Role of Ambivalent Sexism on Approval of Violence and Intention to Intervene in Media

Campaigns Designed to Prevent Intimate Partner Violence

By

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effect of manipulating actor gender and relationship status in violence prevention campaign posters upon the relationship between ambivalent sexism and 1) approval of intimate partner violence (IPV), 2) intention to intervene as a bystander, and 3) understanding of IPV. The bystander literature was used to inform the design of the posters. The study employed a between-subjects design where participants (N=421) completed an online survey where they had to view one of four different poster conditions which displayed a victim telling two friends about how they were assaulted the previous night. Poster conditions were varied on the gender of the victim and perpetrator (male or female) and on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator (stranger or intimate partner). The participants completed the Conflict Tactics Scale – 2 and the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory before viewing the posters. After viewing the posters participants then completed the Bystander Attitudes Scale, Beliefs about Relationship Aggression Scale and an Understanding of IPV scale. Structural Equation Modelling was employed to analyse the data. The analysis revealed that there were no significant moderating roles of relationship status, victim gender, or participant gender on the relationship between ambivalent sexism and approval of violence, intention to intervene, or understanding of IPV. The study concluded that a multifaceted approach is needed to reduce IPV effectively beyond the use of media campaign posters alone.

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Introduction

Prevalence and characteristics of Intimate Partner Violence

The reported global rates of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) are concerning, making

it a serious international public health issue (Kiss, Schraiber, Hossain, Watts, & Zimmerman,

2015; World Health Organization (WHO), 2014). In New Zealand, research has shown that

IPV makes up 25% of all crime (Ministry of Justice, 2015), one of the highest rates in the

world. The New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS) completed in 2014 shows that

although men and women differ in their qualitative experiences of IPV victimization, both

experience concerning rates of IPV. For instance, the survey found women (6%) are

statistically more likely than men (4%) to be a victim of any interpersonal offence committed

by an intimate partner (Ministry of Justice, 2015), but there was no statistical difference in

the rates of physical violence that men (2.5%) and women (3.4%) experienced from an

intimate partner. Women (2%) are statistically more likely than men (0.5%) to have

experienced a sexual offence by an intimate partner and men (17%) were significantly more

likely than women (14%) to have experienced one or more coercive or controlling behaviours

from an intimate partner.

Other research has found that females report more physical injury than males

(Koepke, Eyssel, & Bohner, 2014), this can be attributed to males exerting more harmful acts

than females due to differences in strength and size between genders (Burn, 2009). In

addition, this could also be ascribed to differences in reporting behaviours between males and

females who have experienced IPV. Women are more likely to report IPV victmisation and

are more likely than males to engage in help seeking behaviours. For example, women are

more likely to seek medical attention for injuries than men (Koepke et al., 2014) and men are

less likely to call IPV helplines. However, one mitigating explanation for this is the lack of availability of services for male victims of IPV (Yamawaki, Ostenson, & Brown, 2009). Further, scholars posit that males are also less likely to seek help for IPV due to the social stigma surrounding the topic where males are seen as weak if they seek help for this issue due to social norms centered on hegemonic masculinity (Yamawaki et al., 2009). As such, the differences in reported harm between males and females may be partly attributed to differences in help-seeking behaviours, resulting in an underestimation of the harm experienced by males from IPV. Consequently, although women report more physical harm than men in instances of IPV, it is important to note that males still experience harm and that this harm may be underestimated in official statistics.

Given the complexity of IPV it is important to provide an inclusive definition of this social problem that can account for all experiences, thus, ensuring a clear understanding about all types of victimization and provision of services for everyone needed to be included in this definition. Indeed, research has shown that whilst victims of IPV are most likely to be young people aged between 15-30 years people of all ages can experience IPV (Johnson, Giordano, Manning, & Longmore, 2014). There are a large range of varying definitions of IPV in the literature, however one that is inclusive of all ages, genders and backgrounds is needed. Consequently, a definition that covers all of these bases is provided by Dixon and Graham-Kevan (2011). The definition states that IPV is 'any form of aggression and/or controlling behaviours used against a current or past intimate partner of any gender or relationship status' (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011, p. 1145). This definition allows for a broad and inclusive explanation of what constitutes IPV.

Gendered Perspective.

Since IPV has become a focus of research there have been a number of theories around the origins and causes of this behaviour. Gendered theory has suggested that IPV is

committed predominantly by men against women (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011). The motive behind this behaviour is said to be guided by patriarchal social values, where women are presumed to be subordinate and have less power than men (Anderson, 1997). As an extension of such social norms, men will use violence and control in intimate relationships in order to maintain dominance over women, both in intimate relationships and in wider society. Thus, from this perspective, patriarchal social values are a direct cause of IPV and being male is therefore posited as the most predominant risk factor for perpetrating IPV (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011). Unsurprisingly, gendered theory has resulted in a focus on understanding and responding to women as victims and men as perpetrators of IPV, in research, practice, and policy (Anderson, 1997). From this theoretical standpoint prevention of IPV in the long term relies on reducing patriarchal social norms and values that condone men's violence toward women. Indeed, many prevention campaign posters depict women as victims in heterosexual relationships (Cismaru, Jensen, & Lavack, 2010). As such, a change in this narrow theory of IPV is needed in order to introduce a more multifaceted approach to the social issue of IPV.

A number of the studies used to support the gendered perspective often draw on samples of women selected from domestic violence shelters or emergency departments, which unsurprisingly, find the majority of IPV is committed by men (Dutton, 2006). Findings from studies utilising biased sample selection should not be extrapolated to represent the general population (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011), using samples from emergency departments may also cause a skew towards male perpetration as men are likely to cause more physical harm to women than vice versa (Dutton, 2006). Meta-analyses using studies which used samples from the general population found the disparity between male and female perpetration of IPV was less severe than the gendered perspective presented (Archer, 2000; Sugarman & Frankel, 1996). Therefore, due to the samples employed by past studies

supporting gendered perspective being an inadequate representation of the population,

another explanation of IPV is required that does not put so much onus on male perpetration

and the role of patriarchal values in IPV.

Gender Inclusive Perspective.

Data that demonstrates approximately equal rates of violence in instances of IPV

between the genders (e.g., Archer, 2000) have led to a gender inclusive perspective. This

account suggests that both men and women are capable of and do commit acts of IPV, and it

is caused by a number of interacting factors (Dutton, 2006). Therefore, the gender inclusive

perspective aims to provide a more holistic view of the factors involved in the perpetration of

IPV than the gendered perspective.

In order to explain the similar rates of perpetration of IPV between males and females

IPV researchers have suggested that our social norms cannot be patriarchal (Felson, 2002).

Rather, society is more approving of women's violence towards men than it is of men's

violence towards women. Felson (2002) suggests that this can be explained by the concept of

chivalry, where there is a norm that males ought to protect and care for women rather than

hurt them as is suggested by gendered theory. A common scenario played out in society is the

common belief that men should not hit women as they are deemed to be the weaker gender.

This idea is supported by the extensive research that has shown males are victims of IPV at

approximately the same rate as women (Dixon & Graham-Kevan, 2011). This is

counterintuitive when compared to research into other areas of aggression and violence

where these statistics are skewed toward male perpetration (Ministry of Justice, 2015).

However, a growing amount of research has shown that societal norms reflect the idea of

chivalry as proposed by Felson (2002) where females are in need of protection and should not

be hurt by males. This idea is reflected in a study that investigated how the gender of an

assailant affected participants opinions of an instance of IPV (Sorenson & Taylor, 2005). The

results showed that if the perpetrator of IPV was a woman, the assault was likely to be seen as less harsh and participants were more likely to look at contextual factors as an explanation for the assailant's actions. As such, research confirms this idea that society is more approving of women's aggression towards males than vice versa.

Although chivalry provides an explanation for the comparable gender rates of IPV, measuring this concept can be difficult. However, the concept of ambivalent sexism can provide an alternate measure of chivalry. Researchers posit that ambivalent sexism is a multifaceted construct made up of benevolent and hostile sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2018). Hostile sexism can be seen as attitudes or opinions that view females as inferior to males supporting males being the dominant gender in society. An example of hostile sexism is the view that women seek power by gaining control over men (Glick & Fiske, 2018). Benevolent sexism similarly views females as inferior to males and aims to confine them to traditional gender roles however, these benevolent beliefs are often seen as being favourable to women. The idea that as women are weaker than men, they are in need of a man's protection is an example of a common benevolent sexist belief. Although this may seem like it is favourable to woman, it is maintaining gender inequality. As such, this concept of benevolent sexism ties well into the idea of chivalry provided by Felson (2002) and so can be used to measure this construct. Although on the exterior, benevolent sexism seems to elicit positive outcomes, researchers argue that both benevolent and hostile sexism increase male dominance in society as well as preserving gender inequality.

