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## Observer Reaction to Physical and Verbal Abuse in Relation to Gender and Sexual Orientation of Abuser and Victim

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OBSERVER REACTION TO PHYSICAL AND VERBAL  
ABUSE IN RELATION TO GENDER AND  
SEXUAL ORIENTATION OF  
ABUSER AND VICTIM

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of Fort Hays State University in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Science

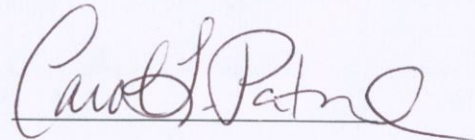
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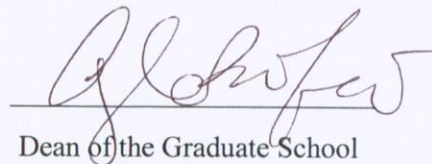
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## ABSTRACT

Advocating for victims of domestic violence has drastically evolved within the last few years through an increase of education and advocacy for victims, but there is still room for improvement. This study examines the relationship among gender of abuser, gender of victim, and type of abuse (physical or verbal) and participants reaction to witnessing domestic violence. In this experimental study, participants were randomly assigned to one of ten different vignettes describing a domestic violence scenario that varied the gender of the victim and the abuser, along with the type of abuse. Two of these vignettes did not mention the gender of the victim or abuser, only the type of abuse. Participants were then asked to infer the gender of the people described in the given scenario. Lastly, they were asked to rate their likelihood, on a five point rating scale, to do the following: leave the couple alone, call the police, verbally intervene, physically intervene, video the altercation, monitor the couple so the abuser knows there is a witness, or just watch the fight because it is interesting. Participants were also asked to fill out a general Victim Concern Scale to gauge their overall concern for victims and if there was any relation with the different types of vignettes. Higher levels of intervention for calling the police were found for scenarios where the gender was not specified. Physical violence was found to have a higher participant response rate than verbal abuse and the most likely response was to call the police. Consistent with previous research, this study found no significant difference in participants' responses to vignettes when comparing heterosexual relationships to LGBTQ+ relationships. Interestingly, participants in this study equally assumed the gender of the victim and abuser. This research adds to previous studies by establishing the relationship among the variables listed and by being able to contribute knowledge to the understanding of domestic violence.

*Keywords:* domestic violence, stereotypes, physical abuse, emotional abuse, gender

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## INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a significant and often overlooked topic in the United States. Recent statistics about domestic violence indicate that overall, one in three women and one in six men will experience sexual violence in their lifetime (CDC, 2018). Taking a closer look at the statistics within the LGBTQ+ community, 50 percent of lesbians will experience violence at some point in their lifetime, and not just from their intimate partner (Wray, 2017). Two out of five gay or bisexual men will also experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime (Wray, 2017). Verbal assault can cause severe psychological damage, but it is more difficult to prosecute leaving many victims without support and legal help. Technology has added another layer to this social issue, making verbal abuse almost impossible to escape for many victims. This increased frequency of verbal assault online has created a normalized aura around this topic that discourages people who have experienced verbal abuse, especially from an intimate partner, to seek help. Due to the recent pandemic of the Coronavirus, many sources are indicating that domestic violence rates are increasing (Taub, 2020), only confirming the dire need to further our understanding of domestic violence and responses to witnessing it.

### **Domestic Violence**

Intimate partner violence can be defined, according to the National Domestic Violence Hotline (2020), as repeated behaviors by one or both partners to maintain control over the other partner in the relationship. Though the concept of domestic violence is well known, there are some misconceptions about what exactly qualifies as domestic violence. Most people assume that domestic violence pertains to only physical acts of violence towards an intimate partner with intentions to harm that person, such as hitting or sexual abuse, and while these are types of domestic violence, the topic of abuse is more complex. What most people do not know is that it

also includes verbal abuse, financial abuse, emotional abuse, and even more. One potential reason these are less well known is for the simple fact it is harder to prosecute than physical abuse. In the United States, it is almost impossible to prosecute someone for verbal assault. For example, if neighbors were to call because they heard the couple next door yelling at each other and are scared that it might escalate, the couple fighting will most likely only receive a ticket, and in this situation, legally, the person who called in the couple is listed as the victim. The worst prosecution they could receive is disturbing the peace or disorderly conduct. If someone is receiving threats from their partner, they can prosecute for criminal threat, but the threat made needs to specifically threaten their life and they have to have the means to do it. If they do not meet that level of severity, the partner can still be prosecuted for criminal threat, but it is harder to prove in court. For the purposes of this study, only physical and verbal assault will be assessed and further discussed. This study chose to only include verbal and physical abuse because they are the most prominent and well-known forms of abuse. It should also be stated that the other types of abuse are no less important or deserving to be discussed.

A large part of society has a very inaccurate perception of domestic violence victims. There are many who believe that the partner being abused is choosing to stay in the relationship, and if they wanted to leave, they would have already. Many do not understand or see the whole picture of psychological, sexual, financial, or physical abuse. Faramarzi et al. (2005) conducted a study which found that women who experienced previous abuse by men are more accepting of male dominance. Possible implications of this could be that women who have been abused when they were younger by their father, their first love, or another male figure are going to be more susceptible to not only being in an abusive relationship when they are older, but to be accepting of it. This abuse will become part of what they know as normal, and they will have a higher

tolerance of abuse than those who have never experienced it. Many victims do not understand that their perception of a healthy relationship is often distorted. Often, people assume victims are to blame because they put themselves in the situation from the beginning. This high tolerance of intimate partner violence can also be accredited to the patriarchy and how accepted it is in some cultures and families.

In addition to experiencing physical abuse many victims will also be subjected to psychological abuse from their partner. These abusive partners often reinforce ideas that the victims are helpless, that they need their abusive partner, that they are the best that they could ever get, etc. The abuser will make them feel insignificant, will isolate the victim from friends and family, and will often financially control them so they are not financially stable without them (National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2018). These stressors demonstrate the complexities that many victims have to sort through and to find a safe way to escape their current situation.

### **Who is Affected**

Domestic violence can happen to anyone, and in fact, it happens to almost 20 people in the United States per minute and to more than 10 million people yearly (NCADV, 2020). These statistics are estimates due to there being an overwhelming amount of underreporting by both men and women. There are many reasons for underreporting but because of the social stigma surrounding domestic violence and out of fear of their partner, many are scared to reach out for help. As stated previously, domestic violence affects everyone, including the victims, friends, children, family members, and witnesses (Young et al., 2016). There are many effects of domestic violence in addition to the initial harm to the victim. One study found that women who were physically abused by their partner actually showed higher levels of self-destructiveness than women who reported never experiencing domestic violence (Tsirigotis & Łuczak, 2018).

This indicates that the trauma experienced in an abusive relationship could potentially affect the victims for the rest of their lives. This evidence contributes to the ongoing need to advocating and demonstrates the need for resources and interventions for those who experience domestic violence to ensure they are receiving help promptly to prevent future damage.

Lethality desperately needs to be discussed with domestic violence because *three women a day die as a result of domestic violence* (Lee, 2017). Of those who are murder victims, one out of two women and one out of thirteen men were murdered by their intimate partner (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2020). Twenty percent of women and five percent of men who are abused physically and sustain physical injury will need medical care. In addition to this, 94% of murder suicide victims are females killed by their intimate partner. Death is a serious and likely outcome for many victims of domestic violence. These statistics demonstrate the urgency to increase education and research for domestic violence in addition to increasing advocacy and resources for victims and their families.

