently courts, tribunals, and the local judiciary can operate, the greater their impact on societal change and the functionality of democratic institutions. In

other words, the rule of law enhances transparency. Public trials and truth commission proceedings in the context of transitional justice are vital to this process. Independence of the judiciary and the rule of law is perhaps the most difficult mechanism for young democracies to establish, and for consolidated ones to uphold. Yet, the pursuit of retrospective justice is an urgent task of young and yet fragile democracy in order to delegitimize the previous regime. During the first few years after regime change, many transitional justice measures can be used to legitimize new political elites and political orders. These measures can highlight the fundamental character of the new order to be established. Many people, for example in post-communist countries, never had any positive experience with fair and open trials. It is here where trials of past perpetrators can have an educational effect and show how the rule of law can contribute to democratic stability. Sooner or later, most governments will confront the dilemma of whether or not to undertake the prosecution of previous leaders or whether they leave the past behind with blanket amnesties. If they opt for a middle path – which most countries do – they have to carefully examine the kind of sanctions and penalties they apply. If the rule of law is taken seriously, the principle of nulla poena sine lege (barring prosecution for an act that was not criminal at the time it was committed), has to also be taken seriously. And this is why many of the crimes of the past are difficult to prosecute under new regimes (Kritz 1995, vol 2, xxxi–xxxii). They simply were not considered "crimes" under the old legislation, as seen in the trial of former Egyptian president Mubarak in 2012 and 2013. Unless these crimes qualify as crimes against humanity, many governments in transition struggle with the dilemma, that after day X – when regime change took place – the rule of law should be applied, cannot necessary be applied retrospectively. One way to overcome this dilemma is to apply international (customary) human rights law, which applies universally. International human rights laws, norms, and standards are transparent and accessible to everyone and can be applied in any legal system regardless of whether it is based on local, traditional, domestic, or international jurisdiction. Its vagueness is its strength, giving countries in legal terms a "margin of appreciation," and thus the possibility to adapt international law to their own legal system according to their own legal or domestic traditions. The golden rule here is not to discriminate or harm others. But this is also where international human rights law often conflicts with traditional or domestic jurisdiction. For example, during the ongoing transitional justice process in Uganda women have largely been excluded from testifying in court. This is due to the tradition that women have no voice in court (Mibinge 2010). O'Donnell, Cullell, and Iazzetta highlight this correlation between the degree to which fundamental human rights are granted in the constitution and by the rule of law and the way democratic institutions function effectively. Traditional legal regimes or cultures that oppose modern human rights standards will most likely fail to reach a higher quality of democracy (O'Donnell, Cullell, and Iazzatta 2004, 59–69). Consequently, in order to score higher in quality performance, such new democracies have to balance international human rights norms and standards in their constitutions with domestic legislation and local and traditional judicial regimes. The more governments benefit directly by bringing former political opponents to justice, the more they will be willing to adapt their constitutions to international law. Yet, these measures depend on political agendas. The outcome of transitional justice processes can play directly into the hands of newly established governments. And in return, governments will be more likely to apply them if these measures help to delegitimize former opponents and increase their own legitimacy. Many authors who work in the field of quality of democracy share similar observations. Schmitter, as well as Bühlmann, Merkel, and Wessels, and others, for example, argue that beyond formal adherence to human rights norms, political leadership has to guarantee that these norms are applied in a transparent, accountable, and responsive way to citizens' needs; otherwise they will be useless and ineffective (Bühlmann, Merkel, and Wessels 2008). This is where transitional justice measures can play a catalytic role. Civil society, victims, bystanders, and victimizers must all enjoy the human rights to security, freedom of expression, and fair trials. Where these human rights are restricted, the likelihood of fair trials, reconciliation workshops, memorial initiatives, and negotiation of property rights and compensation, to give some examples, are all at risk and will mostly fail. The state and (new) political system or order, however, has to have de facto control and

effective power to implement these measures. It has to guarantee both human rights and the safety of those who make demands (Bühlmann, Merkel, and Wessels 2008). This is far from the reality in many transitional societies. Some government leaders in new democracies refrain from pursuing a transitional justice process because they fear retroactive justice themselves. To better assess the expected outcome of transitional justice measures, a method called "evidence-based transitional justice," meaning to benchmark transitional justice measures against their anticipated outcome, for example, when it is expected that these measures will establish the rule of law, has been introduced (Pham and Vinck 2007, 232). That is to say, we can only assess the outcome, impact, or correlation of transitional justice measures on and with democratic institutions if we know what was expected by citizens or governments when they were initiated. In this assessment exercise, international human rights norms and standards can serve as guidelines to trigger regime change and to overcome old authoritarian, radical, and traditional rules and regulations that once led to injustice and atrocities (McLaren 2010, 240). In negotiated or "pacted" transitions toward democracy, military elites often wait to reassert themselves, hampering the country's democratically elected leaders if they seek to address past crimes (McAdams 2001, 239). Generous blanket amnesties are often passed, as seen in the case of Spain, although conditional amnesties are often considered a compromise to avoid impunity on the long term (Alonso and Muro 2011).