A number of studies have investigated the role of benevolent and hostile sexism in IPV (Renzetti, Lynch, & DeWall, 2018; Riley & Yamawaki, 2018; Yamawaki et al., 2009). One study investigated the relationship between ambivalent sexism, victim blaming and exoneration of the perpetrator in IPV scenarios (Valor-Segura, Expósito, & Moya, 2011). The study found those with higher scores in hostile sexism were more likely to blame the victim

of IPV and exonerate the perpetrator of this behaviour. The authors concluded this was due to those scoring high on hostile sexism having more traditional views on gender roles which is associated with higher acceptance of violence against women. Further, research has also shown that benevolent sexism can have an impact on legitimisation of violence against women (Abrams, Viki, Masser, & Bohner, 2003; Koepke et al., 2014). Research showed that individuals who scored high in benevolent sexism were likely to attribute more blame to a victim of rape if the victim was an acquaintance of the perpetrator. This was said to be due to the fact that only women who are obedient are in need of protection. Along a similar vein, this relationship was mediated by the participants belief that the victim had behaved inappropriately (Abrams et al., 2003). On the other hand, participants who scored high on hostile sexism would justify aggression towards a victim if they had gone against what is deemed to be expected of them suggesting they are trying to gain more dominance in the relationship (Abrams et al., 2003; Hammond & Overall, 2017). As such, research has shown that ambivalent sexism can play a role in the beliefs surrounding aggression and justification of violence in situations of IPV.

Given the role that ambivalent sexism is posited to play in IPV, reducing sexism may therefore result in a decrease in IPV. One method of trying to decrease levels of sexism is by confronting sexist attitudes held by individuals (Becker, Zawadzki, & Shields, 2014). Prevention campaigns are one common approach that have been circulated via social media to re-educate and challenge social norms and beliefs thought to endorse IPV. Campaigns aimed at re-educating the public have used posters, tv adverts, and podcasts as vehicles to depict images of male violence towards females and messages suggesting this is the nature of IPV and it is not acceptable (McDonald, Charlesworth, & Graham, 2015). If this theory is accurate in its explanation of IPV, such campaigns should realise a decrease in the public approval of IPV by men toward women. On the other hand, if Felson's (2002) theory of

chivalry is correct the depiction of male aggression towards females should not have any influence in changing levels of approval of men's IPV toward women because the social norm already disapproves of male to female aggression. Moreover, chivalry would suggest that it would be more effective to present images of female violence toward males in order to challenge benevolent sexism (Felson, 2002). However, there is the risk that by presenting female aggression towards male victims an inadvertent increase in hostility towards women may occur (Allen, 2018). Consequently, it is important to be sure that this does not occur as it is counterproductive to present an image that will increase hostility towards women.

One online study has investigated the role that ambivalent sexism plays in participants' responses to posters that display images where the typical gender roles of IPV have been reversed (Allen, 2018). In this unpublished master's thesis posters depicting direct aggression between a male and female actor were designed. In one poster a female was violent towards a male and the other where a male was violent towards a female. The study firstly scored participants on ambivalent sexism then participants viewed posters and were scored on approval of aggression towards each gender. The study revealed that participants approved of female aggression towards males significantly more than male aggression towards a female. This was proposed to indicate support for a chivalrous norm in society and showed that gendered theory was not supported by the results of the study (Allen, 2018). Further analysis revealed that the higher female participants scored on the benevolent sexism scale the less they approved of male aggression towards females. Further, the more male and female participants endorsed benevolent sexism the more likely they were to approve of female aggression towards male victims (Allen, 2018). The study also found that depicting male aggression towards females had no influence in reducing sexism or in reducing approval of aggression. This supports the norm of chivalry where participants already strongly disapprove of male aggression towards females and so there is no room for a change in

opinion on this issue. On the other hand, when a poster depicting female aggression towards a male was presented a decrease in the endorsement of benevolent sexism and a reduction in approval of female aggression occurred. Importantly, there was also no increase in hostility towards women after viewing this poster suggesting that the posters will not be causing any harm. However, the results found in this study had very small effect sizes suggesting that the posters were not as effective as they could be in evoking a change in participants.

The current study will manipulate the relationship type between the victim and the perpetrator in order to see if the effects are specific to IPV or if they are similar to a scenario of violence between strangers (Thornton, Graham-Kevan, & Archer, 2016). One study looked at the verdicts given to perpetrators of sexual assault against a stranger versus an intimate partner (Lynch, Golding, Jewell, Lippert, & Wasarhaley, 2019). The results showed that participants gave similar verdicts to the perpetrators regardless of whether they were intimately involved with the victim or if the victim was a stranger. As such, it appears that relationship status should not have much influence on the way participants view an act of aggression or violence.

The gender of the person viewing an act of aggression may also have an effect on the way an individual views an act of aggression. For example, one study looked at the differences between males and females in relation to their verdicts given in response to a vignette about an instance of sexual assault (Lynch et al., 2019). The results of the study showed that female participants were more likely to give a guilty verdict and judgements that supported the victim than male participants were. As such, there appears to be differences in gender in regard to the way an assault is viewed and interpreted.

One way to increase the potential for the posters to evoke an effect is to make them more relatable to the individuals viewing them (DeGue et al., 2014). Highlighting the role of bystanders to an IPV event may be one way to increase how well viewers relate to the

posters. Indeed, it is plausible that individuals may not be able to see themselves in the role of the perpetrator or victim of IPV that is typically presented in poster campaigns, including those used in Allen's (2018) study. In the area of sexual assault research utilising bystanders in posters has proven to be effective in changing attitudes and beliefs about sexual assault (Banyard et al., 2018; McDonald et al., 2015; McMahon, Palmer, Banyard, Murphy, & Gidycz, 2013; Moynihan et al., 2014; Tindall & Vardeman-Winter, 2011). Given the success that has been seen in the sexual assault literature using the depiction of bystanders in posters it is worth investigating this in the area of IPV to see if this can increase the effectiveness of posters aiming to reduce sexism and approval of IPV.

Research Aims and Hypotheses

The current study will further the research completed by Allen (2018). It sets out to investigate the effect of manipulating actor gender and relationship status in violence prevention campaign posters upon the relationship between ambivalent sexism and 1) approval of intimate partner violence (IPV), 2) intention to intervene as a bystander, and 3) understanding of IPV. The bystander literature was used to inform the design of the posters. The current study is mostly exploratory but has a number of predicted hypotheses:

- Firstly, it is predicted that changing the gender in the posters to present a male victim will result in a decrease in approval of violence towards a male victim.

- Secondly, it is predicted that benevolent sexism will be related to approval of violence where a higher score on benevolent sexism will result in a lower approval of violence level.

- Thirdly, it is predicted that hostile sexism will be related to approval of violence where the higher an individual's score on hostile sexism the more likely they will be to approve of violence.

Methodology

Participants

The current study recruited 493 participants using Amazon Mechanical Turk (M-Turk). Of these, 53 participants were removed from the data set due to having unsatisfactory responses to an attention check, a further 19 participants were also excluded due to not completing over a total of 75% of the survey. This left a total of 421 participants, of whom 201 (47.7%) participants identified as male and 220 (52.3%) as female. The average age of participants was 36 years old ranging from 18-80 years old. The predominant nationality in the current study was American (*N=367),* followed by European (*N=43*), other nationalities included South American (*N=6*), Asian (*N=3*), and African (*N=2*).The majority of the participants reported their sexual orientation was Straight/heterosexual (*N=358*), this was followed with Bisexual (*N=46*), Lesbian (*N=7*), Gay (*N=5*) and other (*N=5*). Moreover, there was a lot of variability in the reported relationship status, the most common was married (*N=189*), followed by single (*N=107*), dating (*N=49*), cohabiting (*N=23*), De Facto relationship (*N=21*), divorced (*N=19*) and other (*N=13*). The majority of the participants in the current study were employed for 16 or more hours a week (*N=310*), 57 participants were employed for 16 hours or less, 43 were unemployed and 11 responded other on this item.