The harm and violence of an abusive relationship also extends further than just the partners involved. The community is also affected, specifically children. Children who are exposed to intimate partner violence through their parent(s) or guardian(s) are also greatly affected. If a child lives in a home where there is intimate partner violence, the child is also more likely to experience abuse when compared to other children who do not live in a house with intimate partner violence (Osofsky, 2003). Children are more than observers, they are sponges soaking up every detail they see and are often traumatized by the experience of witnessing domestic violence (Clarke & Wydall, 2015).

Furthermore, the United States is also affected financially by domestic violence. It was calculated that almost 12 million domestic violence cases occur yearly. These cases sum up to

costing the United States roughly 460 billion dollars annually. Using an approach that Fearon and Hoeffler (2015) used to calculate the cost of domestic violence, the Washington Post reported that, globally, it is estimated that domestic violence alone costs the world 4.3 trillion dollars a year (Lomborg, 2018). These frightening and disheartening statistics help to capture how the effects of domestic violence impact *everyone*, not just the abuser and the victim.

### **Normalized Domestic Violence**

Although advocates for ending intimate partner violence have recently helped open the discussion of this abuse, it is still primarily seen today as a private affair. One of the reasons that domestic abuse is not discussed is because the United States has only recently come out of an era of normalized domestic abuse. Though advocates and survivors of domestic violence have made changes by leaps and bounds in the last few decades, it is important to note that we are not far from where we started. It was not until 1978 that the first man was sent to trial for raping his wife, in front of their child, while they were still living together, in the Oregon v. Rideout trial (Shen, 2011). In the end, the husband was found not guilty of first-degree rape. Though history should have gone differently for the wife, this court case inspired many states to change their laws on marital rape and domestic abuse. This case and many more opened doors for women and men to talk about violence they experienced in their lifetimes. Eventually, by 1993, the United States made marital rape illegal (Shen, 2011). Around the time of the Oregon v. Rideout case, feminists across America were pressuring states to protect their citizens from domestic abuse, especially marital rape.

The Violence Against Women Act was enacted by the Department of Justice in 1994, establishing laws to help protect women from domestic violence (United States Department of Justice, 2017). This was a tremendous achievement, but it was not until 1996, nearly two years

later, that domestic violence became a felony in all states. Under the Violence Against Women Act, the right for domestic violence victims to be treated with respect, and for their dignity and privacy to be honored, was granted. Through this act, they were also promised the right to prosecute the offender of the crime (United States Department of Justice, 2017). This spread throughout America and helped encourage those who were being abused by their partner to come forward and seek help. Though the creation of this act was important, it is surprising, and frankly disappointing, at how long this took to place into action. This act is around 23 years old, which is relatively, not a long time. Many generations of women suffered in silence because they had no one to help them. These generations are still living, and because of this, it can also be assumed that there are some residual effects of abuse from previous generations, or from those who grew up in a home filled with domestic violence. It will be many years, potentially never, before the eradication of domestic violence occurs. Until then it is vital to spread the awareness of domestic abuse and offer support to those who are affected by it.

### **Stereotypes**

There is no doubt that women are subject to abuse, but many people are under the notion that men are incapable of being abused. A simple Google search of domestic violence will result in autocomplete questions of ‘can men be abused?’ or ‘how can a man be abused?’ As stated previously, it is estimated that at least 1 in 10 men will experience or have already experienced domestic violence in their lifetime (National Domestic Violence Hotline, 2018), but often male victims are forgotten or are not prioritized in society. Men who are abused are found to be underrepresented in interventions and do not receive the care and help they need (Hogan et al., 2012). Much of this reasoning is based in American culture and the backbone of the patriarchy, which can be found in a plethora of other cultures, not just the United States. Men are supposed

to be 'strong', and being made the victim, especially by a partner of the opposite gender, does not read well into the sexist narrative that many people believe.

Typically, when people think of domestic violence, they have a schema in their minds of what the abusive situation entails. It is no secret that a majority of domestic violence occurs to females, as stated before, and their abusers are typically male (CDC, 2018). There are various components that go into the schema a majority of people believe. These stereotypes are what are most talked about and what are most seen because of the stereotypes that are currently held in 21<sup>st</sup>-century culture today. A group of researchers (Eagly et al., 2019) analyzed public opinions about gender stereotypes and how they have changed over the years. These researchers found two main components in the stereotypes: communion and agency. Communion is being warm, compassionate, and caring for others. Agency was described and associated with being ambitious, assertive, and competitive. In their research, they found the majority of people associate women with communion and men associated with agency. This study also found that men are significantly seen as less caring and warm than women. These are not facts, but they are an accurate representation of the stereotypes and perceptions that are held in the United States today. This is one of the many reasons it is so difficult for men to come forward and ask for help when being abused. Whether it is realized or not, our implicit biases or outright beliefs about men inhibit men from seeking help. It is automatically assumed that a woman, who is perceived as warm and caring, could never be an abuser.

Stereotypes play a significant role in domestic abuse for many reasons, as previously discussed. And because of this, men are frequently left out of the conversation of domestic violence. With the schemas and stereotypes seen in the United States, often the picture painted in domestic violence crimes is as simple as this: Female = Victim, Male = Abuser. The domestic



violence and abuse that men face are unheard of and often ignored. One reason for this is because of the stereotypes that are common in the United States. People often have a difficult time viewing a woman as the aggressor because they are not perceived as destructive as men (Hammock et al., 2017), so their abuse is taken less seriously if witnessed by outsiders. It is easier for people to associate men as abusers and difficult to view men as the victim. One researcher wrote about clinicians' and counselors' experiences with male victims of domestic violence, and unfortunately, found many men who have suffered domestic abuse from a partner, have little to no support systems (Hogan et al., 2012). In fact, many men who do come forward to talk about their abuse or to seek help are often mislabeled as the abuser and are denied help. As seen in many cases of domestic abuse, the victims experience a sense of shame from the abuse. For men especially, there are many machismo stereotypes about how they should act, and that it is impossible for men to be abused, or even that they should just toughen up. As with all victims of domestic violence, it is difficult admitting they have been abused and to seek help. In addition, men have the stigmatization surrounding the experience as a victim, which makes it all the more difficult to seek help. This stereotype is so ingrained into our culture, there are even some men who do not take their abuse as seriously and will simply try to brush it off. Because of this, many men do not seek the help they need (Hogan et al., 2012).

As concerning as these stigmas are, there is some hope. Previously in research, stereotypes were thought to be rigid and unchangeable, but researchers found that stereotypes are in fact, flexible and often change to what we witness in the world today and are responsive to changes in group social roles (Eagly et al., 2019). Thus, if there is a continued fight to end the stigmas and stereotypes by spreading hope and healing, there can be change for the future. Until then, it is important to report domestic violence so the victims can receive the help they need and

be aware of our own stigmas and stereotypes we hold. Our own actions and beliefs could be what is preventing someone from reaching out.