3.3. Participation, Civic Trust, and Engagement

In their assessment of the quality of democracy in Latin American countries, Altman and Perez-Linan used Dahl's basic dimensions of quality of democracy, which focus on citizens' participation and engagement and thus the level of civic trust. First, in order for citizens to participate and engage with democratic institutions, human rights have to be guaranteed and monitored at least to minimum standards. A "free exercise of political contestation" ought to be guaranteed that, in return, impede accountability and transparency (Altman and Perez Linan 2010, 89). Obviously, democratic institutions that fail to guarantee these rights will face mistrust and a loss of legitimacy over time. Vertical accountability such as citizen's participation becomes a central dimension as it grants individual citizens and organized civil society actors the means of control over politicians and political institutions (Diamond and Morlino, 2005, xiii). If citizens feel free to participate in decision-making processes they are more likely to ask for transitional justice measures as one way to attain their goals of acknowledgement, truth, and compensation. Prudent governmental responsiveness increases citizens' participation, and along with that civic trust. That is to say, it increases the confidence of citizens to engage with and make use of public institutions. In response, citizens' concerns are taken seriously and dealt with by state bureaucracy. The variable of "civic trust" in this context is pivotal, in line with Putnam's argument that the greater the participation, the higher the civic trust in a democratic system (1993). That premise concurs with Tilly's analysis, that in order to establish trust in democratic processes, the insulation of categorical inequalities in public politics and the transformation of non-state powers to state powers are necessary to establish a protective relation between citizens and state (2007, 96). Although none of these statements are surprising, the main argument in this article is that if perpetrators, victims, and bystanders gain confidence, they will make increased use of state institutions. Therefore, the interlinkage and correlation between the performance of democratic institutions and transitional justice measures depends largely upon the political expectations of, and participation by citizens. But identifying a direct causal link is difficult. If transitional justice measures serve to catalyze citizens' or victims' claims and encourage active participation that leads to solid democratic institutional performance, it is probably the most we can expect. But, without a minimally functioning "formal" democratic institution, i.e. constitution, courts, bureaucracies, or executive powers, no transitional justice process is likely to take place at all.

4. Conclusion

Whether it is Linz and Stepan's metaphors on "democracy being the only game in town" (1996, 5) or Hazan's prerequisite of a "national catharsis" that has to be in place before starting a transitional justice process, both rely on the same presumption, that there has to be an overwhelming majority in society – after regime change – that is

willing to come to terms with the past and at the same time to adhere to the concept of democracy. If this is the case, there can be a correlating effect between transitional justice measures and the quality of democracy. A majority of society generally speaking consists of two-thirds of a population, according to Diamond (1999). This majority agreeds, at least in principle, that democracy is the system they want. But there is a short window of opportunity after regime change for setting the legal and political framework for future transitional justice measures; sometime the widow closes within a year or less, before old rivalries return. Thus, political decision-makers have to make sensitive decisions during that period even if they only have a pre-vision of future transitional justice measures. In his quality assessment, Schmitter explains that we have to look at levels, frequencies, and timelines of societal participation, as well as the extent to which public institutions respond to demands and needs or, instead, impose decisions (Schmitter 2005, 28–29).

The inter-linkage, multi-causality, or rather correlation between transitional justice and quality of democracy depends largely on the level of responsiveness and accountability of political elites, transparency, adherence to international human rights norms, and participation by citizens. Transitional justice measures can catalyze some citizens' claims, political interests, and international norms, and as a "side effect" strengthen democratic institutions. This process is not limited to post-conflict scenarios because it can take decades, if not generations. Thus, transitional justice measures are catalysts that can leverage democratic performance over a longer period of time, but they are not the only political, institutional or civic measures contributing to the quality of democracy. Others such as security or economic measures are crucial for any democratic development. But higher quality is generally achieved if governmental responsiveness and civic engagement, and thus trust, are merged with different transitional justice measures at different stages in the process of democracy. A mix of measures over a longer period of time, from both the domestic and international levels, is more likely to have a positive effect on democracy than a top-down or bottom-up approach alone. But control over collective decision-making is also where citizens' claims for memorials and trials can contribute to the quality of democracy (Beetham 1999, 90). In other words: the more control citizens or pressure groups have over the transitional justice process, the more it impacts the quality of democracy. The same is true for external pressure or incentives by the international community, which often trigger citizen's demands. Thus, the crucial premise is that the more responsive and sensitive executive and legislative powers are to their citizens' claims at any stage of transition, the more legitimized they will be – and the higher the quality of their democratic system.

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