Materials

Posters. Four posters were created for the current study, these were based on research completed in the United States of America that aimed to increase bystander intervention, and on reviews of current media campaigns (Banyard et al., 2014, Cismaru et al., 2010). The posters display images of two individuals having a discussion with a person who had experienced a physical assault the previous day. Each poster manipulated two factors, with two levels within each factor, namely: 1) the gender of the victim and perpetrator (male victim and female perpetrator and female victim and male perpetrator); and 2) the

relationship between the victim and perpetrator (intimate partner or stranger). This results in four conditions of 1) male victim and female stranger assault; 2) male victim and female partner assault; 3) female victim and male stranger assault; 2) female victim and male partner assault. The posters used are displayed in the Appendix in *Figures 1-4*. The wording of the posters was kept as similar as possible to try and avoid any extraneous effects that may occur from a difference in wording. At the bottom of the figures a slogan was placed that states 'Know your power. Step Up. Step In.' encouraging viewers to step in and become active bystanders in instances of IPV. This wording was used from previous bystander posters aiming to reduce sexual violence that were created by Banyard and colleagues (2014).

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory – Short Form (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996). The ASI is a measure designed to capture the subscales of hostile and benevolent sexism towards women and consists of 12 items. Both subscales consist of 6 items each. The benevolent sexism subscale is broken further into three different targets. These are made up of protective paternalism, complimentary gender differentiation and heterosexual intimacy. An example of a benevolent sexism item under the heterosexual intimacy subscale is 'no matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a women'. An example of a hostile item is 'Woman are too easily offended'. The ASI asks participants to rate how much they support each item on a 7-point Likert scale where 1 is strongly agree to 7 strongly disagree. In the case of the ASI a higher score indicates that a participant has a higher level of sexism towards women. Glick and Fiske (1996) found the ASI to have reliable Cronbach's alphas for the benevolent subscale (between .73 - .85) and hostile subscale (between .80 - .92) to be within an acceptable range.

Bystander Attitudes Scale-Revised (BAS-R; McMahon et al., 2014). The BAS-R provides a measure of participants attitudes towards engaging in helping behaviour for an individual who is experiencing sexual violence. The current study adapted this scale to be

suited to measure attitudes to helping behaviours in scenarios related to IPV. This has been completed by changing items to reflect intimate violence, for example the item on the original scale 'go with a female friend to the police department if she says she was raped' was changed to 'go with a female friend to the police department after she says she was physically assualted by an intimate partner'. The BAS-R then asks participants to choose the option that best matched how likely they were to engage in a helping behaviour. The BAS-R is ranked on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (extremely likely) to 5 (extremely unlikely) where a low score indicated a higher intention to intervene. The scale consisted of seven items that can be classified into three domains. The first domain is high risk situations, this is when the participant involves themselves directly where there is IPV occurring in a relationship. An exemplar item of this in the scale is 'check in with a friend who you think is being physically assaulted by an intimate partner'. The second domain in the scale is post-assault support, an example of this is 'go with a male friend to the police station after they tell you he has been physically assaulted by an intimate partner'. The third domain in the BAS-R is post-assault reporting of the perpetrator, an example of an item from this subscale is 'tell someone in authority about information you may have about a case where someone is physically abusing their intimate partner, even if pressured to stay silent'. The proactive opportunities subscale was removed as it is not relevant to the goals of the current study. The scale used in the current study consists of six adapted items.

The BAS-R was shown to be reliable with a reliability coefficient of .77 (McMahon et al., 2014). The BAS-R has also been shown to have good concurrent validity with other bystander intervention measures such as the Bystander Intervention Behaviour Scale (Burn, 2009). In the current study the BAS-R had a Cronbach's alpha of .832 showing it has good reliability. As such, the BAS-R provides a reliable and valid tool to measure attitudes towards an intention to intervene in scenarios of IPV.

Beliefs about Relationship Aggression Scale (BaRAS-SV; Dixon, in preperation).

The BaRAS attempts to gain an insight into individuals' beliefs about physical aggression in intimate relationships as perpetrated by both genders in a heterosexual relationship. The BaRAS uses self-report questionnaires and presents participants with a brief description of a physical confrontation between two individuals in an intimate relationship. The BaRAS uses a factorial design in order to reduce the likelihood of socially desirable responding. The BaRAS uses 24 vignettes originally, however this has been shortened in the current study to 12 questions that were deemed the most relevant to the research aims of the current study. The vignettes present both male and female perpetration of intimate violence in heterosexual relationships, these differed in level of provocation and severity of assault. An example of a vignette used in the BaRAS is as follows 'one evening during an argument, John punched Carol in the face, Carol then punched John repeatedly in the face and body'. This is an example of high provocation and a high severity of abuse. The number of answers required in response to the vignette was reduced from 8 questions to 4. This allowed for a shorter version as the longer version is time-consuming. These 4 questions were as follows:

1) To what extent do you approve of (the perpetrators) actions?

2) To what extent do you think (the perpetrators) behaviour was abusive

3) How likely is it that (the victim) will be emotionally distressed?

4) How much should (the victim) be assisted by services that provide help for victims of aggression by an intimate partner?

These items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all) to 5 (definitely) where a higher score on this scale indicates a higher level of approval of aggression towards either males. Past studies have shown the BaRAS to have acceptable Cronbach's alpha of .79 (Cavanagh, 2017). In the current study the BaRAS had a Cronbach's alpha of .93 showing that the scale had a high level of reliability.

Conflict Tactics Scale – 2 (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996).

The CTS2 is a measure of psychological and physical aggression in intimate relationships. It also investigates the use of reasoning and compromise by partners to resolve conflicts in their relationship. The CTS2 consists of a number of subscales specifically these are based around physical assault, psychological aggression, negotiation, injury and sexual coercion. In the current study a shortened version of the scale was implemented consisting of 12 items compared with 39 items in the original scale. An example of a physical assault item is 'I punched kicked or beat-up my partner'. The CTS2 asks participants to rate how often they have experienced certain behaviours from their intimate partners in the past year. The scale is rated on an 8-point scale ranging from occuring once in the past year to more than 20 times in the past year. There is also a selection option labelled this has never happened.

The CTS2 has been shown to have good reliability and validity. Specifically, the CTS2 has been shown to have good internal consistency. Furthermore, the CTS2 has also been shown to have good construct and discriminant validity with other measures. The CTS2 has been shown to be applicable to US populations thus making it useful in the current study as our sample will be drawn from the US.

Understanding of IPV.

In order to gain an insight into the level of understanding of the workings of IPV, two questions were put into the survey that assessed which gender participants thought was more likely to perpetrate IPV. The questions asked participants to rate how likely it was that a male was the perpetrator of IPV in an intimate relationship on a seven-point Likert scale with one being extremely unlikely and seven being extremely likely. The second question asked participants how likely they thought it was that a woman was the perpetrator of IPV in an intimate relationship using the same scale as the previous question. This will allow for an

understanding of how participants view the mechanics of IPV and if they have a good

understanding of accurate perpetration rates of IPV.

Procedure

The current study was approved by the School of Psychology Human ethics

committee before data collection began (project # 24324). The survey was created on

Qualtrics and posted to M-Turk in order for participants to complete, which is an online

survey tool where individuals can receive a small amount of compensation ($1.20) for

completing surveys. To be eligible to take part participants were required to have completed

at least 500 but no more than 5000 tasks on M-Turk. Further, it was also required that

participants have had over 90 of these tasks approved. This helps to ensure that participants

have valid responses and that they are not autocompleting surveys in order to gain the

compensation offered for doing the study. A program known as M-turker was also used to

stop participants completing the survey more than once to be sure that each response was

unique. An attention check was inserted into the survey that asked participants to report what

they had seen in the posters that were displayed for one minute. This ensured that participants

viewed the posters and interpreted correctly. Upon completion of the survey participants were

given a link in order to receive compensation for completing the survey.

Analysis

The current study employed a statistical technique known as Structural Equation Modelling

(SEM) as this was seen as the most beneficial model to use for a number of reasons. Firstly,

as opposed to other multivariate types of analysis, SEM is able to incorporate latent variables

into the analysis (Reisinger & Turner, 1999). This avoids having to complete a number of

other analyses and allows for a clearer conclusion to be drawn from the results of the model.