### **Sexual Orientation**

As previously mentioned, coming out of the normalized era of domestic violence makes this a difficult situation for everyone. To emphasize this point, one study gave participants a vignette describing a domestic violence situation. The vignette varied in the gender of the abusers and victims for both heterosexual relationships and LGBTQ+ relationships. People who witnessed a female being abused were far more likely to intervene or call the police. Men who were being abused showed significantly less intervention, even though the abuse described in the situation was the same (Seelau & Seelau, 2005). From previously stated research, this finding is no surprise. One interesting fact is the researchers did not find any support for the idea that people would be less responsive or troubled by witnessing domestic violence in a heterosexual relationship compared to a lesbian or gay relationship. This study did not include a written example of their vignettes or if they clearly stated that it was a lesbian or gay relationship so there is no way to clarify if it was clearly stated or not. It will be made clear in this study what relationship the abuser and victim are in. Public opinions of LGBTQ+ relationships have been an ever-evolving topic in the United States. According to researchers, it has only been until recently that the majority of the population in America has socially accepted LGBTQ+ relationships (Hasenbush et al., 2015). It should be noted that the research of Seelau and Seelau was published in 2005 when LGBTQ+ relationships were even more controversial in the public's eye. It is expected there will be a greater majority of people reporting favorable opinions of the LGBTQ+ community and their relationships.

## **Types of Violence**

### ***Verbal***

When people hear about domestic violence, it is often assumed that the violence is physical, but this is not always the case. There is also verbal abuse that can have devastating psychological effects on victims. When comparing the two forms of abuse, it was found that people are far more likely to respond or intervene when the abuse is physical rather than if it was verbal (Hammock et al., 2017). The researchers discovered that participants' view of physical aggression is perceived more negatively and serious than verbally aggressive behavior. This study also made the connection back to the stigmas previously discussed, that male perpetrators are viewed more negatively than female perpetrators. In total, if the victim of domestic violence was female, the perpetrator was viewed more negatively for both physical and verbal abuse. Their evidence was also displayed that people rate the seriousness of physical violence higher than verbal assault (Hammock et al., 2017). It is expected that these results will also be replicated in this study. This poses a problem to society, if verbal abuse is not taken seriously there are many people who will discredit their own experiences and may not seek the help they need. They may risk the chance that by not seeking help, the verbal abuse escalates to physical abuse. There is also research to support that verbal abuse, especially in a domestic violence situation, can intensify the effects of depression and other psychological distress experienced by the victim. Overall, their analysis found that men who are emotionally abused may have a byproduct of experiencing "depression, psychological distress, alcoholism, PTSD, weight loss, fear, and self-blame" (Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2001, p. 10).

## ***Physical***

Unsurprisingly, physical violence also poses a number of safety, physical and mental health risks. Of the estimated 4.5 million physical assault victims, 1.8 million of the victims experience injuries due to the violence, and it is reported that of those 1.8 million victims, over 500 thousand require medical care (CDC, 2003). It is also estimated that this is not an accurate number of the actual population that is being seriously hurt. Many victims of sexual assault cannot receive medical help because their partner will not allow it. They are scared of the repercussions from reporting the abuse and their partner, they are unaware of the severity of the situation, or they might feel shame and other complex emotions that keep them from receiving help (Prosman et al., 2013). Psychological effects of physical abuse previously discussed may also be a strong contributor of why victims do not seek help. If they experienced abuse when they were younger or if they have been experiencing abuse for a long time, they may come to associate the abuse as an expected part of their relationship (Faramarzi et al., 2005).

Unfortunately, as a society we often compare verbal and physical abuse to one another in a negative way that can often be invalidating for the victims of both types of abuse. Neither abuse should be taken lightly, nor is there any real-world value in rating one as more serious than the other. Both of these abuses are a tragedy. It is the purpose of this study not to compare them, but to enlighten the public of the negative effects and seriousness of these abuses, and to bring light to our own biases and perceptions surrounding this topic.

## **Legal Issues**

Domestic violence is a legal issue regarding the safety of both partners. States have different laws and regulations that are designed to protect the victim. But some of these laws, though meant with good intention, cause more stress and inhibit the victim from seeking help.

For example, many states have a law that requires medical professionals to report if they suspect abuse is happening. Specifically, in California, medical professionals can face consequences if they do not report suspected or known abuse. While at face value, this sounds great, it can also discourage victims from seeking medical or mental help because they do not want their partner to get in trouble or worry for their safety if their partner finds out (Findlaw, 2018). In other states like New Jersey and Wyoming, they do not have specific laws for medical professionals because technically, everyone is mandated to report suspected or known abuse (Findlaw, 2018).

Some states also have a mandatory arrest policy when it comes to calls concerning domestic violence. Specifically, in New York, police are mandated to arrest if there is any probable cause that domestic violence has occurred (Findlaw, 2018). While in North Carolina police may arrest someone if there is probable cause that a felony has or will occur if one or both partners are not arrested (Findlaw, 2018). The phrasing is similar, but there is a clear distinction between ‘must arrest’ and ‘may arrest’.

### **Conceptualizing the Variables**

This study intends to shed light on domestic violence with the hope of offering a different perspective in regards to the general public’s perception of the type of violence, gender of abuser and victim. We expect these aforementioned variables to have a significant effect on participants’ responses to the vignettes. Physical violence can seriously injure a person and because of this outward display of aggression people may be more inclined to view this as a more serious matter than if someone was to be yelling threatening things toward their partner. We do expect to see a difference in chosen intervention among participants. Gender of the participant rating the vignette is an important variable in our study for many reasons, one being that previous research studied empathy among gender found women are generally better able to

empathize than their male counterparts (Chen, Feng, Lu, & Lu, 2018). These researchers associated this finding with testosterone in the body and found that this hormone is in fact negatively correlated with empathy. It should be stated that the research does not mean that men are incapable of being able to empathize, but that because of hormones and many other factors, such as stereotypes, women may be better at empathizing in this situation than men. Although it sounds counterintuitive to stereotype men and women, it is predicted that, because of this research on the effects of testosterone, women may respond more empathetically than men. Gender within the vignettes as a variable is also important because previous research has shown that men are viewed as a greater threat and able to do more damage than a woman could. In addition to the information provided about stereotypes and the populations' general perception of women and their ability to do harm, we also expect that the concern for the victim will be rated as less severe when the abuser is female.

Gender was expected to play a large role in this study, based on current perceptions of genders and their associated stereotypes. Previous research found that the public's perceptions of gender are that women are viewed with communion and are perceived as being warm, while men are associated with agency, a trait describing goal achievement and action (Eagly et al., 2019). Their research found that men are not instinctually seen as being warm and kind compared to their female counterparts. Women are also not seen as being able to cause as much damage as a man could so this and the stereotypes just mentioned could impact how participants view domestic violence.

While the Coronavirus has consumed the population's attention, intimate partner violence pandemic has seen a significant increase. Quarantines and schools shutting down have forced many families to isolate and have limited the ability of people to seek help from the community.

The CDC did an acute study looking at the rates of domestic violence during the Coronavirus pandemic and found that it has increased drastically; specifically, violence against women has increased from 4.4 to 14.8% (Sediri et al., 2020). This research also found that women who had previously experienced intimate partner violence prior to COVID were at an increased risk of experiencing violence during the lockdown.

## **Hypotheses**

### **Hypothesis One**

*Hypothesis 1a:* There will be a significant increase of participant interaction or intervention when the victim is female, and abuser is male.

*Hypothesis 1b:* There will significantly be less participant interaction or intervention when the abuse is verbal, rather than physical.

*Hypothesis 1c:* Male abuser/female victim will produce higher levels of participant intervention than the male abuser/male victim, female abuser/male victim, and female abuser/female victim relationships.

*Hypothesis 1d:* LGBTQ+ relationships will have a significantly lower participant intervention compared to heterosexual relationships.

### **Hypothesis Two**

*Hypothesis 2a:* There will be a significant correlation between participants' levels of concern ratings for domestic violence victims and likelihood of intervening.

*Hypothesis 2b:* There will be a significant correlation between participants' levels of concern for the different gender of victims and likelihood of intervening.