Secondly, using SEM allows for the analysis of complex pathways that would be difficult to

compute using other statistical methods (Reisinger & Turner, 1999). This also allows for the

testing of multiple hypotheses at once reducing the number of computations needed to achieve the same result with other methods. As such, using SEM as a method of analysis in the current study will allow for the drawing of accurate conclusions with fewer computations in the current study.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 provides descriptive data of participant's total scores across all four poster conditions. Independent samples t-tests were completed in the analysis to check for statistical differences between males and females on the main variables used in the current study. The analysis revealed that males were statistically more likely than females to endorse both hostile and benevolent sexism. Further, males were more likely than females to approve of violence towards both male and female victims. Males were also more likely than females to report higher scores on both hostile and benevolent sexism.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics separated by gender

	Male		Female		t-test	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p
Hostile sexism	4.11	1.16	4.94	1.24	-7.00	<.01
Benevolent sexism	3.88	1.05	4.37	1.14	-4.62	<.01
Approval of violence towards female	1.92	1.24	1.35	0.76	5.63	<.01
Approval of violence towards male	2.25	1.15	1.72	0.84	5.30	<.01
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage		
Physical minor	73	36.3	49	22.3		
Physical severe	53	26.4	21	9.5		
Psychological Minor	147	73.1	150	68.2		

| Psychological severe | 66 | 32.8 | 35 | 15.9 | | |

Table 2.
Zero-order correlations for primary scales

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Approval of violence towards a female	1	.790**	-.196**	-.396**	.300**	.042
2. Approval of violence towards a male		1	-.229**	-.360**	.273**	.061
3. Benevolent Sexism			1	.430**	.178**	.098*
4. Hostile Sexism				1	-.306**	-.063
5. Bystander intervention					1	.159*
6. Understanding of IPV						1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 6 displays the zero order correlations for each of the six main variables used in the current study. As the matrix shows the majority of these variables have a relationship with each other suggesting some level of shared variance between the items.

The data in the current study was analysed using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in Mplus version 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2012) to find any relationships and moderating effects that existed between variables in the current study. A model was created in which ambivalent sexism was a predictor for approval of violence towards both genders (coded as male 0 and female 1) and intention to intervene with moderating variables of

relationship status (coded as intimate partner 0 and stranger 1), victim gender and participant

gender (coded as male 0 and female 1) included in the analysis.

Results are displayed in Figures 1 to 3. No significant moderating effects of victim

gender, participant gender, and relationship status on the relationship between ambivalent

sexism and approval of violence and intention to intervene were found. As such, this suggests

viewing posters that aim to reduce IPV had no any influence on changing participant's

approval of violence when compared to posters aiming to reduce stranger violence. Further,

reversing the traditional gender roles of the victim and abuser in posters had no significant

effect on approval of violence.

A significant relationship was uncovered in the SEM between hostile sexism and

approval of aggression towards both males and females. As illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, the
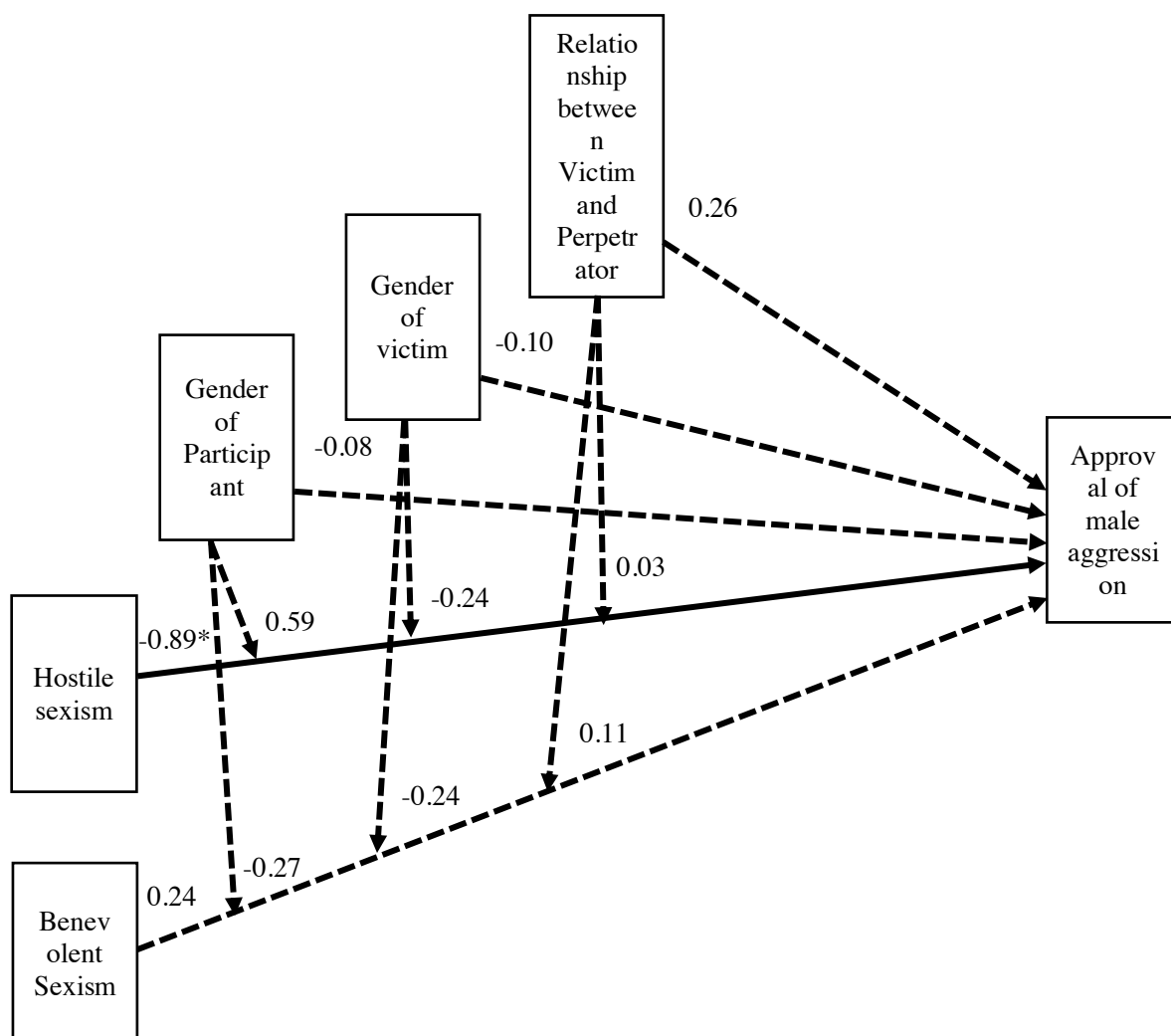
analysis showed that participants who scored high in hostile sexism were more likely to

approve of male aggression (t (420) = 2.03, *S.E* = 0.35, *95% CI* = 1.52, 1.73, *p* = .043) and

Figure 1. SEM analysis of all factors on approval of male aggression

      Note. Dashed line indicates non-significant relationship. Gender is coded as 0 male

and 1 female. Relationship status is coded as 0 intimate partner and 1 stranger. * indicates

significance level of less than .05.

females aggression (t (420) = 2.13, *S.E* = 0.39, *95% CI* = 1.87, 2.08, *p* = .034) this association

remained stable across all poster conditions. This provided support for the hypothesis that

hostile sexism would be related to approval of violence. The SEM analysis also showed that

individuals who scored higher in hostile sexism were more likely to report a lower intention

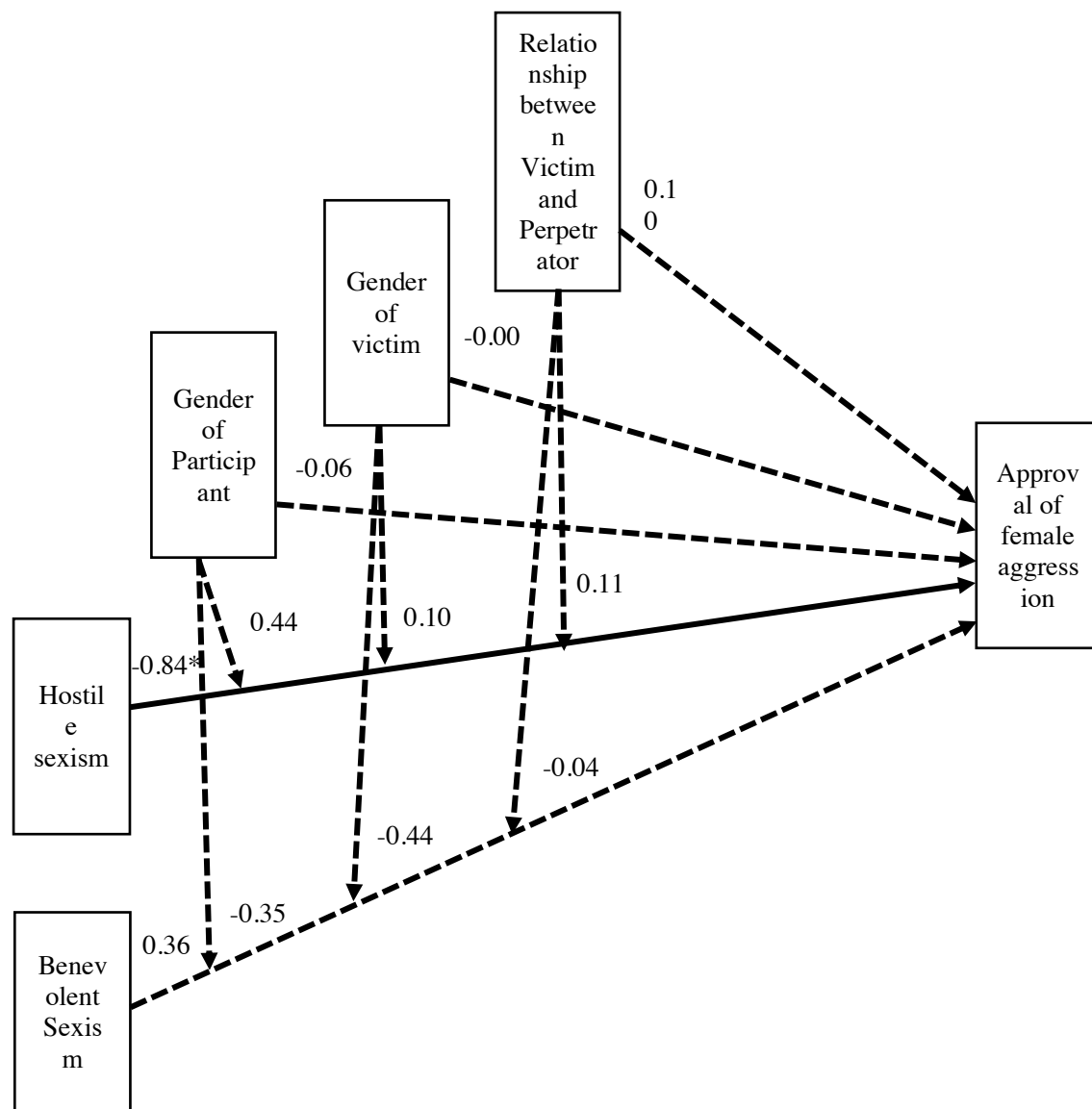to intervene in a scenario of IPV (t (420) = 2.12, *S.E* = 0.21, *95% CI* = 1.88, 1.98, *p.* = .034).

Figure 2. SEM analysis of all factors on approval of female aggression

Note. Dashed line indicates non-significant relationship. Gender is coded as 0 male and 1 female. Relationship status is coded as 0 intimate partner and 1 stranger. * indicates significance level of less than .05
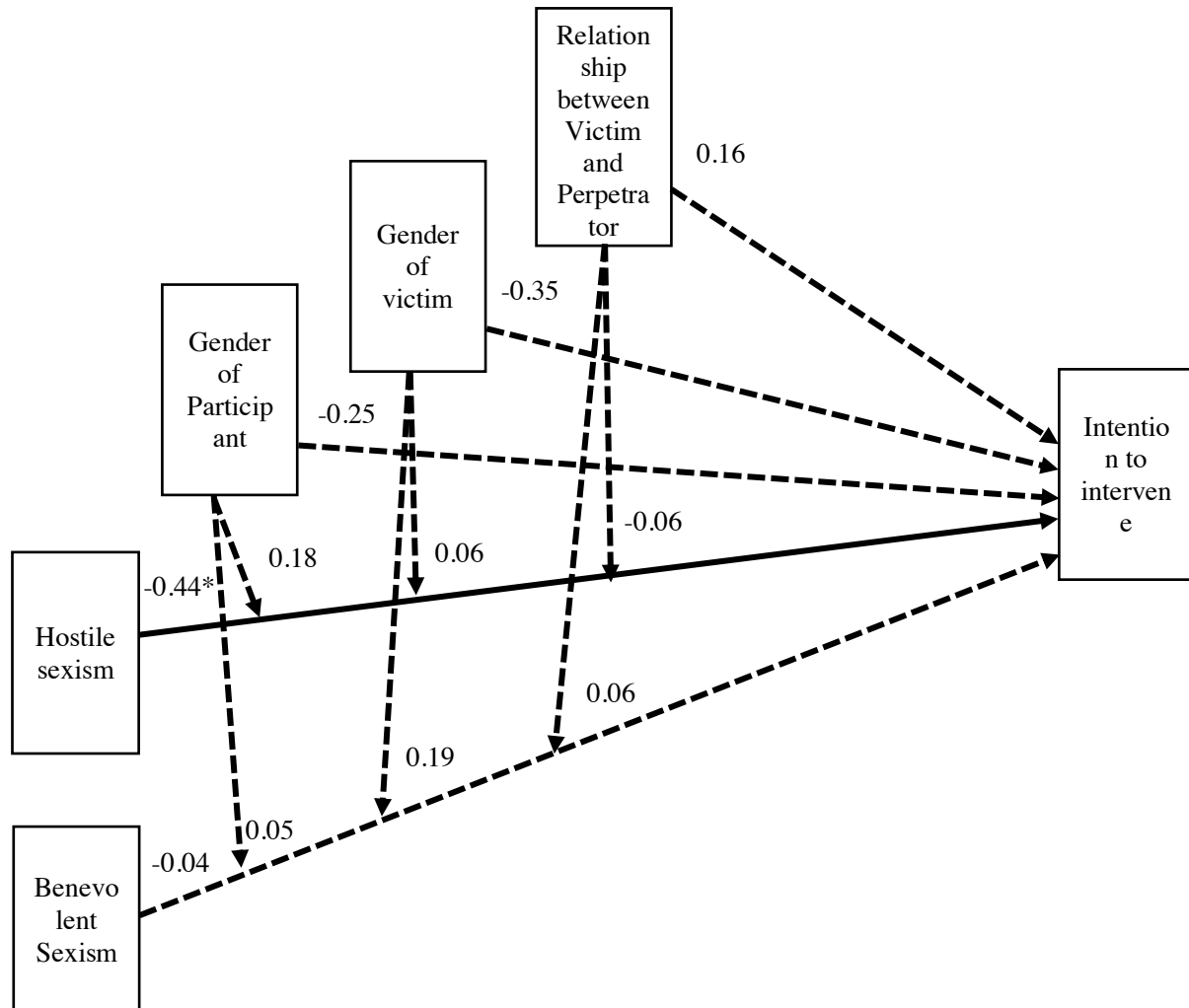

Figure 3. SEM analysis of all factors on intention to intervene

Note. Dashed line indicates non-significant relationship. Gender is coded as 0 male and 1 female. Relationship status is coded as 0 intimate partner and 1 stranger. * indicates significance level of less than .05.

Moreover, given that there were no moderating effects of poster conditions on the relationship between ambivalent sexism and approval of violence and intention to intervene further analysis was conducted. This involved conducted an SEM analysis without including the poster conditions to identify associations that existed in the pooled data. These analyses

are illustrated in Figure 4. The key novel finding to note from these analyses is the mediating

relationship between gender and hostile sexism in figure 3. This finding suggests that males

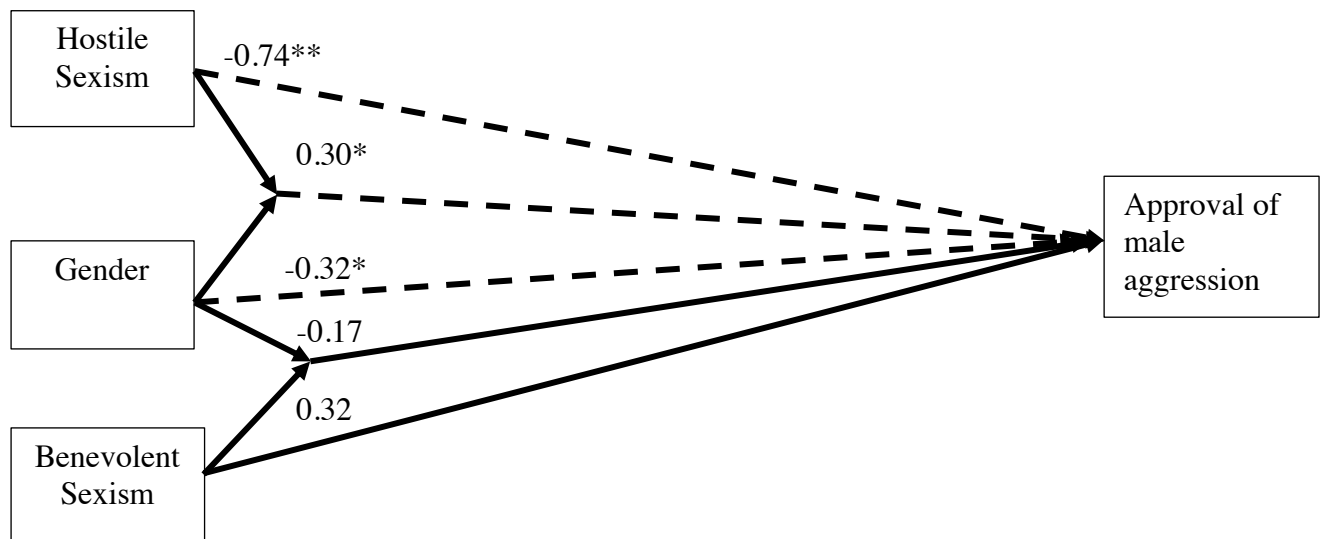who were higher in hostile sexism were more likely to approve of aggression towards males.