## Method

### Materials

The experimental design study had a total of ten different vignettes differing in gender of the abuser (male or female), gender of the victim (male or female), and the type of abuse (physical or verbal). There are two vignettes that did not describe the gender of the abuser or victim and one focused on physical abuse and the other on verbal abuse. One of the ten different vignettes were given to the participants describing a domestic violence scenario. Following the vignette were a set of response questions asking participants how they would respond to seeing this scenario in real life (e.g., “You are walking alone outside when you notice two people, one of which is being beaten by the other. You then realize that they are your neighbors from across the street and the person being beaten, is becoming more distressed. The situation seems to be escalating and you finally make the realization that person being beaten is in danger. The other person continues to hit their partner, and you are the only one around witnessing this violence.”).

This study included a Victim Concern Scale designed by Clements, Brannen, Kirkley, Gordon, and Church (2006). All 22 items were administered to maintain the reliability of the scale. The Victim Concern Scale is correlated with emotional ( $r = .32$ ) and cognitive ( $r = .19$ ) empathy. The revised 22 questions from Clements et al. had a high reliability index ( $\alpha = .936$ ).

Participants were also asked to rate their likelihood of responding to the domestic violence from seven scaled options. The given responses will be: (1) Leave the couple alone and go about your business; (2) Call the police; (3) Verbally intervene (say something); (4) Physically intervene; (5) Video the altercation; (6) Just watch, because it is interesting; (7) Just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness.



## **Procedure**

Participants were recruited online through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Before consenting to participate, they were informed of the purpose of the study were then asked to check a box confirming their consent to participate. Next, the vignettes, Victim Concern Scale, and survey were administered to the participants to read and complete. Lastly, participants were given a debriefing form reviewing the study's objectives and thanking them for their participation and contribution. The debriefing information also included contact information to contact the researcher, Fort Hays State University IRB, and outside resources/hotlines, such as Suicide Hotline and the National Domestic Violence Hotline if they were distressed or wished to speak to someone about the study in which they participated in.

## **Design**

A total of seven 3x3x2 Factorial ANOVAs were conducted to best analyze the relationships between the levels of the independent variables and each dependent variable. The independent variables in this study are (1) gender of the abuser (male, female, or undesignated); (2) gender of the abused (male, female, or undesignated); and (3) the type of violence (physical or verbal). The dependent variable was the rated likelihood of each of the following: (1) Leave the couple alone and go about your business, (2) Call the police, (3) Verbally intervene (say something), (4) Physically intervene, (5) Video the altercation, (6) Just watch, because it is interesting, (7) Just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness. This research design allows for the examination of possible main effects for each dependent variable as well as an interaction effect occurring between the independent variables.

Lastly, a Pearson's  $r$  Correlational Matrix was conducted to examine the possibility of an association between overall victim concern and the likelihood of participants intervening in six

different ways, as a whole group, and also divided by the gender of the participant. Furthermore, the purpose of running this correlation is to examine the relationship between the concern for the victims and likelihood of participant's intervening.

## **Participants**

For the purposes of this study, there was an original goal of collecting 500 participants in order to have adequate statistical power. We were able to recruit 498 participants in total (two were over 65 and removed from the sample, based on IRB requirements). The participants were selected through random sampling, using Amazon Mechanical Turk services. All participants recruited were limited to the adult population (18-65 years old) and only to those who had computer access since the vignettes and questionnaires were delivered via the computer. All APA ethical guidelines were followed to ensure the safety and rights of participants were not violated. Participants in this study were asked to give consent to participate and were provided a debriefing form. Measures were taken to maintain confidentiality of the participants. Looking at the demographic of the participants collected, there were a total of 344 males and 154 females. Of those participants, there was one Alaskan Native, 164 Asians, 23 Black or African American, 46 Hispanic or Latinx, 16 Native Americans, 3 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and 245 White or Caucasian participants. Of these participants 54% confirmed that they know someone who has been a victim of domestic violence or are victims themselves.

## **Results**

The data were screened using the explore function of SPSS. No data points were found to be missing. Two participants over the age of 65 were deleted as part of the IRB requirements.

Seven 3(gender of abuser) x 3(gender of victim) x 2(type of abuse) factorial ANOVAs were conducted to compare main effects of gender of the victim, the gender of the abuser, and

type of abuse and the interaction effect between gender of the victim, the abuser, and the type of abuse on participants likelihood to respond to each of the seven dependent variables: (1) Leave the couple alone and go about your business, (2) Call the police, (3) Verbally intervene (say something), (4) Physically intervene, (5) Video the altercation, (6) Just watch, because it is interesting, (7) Just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness.

It was predicted that the results would show a significant main effect of participants having higher likelihood of intervening when the victim is female, rather than male or unidentified, and the abuser is male, rather than female or unidentified, and when the violence is physical, rather than verbal. A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the gender of abusers, gender of victims, and type of abuse, on self-reported likelihood of intervening based on different scenarios to witnessing domestic violence.

### **Hypothesis 1**

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to leave the couple alone and go about your business. Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesignated), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 0.17, p < .84$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.46, SD=1.24$ ), females ( $M=3.40, SD=1.20$ ), and undesignated gender ( $M=3.39, SD=1.23$ ). The main effect for gender of abuser yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 295) = 2.61, p < .075$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.57, SD=1.19$ ), females ( $M=3.29, SD=1.24$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.39, SD=1.28$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 496) = 0.27, p < .61$ , indicating no significant difference between physical ( $M=3.40,$

$SD=1.23$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.45$ ,  $SD=1.23$ ). An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 4.18$ ,  $p < 0.04$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to leave the couple alone and go about their business. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.60$ ,  $p < 0.44$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 1.49$ ,  $p < 0.44$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was not found to be significant. The interaction between all three variables was not significant,  $F(2, 492)=1.05$ ,  $p < .35$  (see Table 1).

**Table 1***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Leave the Couple Alone and Go About Your Business*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	0.40	1	0.40	0.27	0.61	0.001
Gender of Abuser	7.84	2	3.92	2.61	.075	5.22
Gender of Victim	0.52	2	0.26	0.17	0.84	0.001
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	36.26	1	6.26	4.18	0.04	0.008
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	0.91	1	0.91	0.60	0.44	0.001
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	2.91	1	2.91	1.94	0.16	0.004
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	1.60	1	1.60	1.07	0.30	0.002

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to call the police. Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesignated), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 2.07, p < .13$ , indicated no significant difference between males ( $M=4.00, SD=0.97$ ), females ( $M=3.96, SD=0.95$ ), and undesignated ( $M=4.19, SD=0.74$ ). The main effect for gender of abuser

yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 2.03, p < .13$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.97, SD=0.97$ ), females ( $M=3.99, SD=0.95$ ), and undesignated ( $M=4.19, SD=0.74$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1,492) = 3.09, p < .08$ , indicating no significant difference between physical ( $M=4.10, SD=0.88$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.95, SD=0.96$ ). An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.50, p < 0.48$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to call the police. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.32, p < 0.57$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.48, p < 0.49$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was found to be significant, indicating that the gender of the abuser and type of violence has a significant effect on likelihood of participants calling the police. The interaction between all three variables effect was not significant,  $F(2, 492) = 0.36, p < .70$  (see Table 2).