Figure 4. *SEM analyses of approval of male aggression without poster condition.*

Note. Dashed line indicates non-significant relationship. Gender is coded as 0 male

and 1 female. * indicates significance level of less than .05. ** indicates significance level of

less than .001

Further SEM analysis investigating the relationship between poster condition and

understanding of IPV revealed an interaction between these two variables. It was found that

when the participants viewed a poster that displayed an image of a man hitting a woman,

participants were likely to report that the perpetrator of IPV was more likely to be a man than

a woman than participants who had viewed other posters. A 4x2 ANOVA analysis revealed

that this was a statistically significant difference at the $p < .001$ level between the four

posters and the understanding levels of IPV ($F(3, 419) = 5.67$, $p = .001$). This suggests that

participants who viewed poster condition one displayed less understanding of IPV than the

participants in the other poster conditions. The results are visually presented in Figure 5.
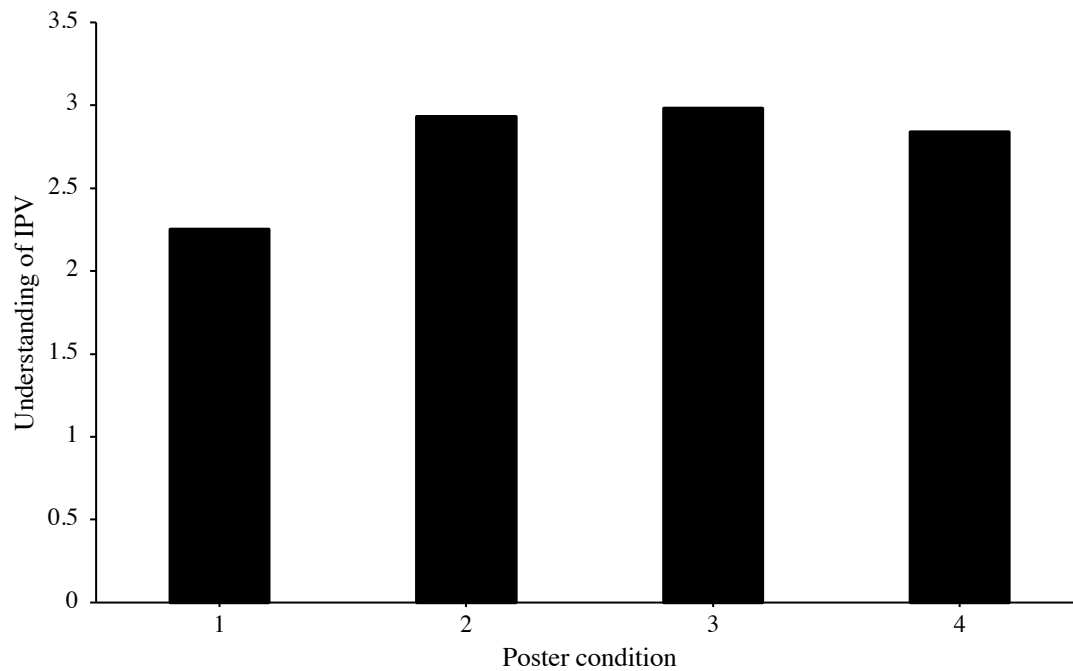
Figure 5. Interaction between understanding of IPV and poster condition.

Note. Poster condition 1 displayed a scenario of a male hitting a female in and intimate relationship. Poster condition 2 displayed a scenario of a female hitting a male in an intimate relationship. Poster condition 3 presented a scenario of a male hitting a female stranger. Poster condition four depicted a scenario of a female hitting a male stranger.

Discussion

This study investigated the effect of manipulating actor gender and relationship status in violence prevention campaign posters upon the relationship between ambivalent sexism and reported 1) approval of intimate partner violence (IPV), 2) intention to intervene as a bystander, and 3) understanding of IPV. The results revealed no moderating effect of poster condition on the relationship between sexism and approval of violence suggesting that the poster condition had no influence on changing approval of violence. As such, hypothesis one which predicted that depicting a male victim in the poster would reduce approval of violence towards men was not supported. In addition, other dependent variables of 'intention to intervene' and 'understanding about the nature of IPV' also revealed no significant effects.

Moreover, benevolent sexism was not related to approval of violence, thus the second hypothesis was not supported in the current study. However, further SEM analysis revealed a relationship between hostile sexism and approval of aggression towards both males and females. The higher a participant scored on hostile sexism the more likely they were to endorse aggression towards both males and females. This supported the third hypothesis that hostile sexism would be related to a higher approval of violence. Further, the more an individual endorsed hostile sexism the less likely they were to report an intention to intervene in a scenario of IPV. Moreover, an interaction was found between poster condition and understanding of IPV. Participants that viewed a poster depicting male to female IPV were more likely to report that a male was the perpetrator of IPV than a female in comparison to those who viewed any other posters. Given the exploratory nature of the current study the findings will be elaborated below and compared to any relevant literature.

The current study did not support the findings of past research that found manipulating male and female gender in poster campaigns had an influence on levels of approval of aggression towards both male and female victims (Allen, 2018). The posters had no effect on changing the way participants approved of aggression. Unlike the study completed by Allen (2018) displaying a male victim did not change the approval levels of aggression in the participants that viewed them when compared to a poster that displayed a female victim. As such, the current study cannot support the use of posters that are aiming to reduce the level of approval of aggression in individuals viewing them by manipulating gender.

The study found that participants who reported a higher level of hostile sexism were likely to show a higher propensity to approve of aggression towards both males and females in comparison to those who scored lower on hostile sexism. These findings are similar to previous research where individuals who scored higher on hostile sexism were more likely to

blame the victim and exonerate the perpetrator in a scenario of IPV (Valor-Segura et al., 2011). For example, one study found that the more participants endorsed hostile sexism and patriarchal values were more likely to approve of wife beating (Sakall, 2001). Although, some have found that this may be due variance in cultural beliefs, such as Sakall (2001) who conducted a study in Turkey, a country known for being high in patriarchal values. However, the current study utilised a sample from the USA, a western country where violence against women is disapproved of (Popa-Nedelcu, Siserman, & Domnariu, 2019). Therefore, it is unlikely that cultural values are having an impact on patriarchal attitudes in the current study. As such, the current research provides support for the gender inclusive perspective as both males and females who were high in hostile sexism were more likely to approve of aggression towards an intimate partner. Given that hostile sexism was related to approval of violence attempting to reduce hostile sexism may be one way to reduce approval levels. As such, it may be useful to attempt to target the reduction of hostile sexism in prevention campaigns as a way to reduce IPV.

The finding that females who expressed higher levels of hostile sexism had more approval of violence towards both genders is interesting. It is thought that the majority of females usually tend to reject the notion of hostile sexism, and as such there is little research into this area (Russell & Trigg, 2004). However, the mechanics behind approval of violence and hostile sexism in males has been well documented in research (Hammond & Overall, 2013; Hammond & Overall, 2017). It has been suggested that males who have a high level of hostile sexism are likely to be more dissatisfied in a relationship due to feelings of manipulation where they believe a female partner is trying to gain an upper hand or dominance in the relationship (Hammond & Overall, 2013; Hammond & Overall, 2017). This is argued to lead to more hostile acts in the relationship. This provides an explanation for hostile sexism in males but not for females. Without investigating further, it is hard to

pinpoint the mechanics of hostile sexism within female participants as such this may warrant further research. These mechanics may operate in a similar way to that of males. Though one study investigating female endorsement of hostile sexism found that females endorsed hostile sexism when they thought of women who fulfilled a stereotypical feminist role when completing the hostile sexism survey (Becker, 2010). As such, the mechanics of this relationship may be different to that of a male.

The current study did not find any relationship between benevolent sexism and approval of violence. As such, the current study does not support a number of findings where benevolent sexism has been related to an increased approval of females violence towards men (Felson & Feld, 2009). Therefore, from the current study trying to reduce benevolent sexism would be ineffective in reducing approval of female to male aggression.

Hostile sexism was also related to participants intention to intervene in a scenario of IPV in the current study. Individuals with a higher level of hostile sexism were less likely to report intentions to intervene. One potential mechanic behind this may be the way individuals are likely to favour the 'ingroup' (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Abad-Merino, 2017). Individuals who are high in hostile sexism may view victims of IPV as the 'outgroup' due to perceiving them as threatening and seeking to gain power in the relationship (Dovidio et al., 2017; Hammond & Overall, 2013). Consistently, social psychology shows that individuals are less likely to engage in helping behaviours towards others who are seen to be in the 'outgroup' (Dovidio et al., 2017; Lelaurain, Graziani, & Monaco, 2017). As such, individuals who are high in hostile sexism may view victims of IPV as unworthy of help due to being seen as the 'outgroup' and not being favoured.

The relationship between the victim and the perpetrator of aggression had no influence on approval of violence in intimate relationships. Intimate relationship aggression and aggressive behaviour between strangers when occurring in public are both disapproved

of by participants in the current study. This supports past research that has found similar results that looked at instances of sexual assault between strangers and intimate partners (Lynch et al., 2019). As such, it appears there is some overlap in the way these acts are viewed between participants and may not be applicable to treat them as separate constructs in situations similar to those of the current study.

The gender of the victim presented in the poster condition had no influence on the level of approval of violence in participants. This does not provide support for the findings of Allen (2018) where changing the gender of the victim in the poster resulted in a decrease in approval of violence towards male victims. One potential explanation for this difference may be that the posters in the current study did not display a direct act of violence. In comparison the study completed by Allen (2018) presented an image of a male being at direct physical threat by a female. This style of poster may have more graphically depicted the level of harm that can be perpetrated by a female in an intimate relationship (Allen, 2018). As such, participants are more likely to change their views on approval of violence towards a male victim due to this confrontational image.

One interesting finding from the current study was that when participants viewed a poster depicting a scenario where a male was violent to a female, participants were more likely to report that a male would perpetrate IPV than a female. When viewing other poster conditions participants reported that both males and females were capable of committing IPV. Therefore, it appears that presenting a poster depicting a stereotypical scenario of IPV (i.e. male aggression towards a female victim) which aims to reduce approval of violence led to an increase in stereotypical thinking around who the perpetrator of IPV can be. As such, caution is advised in using a stereotypical image of IPV when aiming to reduce approval of violence as this may lead to an increase in the stereotypical thinking around who can be a perpetrator of IPV.

Although only hostile sexism was related to approval of violence and intention to intervene it is important to not let this be a narrow focus of future research. Though this appears to support the gendered perspective where patriarchal values lead to perpetration of IPV it is important to be more inclusive than limiting research to just this factor. As such, it is important to adhere to the gendered inclusive approach in order to avoid missing other factors that play a role in IPV. The gender inclusive approach to IPV allows for the use of multifactorial explanations of the mechanics of IPV of which can include patriarchal values alongside other factors found to play a role in IPV (Popa-Nedelcu et al., 2019). It is dangerous and potentially unethical to limit research to focus on solely one aspect of IPV as suggested by gendered theory as this restricts the ability to gain the best understanding of IPV possible, and therefore restrict the production of the best methods to reduce the impact of IPV.

Limitations

One potential limitation is the design of the factors used in the current study. This study manipulated two factors of relationship status and gender. The fact that there was no perceived difference in approval of physical assault between stranger violence and IPV may be due to the low approval rates of violence to anyone. Although introducing a third factor into the design of posters was the beyond the scope of the master's thesis, further research could manipulate the behavioural acts used in addition to relationship status and gender. For example, a comparison poster that depicts a harmful behaviour such as spiking a drink with drugs could provide an alternative poster condition. This type of behavioural act may be conceptually different enough to display an effect of the poster condition on approval of physical assault towards both males and females.

There are a number of other ways to improve the current study, firstly by completing this study over a longer period of time we may see increased effects if participants had

repeated viewings of the poster conditions. This would reveal any long-term effects that the posters may be having on the gender roles in instances of IPV. Secondly, it may be interesting to try and incorporate a 'genderless' poster where the genders of the perpetrators and victims are masked. This may challenge the stereotypical thinking around IPV where the female is seen predominantly as a victim and the male as the perpetrator due to not having clear genders prescribed to each role. Thirdly, as alluded to above, it may be valuable to try and use a control condition that does not refer to aggression or violence between genders. This may allow for more disparity between each condition where we see a more effective influence of the posters on approval of violence.

Implications for practice and further research

There are a number of implications of the findings of the current study. Firstly, it is important to be aware of the risk of increasing stereotypical thinking about IPV by using posters that display male to female aggression only. Gender inclusive approaches will serve to better help people understand the broad nature of IPV. Secondly, this study found that using bystanders in media campaigns is not effective in impacting the outcome variables measured. Therefore, it is necessary to try and find more effective ways of reducing approval of violence. One way to do this may be to present posters as an aide alongside classes or groups that are aiming to reduce IPV as this has been shown to be effective in other areas (Banyard et al., 2018). Moreover, from the results of the current study, it may be more effective is to aim for the reduction of hostile sexism in both males and females. If hostile sexism was to be targeted in the poster conditions, there may be a resultant reduction in approval of aggression towards both females and males. The current study adds to the growing literature aiming to find cost effective ways to reduce the impact of IPV.

Future research should aim to understand more about the relationship between hostile sexism in females and approval of violence towards both males and females. This would

provide greater insight into the mechanics of this relationship and would allow for attempts to reduce this in females in order to reduce the impact of IPV. Moreover, it would allow for the understanding of potential differences that may exist between males and females in the way hostile sexism influences approval of violence in these populations.

Conclusion

This study explored the effect of manipulating actor gender and relationship status in violence prevention campaign posters upon the relationship between ambivalent sexism and approval of IPV, intention to intervene as a bystander, and understanding of IPV. The results found that viewing the posters had no influence on the relationship between ambivalent sexism and the measured dependent variables. However, it was found that individuals who scored high on hostile sexism were more likely to approve of violence towards both males and females and were less likely to report an intention to intervene in a scenario of IPV. As such it can be concluded that a multifaceted approach is needed to reduce IPV effectively beyond the use of media campaign posters alone. Further research should attempt to understand the role of hostile sexism in producing positive attitudes toward violence to others in both men and women and a reduced willingness to help bystanders in a violent situation.

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Appendix.

Figure 1. Female violence towards an unknown male victim

Figure 2. Female violence towards a male intimate partner.

Figure 3. Male violence towards an unknown female victim

Figure 4. Male violence towards a male intimate partner

Appendix B: Information and Consent Form.

EXPLORING THE UTILITY OF MEDIA CAMPAIGNS THAT AIM TO REDUCE VIOLENCE

INFORMATION AND CONSENT SHEET: Project # 24324 (Amended)

Louise Dixon, Reader, (Louise.Dixon@vuw.ac.nz), Matt Hammond, Lecturer,

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(Hedwig.Eisenbarth@vuw.ac.nz), Nathan Heine, MSc student,

(Nathan.Heine@myvuw.ac.nz)

Thank you for your interest in this project. Please read this information before deciding whether or not to take part. If you decide to participate, thank you. If you decide not to take part, thank you for considering this request.

Who are we?
Louise Dixon is a Reader/Associate Professor in Forensic Psychology at Victoria University of Wellington, she is the lead researcher on this project. Matt Crawford is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Victoria. Matt Hammond is a Lecturer in Psychology at Victoria. Hedwig Eisenbarth is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Victoria. Nathan Heine is studying for his MSc in Forensic Psychology at Victoria University of Wellington and is conducting this project under the named academics' supervision as part of completing his degree.

What is the aim of the project?
This project investigates utility of messages that are typically used in media campaigns that set out to prevent violence between people. There are no restrictions placed on taking part in this project.

This research has been approved by the School of Psychology Human Ethics Committee under delegated authority of Victoria University of Wellington's Human Ethics Committee *[project # 24324]*.

What is involved if I agree to participate?
You must complete the study in one sitting, you cannot stop taking part half way through and then resume from where you left off. **Please make sure you set aside at least 30 minutes to participate before starting the study**. While you are participating, your responses will be stored in a temporary holding area as you move through the sections, but they will not be permanently saved until you complete all sections and you are given a chance to review your responses. You can stop participating in this study at any time, without giving a reason, up until you submit your completed questionnaire. If you chose to withdraw from the study before submitting your responses your data will not be saved and you will not receive payment. You will only receive the payment if you chose to complete the study and submit your responses.