**Table 2***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Call the Police*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	<i>Df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	2.61	1	2.61	3.09	0.08	0.006
Gender of Abuser	3.44	2	1.72	2.03	0.13	0.008
Gender of Victim	3.50	2	1.75	2.07	0.13	0.008
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	0.42	1	0.40	0.50	0.48	0.001
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	0.27	1	0.27	0.32	0.57	0.001
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	0.41	1	0.41	0.48	0.49	0.001
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	0.54	1	0.54	0.64	0.43	0.001

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to verbally intervene (say something). Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesignated), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 1.19, p < 0.34$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M = 3.75, SD = 1.04$ ), females ( $M = 3.65, SD = 0.93$ ), and undesignated ( $M = 3.82, SD = 0.94$ ). The main effect for gender

of abuser yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 0.98, p < .38$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.74, SD=0.97$ ), females ( $M=3.66, SD=1.01$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.82, SD=0.94$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 496) = 2.94, p < .09$ , indicating no significant difference between physical ( $M=3.80, SD=0.93$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.65, SD=1.03$ ). An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.26, p < 0.61$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to verbally intervene. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.02, p < 0.88$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.13, p < 0.72$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was found to not be significant. The interaction between all three variables was found to not be significant,  $F(2, 492) = 0.31, p < .73$  (see Table 3).



**Table 3***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Verbally Intervene (Say Something)*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	2.82	1	2.82	2.94	0.09	0.006
Gender of Abuser	1.88	2	0.94	0.98	0.38	0.004
Gender of Victim	2.29	2	1.15	1.19	0.30	0.005
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	0.25	1	0.25	0.26	0.61	0.001
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	0.02	1	0.02	0.02	0.88	0.000
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	0.13	1	0.13	0.13	0.72	0.000
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	1.56	1	1.56	1.62	0.20	0.003

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to physically intervene. Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesigned), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495)=0.95, p<.39$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.74, SD=1.19$ ), females ( $M=3.57, SD=1.19$ ), and undesigned ( $M=3.64, SD=1.28$ ). The main effect for gender of abuser

yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 0.36, p < .70$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.71, SD=1.18$ ), females ( $M=3.60, SD=1.21$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.64, SD=1.28$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 496) = 3.91, p < .05$ , indicating a significant difference between physical ( $M=3.76, SD=1.20$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.54, SD=1.22$ ) abuse. An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 492) = 0.10, p < 0.75$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to physically intervene. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 492) = 0.02, p < 0.88$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 492) = 0.33, p < 0.56$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was found to not be significant. The interaction effect between all three variables was found to be not significant,  $F(2, 492) = 1.02, p < .36$  (see Table 4).

**Table 4***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Physically Intervene*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	5.71	1	5.71	3.91	0.05	0.008
Gender of Abuser	1.07	1	0.54	0.36	0.70	0.001
Gender of Victim	2.79	2	1.39	0.95	0.39	0.004
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	0.15	1	0.15	0.10	0.75	0.000
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	0.88	0.000
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	0.49	1	0.49	0.33	0.56	0.001
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	0.63	1	0.63	0.43	0.51	0.001

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to video the altercation. Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesigned), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = .34, p < .71$ , indicated no significant difference between males ( $M = 3.66, SD = 1.14$ ), females ( $M = 3.63, SD = 1.06$ ), and undesigned ( $M = 3.74, SD = 1.03$ ). The main effect for gender of abuser

yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = .49, p < .61$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.68, SD=1.13$ ), females ( $M=3.61, SD=1.07$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.74, SD=1.03$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 496) = .023, p < .88$ , indicating no significant difference between physical ( $M=3.65, SD=1.11$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.67, SD=1.07$ ). The interaction effect was not significant,  $F(2, 492) = .622, p < .54$  (see Table 5). An interaction between type of abuse and the gender of abuser was not found. Partial Eta squared is .01 for type of abuse and .001 for gender of abuser, relative impact of type of abuse is stronger than the impact of the gender of abuser. This indicates that there is a significant main effect for type of violence, but that there is no specific main effect for gender of abuser. An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 1.59, p < 0.21$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to video the altercation. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.36, p < 0.55$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.29, p < 0.59$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was found to not be significant. The interaction effect between all three variables was found to be not significant,  $F(2, 492) = 0.40, p < .53$  (see Table 5).

**Table 5***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Video the Altercation*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	0.03	1	0.03	0.02	0.88	0.000
Gender of Abuser	1.17	2	0.59	0.49	0.61	0.002
Gender of Victim	0.81	2	0.41	0.34	0.71	0.001
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	1.90	1	1.90	1.59	0.21	0.003
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	0.43	1	0.43	0.36	0.55	0.001
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	0.34	1	0.34	0.29	0.59	0.001
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	0.47	1	0.47	0.40	0.53	0.001

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to just watch, because it is interesting. Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesignated), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = 1.67, p < .19$ , indicated no significant difference between males ( $M=3.46, SD=1.42$ ), females ( $M=3.23, SD=1.35$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.22, SD=1.49$ ). The main effect for gender

of abuser yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 495) = .51, p < .60$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.39, SD=1.36$ ), females ( $M=3.30, SD=1.43$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.22, SD=1.49$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 496) = 2.01, p < .16$ , indicating no significant difference between physical ( $M=3.41, SD=1.40$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.23, SD=1.42$ ). An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.28, p < 0.60$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to watch because it is interesting. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 1.51, p < 0.22$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 3.94, p < 0.05$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was found to not be significant. The interaction between all three variables was not significant,  $F(2, 492) = 2.13, p < .12$  (see Table 6).

**Table 6***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Just Watch, Because it is Interesting*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	4.00	1	1.00	2.01	0.16	0.004
Gender of Abuser	2.02	2	1.01	0.51	0.60	0.002
Gender of Victim	6.65	2	3.33	1.67	0.19	0.007
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	0.56	1	0.56	0.28	0.60	0.001
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	2.99	1	2.99	1.51	0.22	0.003
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	7.83	1	7.83	3.94	0.90	0.008
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	0.08	1	0.08	0.04	0.84	0.000

A three-way analysis of variance was conducted on the influence of three independent variables (gender of victim, gender of abuser, and type of abuse) on participants' likelihood to just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness. Both gender of the victim and abuser included three levels (male, female, undesignated), and type of abuse consisted of two levels (physical, verbal). There were no significant main effects. The main effect for gender of victim yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 498) = 0.35, p < .56$ , indicated no significant difference between males ( $M=3.55, SD=1.13$ ), females ( $M=3.62, SD=1.16$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.73, SD=1.04$ ). The main effect

for gender of abuser yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(2, 498) = 2.73, p < .10$ , indicating no significant difference between males ( $M=3.49, SD=1.121$ ), females ( $M=3.68, SD=1.07$ ), and undesignated ( $M=3.73, SD=1.04$ ). The main effect for type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $F(1, 498) = 0.62, p < .42$ , indicating no significant difference between physical ( $M=3.63, SD=1.11$ ) and verbal ( $M=3.59, SD=1.14$ ). An interaction between gender of victim and gender of abuser was examined. The main effect for this interaction yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.44, p < 0.51$ . The interaction of both gender of the victim and abuser did not have a significant effect on participants' likelihood to watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness. An interaction between gender of the victim and the type of abuse was examined. The interaction between these two variables yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.02, p < 0.90$ . Gender of the victim and type of abuser did not have a significant interaction. An interaction between gender of the abuser and the type of abuse yielded an  $F$  ratio of  $(1, 492) = 0.02, p < 0.90$ . The interaction between abuser and type of abuse was found to not be significant. The interaction between all three variables was not significant,  $F(2, 498) = .166, p < .20$  (see Table 7).