If you agree to take part, you will complete an online study. You will first be required to complete a questionnaire that will ask you to share your demographic details with us, your thoughts about gender roles, and any acts of aggression you may have taken part in with an intimate partner at some point in the past. You will then briefly view a campaign poster that will picture people briefly discussing an incident of violence that has happened to one of the actors. You will be asked to answer questions about the particular poster shown to you and how you may react if someone you knew was being harmed. You will then be asked to read short scenarios which describe men and women aggressing against a partner of the opposite sex and comment on these behaviours. The scenarios are short and hypothetical and describe physical violence occurring between two adults. For example, it may say 'Alex repeatedly hit Susan in the body'.

If you choose to participate, it is important that you understand you *may* experience some discomfort due to the content of some pictures.

It will take you approximately 30 minutes to complete this study.

You will receive $1.20 for taking part in this study. You will receive payment upon completion of the study.

Privacy and Confidentiality
(To protect your privacy, a randomly generated number that does not identify you will automatically represent all the information you provide. Your names or other identifying information will not be stored alongside your responses). This means that individual feedback on your responses will not be provided, however, a summary of aggregate results will be available on www.aggressionlab.com after March 2019.

Your de-identified data will be kept indefinitely by the research lead. It will definitely be kept for at least 5 years by the lead researcher after this research is published.

What happens to the information that you provide?
The responses you provide will be collected and combined with other participants' responses. We will then analyse the data, and look at overall patterns of responses. The results will be written up in the form of scholarly articles or presentations where we will talk about the general pattern of results. The lead researcher may also use your data in other related projects, and share it with competent students and professionals. When any of these things occur —data is shared, results are described, articles are written, or scientific presentations are given—it will be impossible for anyone to identify you.

If you have any questions or problems, whom can you contact?

If you have any questions about this study, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact Louise Dixon or one of the research team using the details stated at the top of this information document.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University HEC Convener: Dr Judith Loveridge. Email hec@vuw.ac.nz or telephone +64-4-463 6028.

-      If you wish to discuss issues around aggression in relationships with someone, there are many avenues of free support, such as:

USA
At the links below you can find a list of resources in the US for help with:

Suicide prevention and support:
https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org
24/7 lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

The Samaritans:
http://samaritansnyc.org/24-hour-crisis-hotline/
24/7 crisis hotline: 212-673-3000

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
https://www.thehotline.org
24/7 hotline: 1-800-799-7233

You can find a list of national resources for help with a wide range of issues here: https://psychcentral.com/lib/common-hotline-phone-numbers/

CANADA
At the links below you can find a list of resources across Canada for help with:

Suicide prevention and support:

http://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/
24/7 hotline: 1-833-456-456
http://suicideprevention.ca/news-resources/Crisis

Help for issues with violence and sexual of violence:
http://endingviolencecanada.org/getting-help/

For emotional support and crisis response for youth 30 years old and under across Canada:
http://Youthspace.ca/
Text: 778-783-0177

Help for a variety of crisis issues in Canada and worldwide:
https://thelifelinecanada.ca/help/call/

Thank you for considering participating in this research.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

I have read and understood the information about this research project. I understand the purpose of this research, what will happen if I participate, and what will happen to the information I provide. I understand the measures that have been put in place to protect my privacy and confidentiality. For example, I understand that a randomly generated number, that does not identify me, will represent the information I provide. I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time prior to submitting the questionnaire online without providing a reason.

I agree to participate in this research, and I understand that checking (ticking) the box below indicates my consent.

[ ] Yes, I agree to participate in this research. ⌈¯⌉
                                                ⌊SEP⌋

If you do not agree to participate in this research, please exit this browser window now.

During this study, we ask that you comply with the following requirements:

1) Please **maximize the size of your web browser** so that it covers your entire screen. Complete the questionnaire on a desktop computer, laptop computer, or large tablet, not on a mobile phone or similar device.

2) Please complete the questionnaire in a single session, and **do not leave the questionnaire to engage in other tasks**. So don't check your mail, look at Facebook, send or read a text message, get up for a drink, etc.

3) Please **do not use your web browser's back or refresh buttons** at any point during the study.

4) Because this study requires your close attention, we ask that you **complete the questionnaire in an environment that is free of noise and distraction**. Please do not speak to anyone, or have anyone near you. Ideally, you would be alone in a quiet room, or in a room where other people are quiet (such as a library).

The reason we ask you to follow these instructions is to ensure the quality of the information you give us. We know from previous research that if you do take a break, chat with others, etc, it will impair your ability to do the tasks set in this study.

Appendix C: Debriefing Information.

EXPLORING THE UTILITY OF MEDIA CAMPAIGNS THAT AIM TO REDUCE VIOLENCE

Debriefing Statement: Project # 24324 (Amended)

Louise Dixon, Reader   **Matt Hammond, Lecturer**
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+64 4 463 6548   +64 4 463 5649

Hedwig Eisenbarth, Senior   **Nathan Heine, MSc Student**
Hedwig.Eisenbarth@vuw.ac.nz   nathan.heine@myvuw.ac.nz

Thank you for participating in this research study.

Family violence is the most common form of violent crime in many parts of the world (North America). One common form of family violence is between partners in intimate relationships. Professionals often attempt to reduce the problem through the use of media campaigns (such as posters, TV adverts, podcasts) to educate the general public about this social issue and to change or maintain perceptions that this form of violence 'is ok' to 'it is not ok'.

However, despite public money being spent on such campaigns, there is a surprising lack of evidence exploring what the messages in these campaigns should be and how different messages impact public perceptions, or not. These are important concepts for professionals to know if they are to design effective campaigns that prevent intimate partner violence. Psychological science can be used to help understand these concepts.

This study did just that. It used an experimental design to test how acceptable people rated acts of heterosexual intimate partner violence after exposure to educative posters (similar to those you may find in real campaigns) that differed in their message about the likely gender of the aggressor and victim. In other words, it provided an *experiment* where all variables except the aggressor's gender were held constant and people were randomly assigned to poster conditions. Therefore, any changes in people's

perceptions after exposure to the poster could be attributed to the aggressor's gender in the poster and nothing else. You may have viewed a poster that described violence between strangers and not intimate partners, that is because we wanted to see if people thought differently about partners compared to people they didn't know.

It is expected that, before being exposed to the poster, on average people are more intolerant of male to female aggression than vice versa. This is because current research shows that male to female aggression goes against chivalrous norms (benevolent sexism) that are prevalent in Western society that assume women should be protected and looked after by men. It is anticipated that campaigns depicting male to female aggression will serve to maintain the existing intolerance of male to female aggression.

It is also anticipated that campaigns depicting female to male aggression will serve to increase intolerance of female to male aggression. Research shows that female to male aggression is more readily accepted in society than male to female aggression and that this acceptance may contribute to the reported abuse of men by their female partners.
So arguably it is important to find ways to reduce this, as well as reducing male to female violence. Such results will promote the use of campaigns that advertise the problem of intimate partner violence, targeting the cessation of aggression to men *and* women.

However, it is also important to test whether the effects of campaigns depicting female violence increase the approval of violence to women. We *do not* want to promote campaigns that do this, so if this result is found we will not endorse this advertising strategy. This study is therefore a very important first step in determining what the public health message should be to prevent all form of intimate partner violence.

This is the first study in a series of studies, tests need to be conducted with posters that depict same sex couples, people from different ethnicities and ages so that effective messages can be determined for all. We acknowledge this and aim to explore such issues in the future.

If you have experienced or perpetrated relationship violence, or indeed if you find the contents of this questionnaire upsetting for some other reason and wish to
discuss any issues about relationship aggression, there are many avenues of free support, such as:

USA
At the links below you can find a list of resources in the US for help with:

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https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org
24/7 lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

The Samaritans:
http://samaritansnyc.org/24-hour-crisis-hotline/
24/7 crisis hotline: 212-673-3000

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
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http://Youthspace.ca/
Text: 778-783-0177

Help for a variety of crisis issues in Canada and worldwide:
https://thelifelinecanada.ca/help/call/

If you would like to keep a copy of this debrief information for your future records please take a screen shot and save it somewhere accessible to you now, and/or print a copy of this window now.
If you have any questions about this study, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact Louise Dixon or one of the research team using the details stated at the top of this information document.

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Victoria University HEC Convener: Dr Judith Loveridge. Email hec@vuw.ac.nz or telephone +64-4-463 6028.

Thank you once again for your help.
Sincerely,
Dr. Louise Dixon, Dr. Matt Crawford, Dr. Matt Hammond, Dr Hedwig Eisenbarth and Nathan Heine