**Table 7***3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA on Participants' Likelihood to Just Watch, So The Abuser Knows There is a Witness*

Predictor	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	Partial $\eta^2$
Physical Verbal	0.79	1	0.79	0.62	0.42	0.001
Gender of Abuser	3.45	1	3.45	2.73	0.10	0.006
Gender of Victim	0.44	1	0.44	0.35	0.56	0.001
Gender of Victim X Gender of Abuser	0.55	1	0.55	0.44	0.51	0.001
Gender of Victim X Physical Verbal	0.02	1	0.02	0.02	0.90	0.000
Gender of Abuser X Physical Verbal	0.02	1	0.02	0.02	0.90	0.000
Physical Verbal X Gender of Abuser X Gender of Victim	2.10	1	2.10	1.66	0.20	0.003

***Hypothesis 2a: Male Victims***

A bivariate correlation was performed to test the hypothesis that there would be a significant correlation between participants' levels of general concern ratings for victims of violence and likelihood of intervening for male victims in the vignettes. The Pearson's  $r$  correlations revealed that there were significant relationships between level of concern for the victim and participants' rated likelihood of intervention on seven scales dependent upon the gender of the described victim and abuser (see Table 8).

**Table 8**

*Correlation of Victims' Gender in Relation to Victim Concern Scale Scores and Likelihood of Intervention*

	Male (N=153)	Female (N=201)	Total (N=498)
	R	R	R
Leave the couple alone and go about your business	-.37***	-.19**	-.21***
Call the police	-.15	.05	.16***
Verbally intervene (say something)	-.06	-.01	-.11*
Physically intervene	-.36***	-.17*	-.20*
Video the altercation	-.09	-.07	-.04
Just watch because it is interesting	-.42***	-.22**	-.27***
Just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness	.16*	.04	.07

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

Results indicated that there is a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of leaving the couple alone and going about your business,  $r(151) = -.37, p < .001$ . This finding supported the hypothesis that participants who had a lower level of concern and would be more likely to leave them alone and walk away, and those with a higher level of concern would be less likely to leave them alone and walk away (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of calling the police on the fighting couple,  $r(151) = -.15, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that participants who had a higher

level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of calling the police for the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of verbally intervening on the fighting couple,  $r(151) = -.06, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that participants who had a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of verbally intervening for the couple (see Table 8).

Results for physically intervening with the fighting couple indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of intervening,  $r(151) = -.36, p < .001$ . This finding did not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would show an increased likelihood of intervening physically in this abusive situation (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of videoing the altercation,  $r(151) = -.09, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that a higher levels of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of intervening for the couple (see Table 8).

Results for watching the fighting couple, just because it is interesting, indicated a negative correlation between that and general concern for victims,  $r(151) = -.42, p < .001$ . This finding supported the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would be less likely to watch the fighting couple, simply because it is interesting, and that participants with lower concern were more likely to watch (see Table 8).

The Pearson's  $r$  correlational results also indicate that there is a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of watching the fighting

couple so that they know there is a witness,  $r(151) = .16, p < .05$ . This finding does support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would show increased likelihood of monitoring the couple (see Table 8).

### ***Hypothesis 2A: Female Victims***

A bivariate correlation was performed to test the hypothesis that there would be a significant correlation between participants' levels of concern ratings for victims of violence and likelihood of intervening for female victims. Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of leaving the couple alone and going about your business,  $r(199) = -.19, p < .01$ . This finding supports the hypothesis that participants who had a lower level of concern would be more likely and those with a higher level of concern would be less likely, to leave them alone and walk away (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of calling the police on the fighting couple,  $r(199) = -.05, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that participants who had a higher level of concern will be correlated with increased likelihood of calling the police for the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of verbally intervening on the fighting couple,  $r(199) = -.01, p > .05$ . This finding would be correlated with increased likelihood of verbally intervening for the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there is a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of physically intervening on the fighting couple,  $r(199) = -.17, p$

< .05. This finding did not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of intervening on the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of videoing the altercation,  $r(199) = -.07, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that participants who had a higher level of concern will be correlated with increased likelihood of intervening on the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of watching the fighting couple because it is interesting,  $r(199) = -.22, p < .01$ . This finding did support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of intervening with the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of watching the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness,  $r(199) = .04, p > .05$ . This finding does not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern showed decrease likelihood of intervening with the couple (see Table 8).

### ***Hypothesis 2A: Male and Female Victims***

A bivariate correlation was performed to test the hypothesis that there would be a significant relationship between participants' levels of concern ratings for victims of violence and likelihood of intervening. Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of leaving the couple alone and going about your business,  $r(497) = -.21, p < .001$ . This finding supports the hypothesis that participants who had a lower level of concern would be more likely and those with a higher level of concern would be less likely to leave the couple alone and walk away (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a positive correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of calling the police with the fighting couple,  $r(497) = .16, p < .001$ . This finding did support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern were correlated with increased likelihood of calling the police with the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a positive correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of verbally intervening with the fighting couple,  $r(497) = -.11, p < .05$ . This finding did support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern showed increased likelihood of intervening with the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of physically intervening the fighting couple,  $r(497) = -.20, p < .05$ . This finding does not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern showed decreased likelihood of physically intervening on the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of videoing the altercation,  $r(497) = -.04, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that participants who had a higher level of concern will be correlated with increased likelihood of intervening on the couple (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of just watching the fighting couple because it is interesting,  $r(497) = -.27, p < .001$ . This finding supported the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern showed decreased likelihood of watching the fighting couple, because it is interesting (see Table 8).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of watching the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness,

$r(497) = .07, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern were less likely to watch the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness (see Table 8).

***Hypothesis 2b: Male Participants***

Next, a bivariate correlation was performed to test the hypothesis that there would be a significant relationship between male participants' levels of concern ratings for victims of violence and likelihood of intervening dependent upon the gender of the participants. Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of leaving the couple alone and going about your business,  $r(343) = -.12, p < .05$ . This finding also supported the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern will be less likely to leave the fighting couple alone and walk away (See Table 9).

**Table 9**

*Correlation of Participants' Gender in Relation to Victim Concern Scale Scores and Likelihood of Intervention*

	Male (N=344)	Female (N=153)	Total (N=498)
	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i>
Leave the couple alone and go about your business	-.17*	-.37***	-.21***
Call the police	.15**	.16	.16***
Verbally intervene (say something)	.16*	.06	.11*
Physically intervene	-.09	-.36***	-.20***
Video the altercation	-.01	-.09	-.04
Just watch because it is interesting	-.17**	-.42***	-.27***
Just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness	.09	.07	.07

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

Results indicated that there was a positive correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of calling the police on the fighting couple,  $r(343) = .15, p < .01$ . This finding did support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern showed increased likelihood of calling the police on the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was a positive correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of verbally intervening with the fighting couple,  $r(343) = .16, p < .01$ . This finding did support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern were correlated with increased likelihood of intervening with the couple (see Table 9).



Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of physically intervening on the fighting couple,  $r(343) = -.09$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of physically intervening for the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of videoing the altercation of the fighting couple,  $r(343) = -.01, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that participants who had a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of participants' videoing the altercation of the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of just watching the fighting couple because it is interesting,  $r(343) = -.17, p < .01$ . This finding did support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would show decreased likelihood of watching the couple, because it is interesting (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between male participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of watching the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness,  $r(343) = .09, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern were less likely to watch the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness (see Table 9).

### ***Hypothesis 2A: Female Participants***

Next, a bivariate correlation was performed to test the hypothesis that there would be a significant relationship between female participants' levels of concern ratings for victims of

violence and likelihood of intervening dependent upon the gender of the participants. Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between female participant concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of leaving the couple alone and going about your business,  $r(152) = -.37$ ,  $p < .001$ . This finding supported the hypothesis that a lower level of concern would be more likely and those with a higher level of concern would be less likely to leave them alone and walk away (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between female participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of calling the police for the fighting couple,  $r(152) = .16$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of calling the police about the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between female participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of verbally intervening for the fighting couple,  $r(152) = .06$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis such that a higher level of concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of physically intervening for the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between female participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of physically intervening with the fighting couple,  $r(152) = -.36$ ,  $p < .001$ . This finding did not support the hypothesis that a higher level of concern would be correlated with an increased likelihood of intervening on the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was not a significant correlation between female participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of videoing the altercation of the fighting couple,  $r(152) = -.09$ ,  $p > .05$ . This finding did not support the tested hypothesis that a higher level of

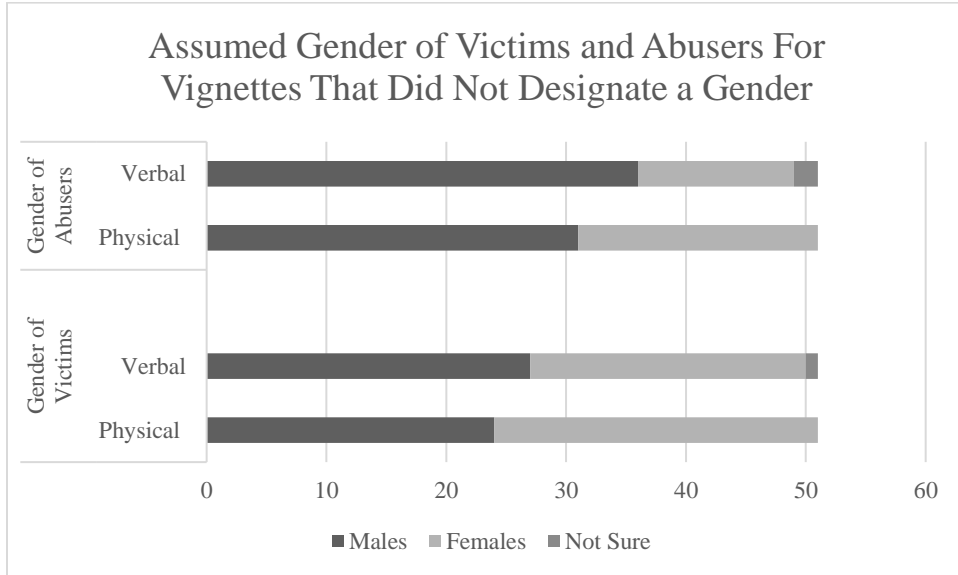
concern would be correlated with increased likelihood of videoing the altercation between the couple (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between female participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of just watching the fighting couple because it is interesting,  $r(152) = -.42, p < .001$ . This finding does support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern showed decreased likelihood of watching the couple, because it is interesting (see Table 9).

Results indicated that there was a negative correlation between female participants' concern for the victim and the rated likelihood of watching the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness,  $r(152) = .07, p > .05$ . This finding did not support the hypothesis that participants who had a higher level of concern would be more likely to watch the fighting couple, so they know there is a witness (see Table 9).

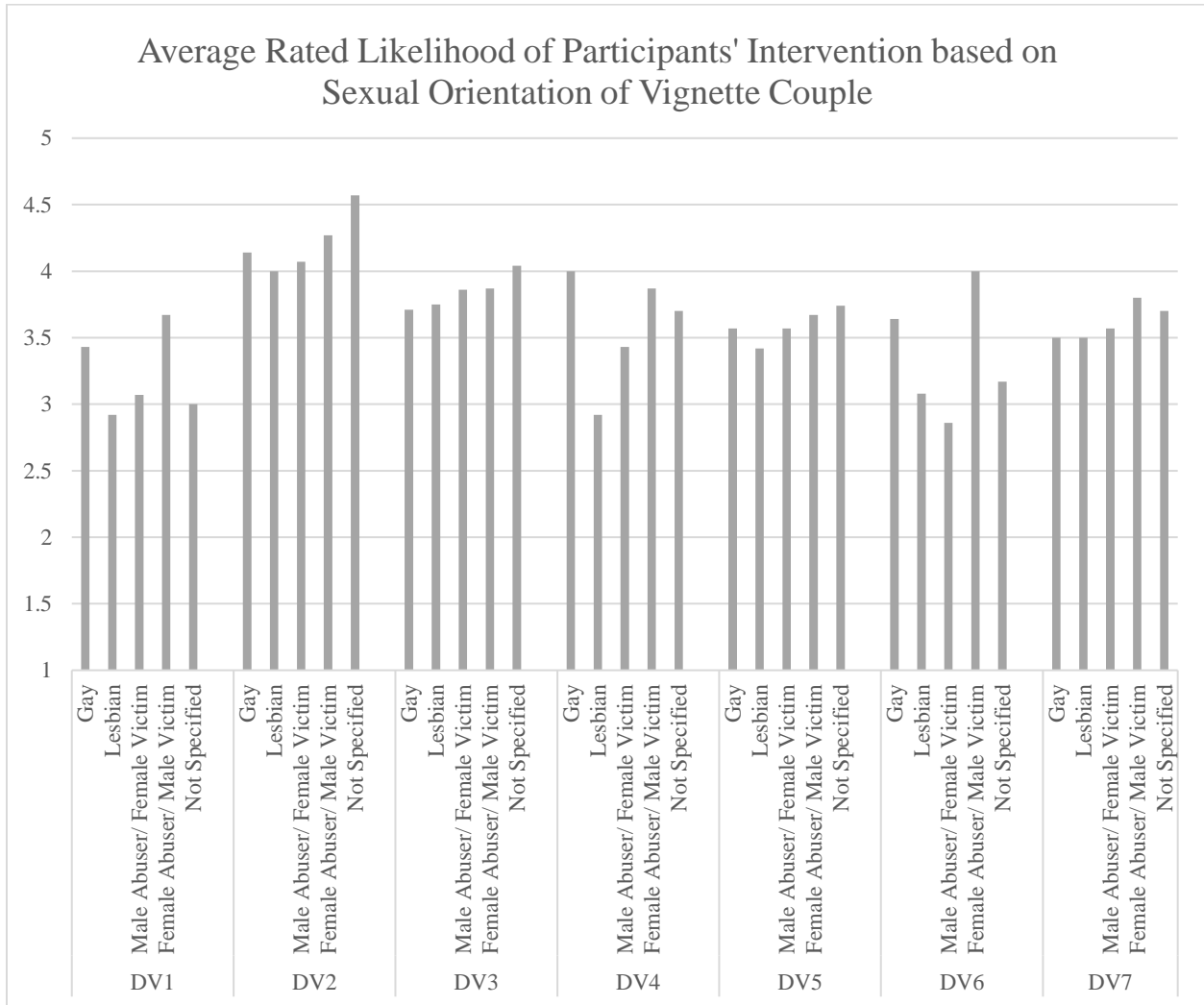
Lastly, we examined if stereotypes played a large role in participants' assumptions of the gender of victims and abusers. It was analyzed to see if those who had received the vignettes in which the gender of abuser and victim were undesignated, had assumed the gender of abuser and victim were. Participants assumed the gender of the victims for physical violence to be nearly equal with 24 males and 27 females. For gender of abusers for physical abuse was assumed 31 males and 20 females. For assumptions of the gender of victims for verbal abuse was also nearly equal with 27 males, 23 females, and one not sure response. Lastly for the assumptions of the gender of abuser for verbal abuser there was a significant difference between males (36) and females (13), in addition to two responses that were not sure (see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**



The figure below examines how on average the participants rated the likelihood of intervening in differing ways dependent upon the sexual orientation of the couple portrayed in the vignettes. Among all of the different orientations listed in the vignettes, the highest likelihood of intervention was calling the police, specifically for the vignettes that did not designate gender of the victim or abuser, the average total for this was 4.57. Surprisingly one of the highest rated likelihood for participants was to watch female abuser and male victim scenarios just because it's interesting, the average rated likelihood for this was 4.00. In contrast to this, participants were least likely to watch the fighting couple when because it is interesting when the abuser is male and victim is female, the average for this was 2.86. The next lowest rate of likelihood of intervention was for physically intervening with lesbian couples, the average for this was 2.92. When comparing the data calling the police was the most likely form of intervention amongst all different orientations of couples described in the vignettes (see Figure 2 and Table 10).

**Figure 2**

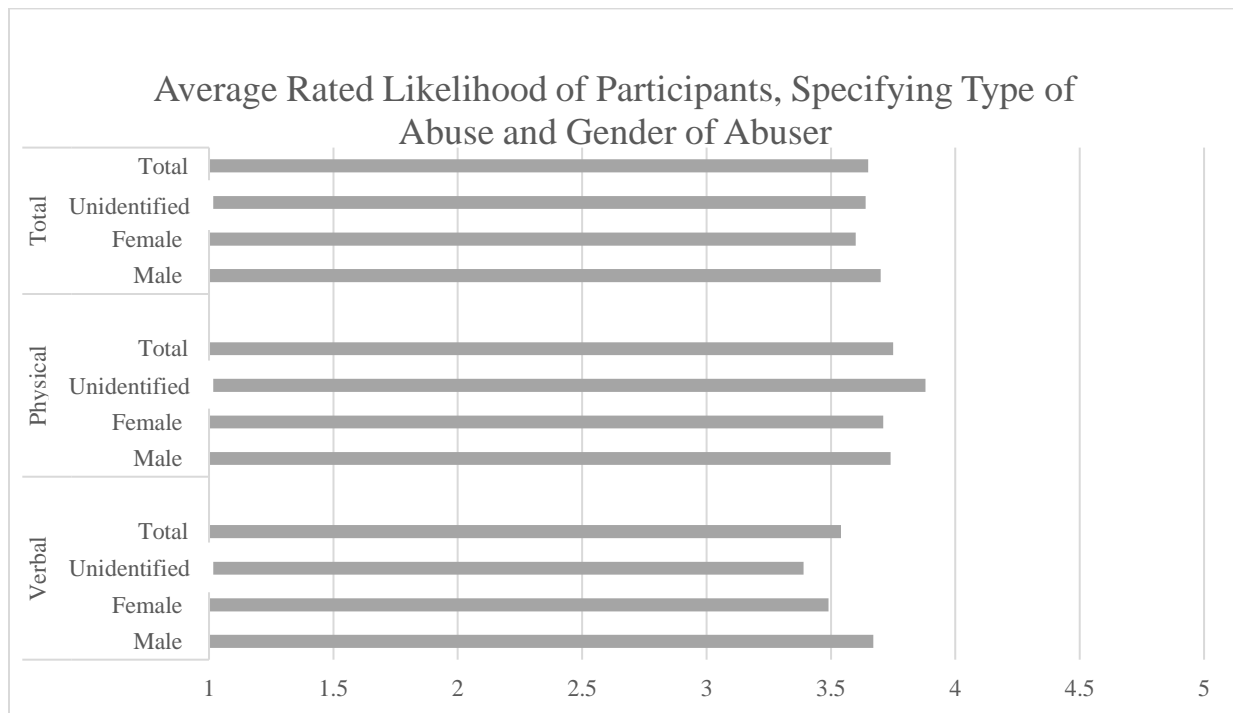


*(DV1) Leave the couple alone and go about your business, (DV2) Call the police, (DV3) Verbally intervene (say something), (DV4) Physically intervene, (DV5) Video the altercation, (DV6) Just watch, because it is interesting, (DV7) Just watch, so the abuser knows there is a witness.*

**Table 10**

*Means and standard deviations for a 3(female victim, male victim, undesignated victim) X 3(female abuser, male abuser, undesignated abuser) X2(physical abuse, verbal abuser) design*

	DV1		DV2		DV3		DV4		DV5		DV6		DV7	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Female Victim	3.40	1.20	3.96	0.95	3.65	0.93	3.57	1.19	3.63	1.06	3.23	1.35	3.62	1.16
Male Victim	3.46	1.24	4.00	0.97	3.75	1.04	3.74	1.19	3.66	1.14	3.46	1.42	3.55	1.13
Undesignated Victim	3.39	1.23	4.19	0.74	3.82	0.94	3.64	1.28	3.74	1.03	3.22	1.49	3.73	1.04
Female Abuser	3.29	1.24	3.99	0.95	3.66	1.01	3.60	1.21	3.61	1.07	3.30	1.43	3.68	1.07
Male Abuser	3.57	1.19	3.97	0.97	3.74	0.97	3.71	1.18	3.68	1.13	3.39	1.36	3.49	1.21
Undesignated Abuser	3.39	1.28	4.19	0.74	3.82	0.94	3.64	1.28	3.74	1.03	3.22	1.49	3.73	1.04
Physical	3.40	1.23	4.10	0.88	3.80	0.93	3.76	1.20	3.65	1.11	3.41	1.40	3.63	1.11
Verbal	3.45	1.23	3.95	0.96	3.65	1.03	3.54	1.22	3.67	1.07	3.23	1.42	3.59	1.14

**Figure 3**

The critical point to gather from Figure 2 is the differences in the rated likelihood of intervention between physical and verbal abuse. Participants were far more likely to intervene when the abuse was physical as opposed to verbal. This is also seen in the interaction that was found in the ANOVA described previously. Overall, the likelihood of intervening was around 3.56 indicating that participants were somewhat likely to intervene for all couples described (see Figure 2). The graph also shows how there were higher rated likelihood of overall intervention when the abuser is male when compared to their female counterpart.

### **Discussion**

Originally it was anticipated that the gender of the victim, abuser, and the type of violence would have a strong main effect on the public's perceptions and general reactions to witnessing domestic violence. What was found in the results is far more complicated and did not yield an easy answer to whether our variables have any form of relationship with one another or not. While it was not easy to demonstrate this relationship in the experimental study, there is little doubt that they are very intertwined with one another. Other researchers (Eagly et al., 2019) have demonstrated that stereotypes amongst gender have a strong hold on the public's perception. One example of this can be seen in Figure 1; participants were more likely to leave a domestic violence situation when the abuser is female, and the victim is male. This finding demonstrates that people believe women are not able to inflict as much harm as a man can, thus they are more likely to leave the fighting couple alone and go about their business.

The majority of participants were likely to call the police as their main form of intervention. Calling the police is likely one of the safest forms of intervention. It is important to consider that physically intervening can possibly intensify or worsen the situation. In addition to

that, those who intervene could be putting themselves in direct harm if they were to get physically involved. When looking at the data, it was concerning to find that a majority of participants still were not likely to intervene in any form. It appears as though participants are relatively neutral in these situations; they are neither likely to intervene, but they are also not likely to leave the fighting couple alone. This neutrality might indicate the complexity of this issue and that it may be difficult to imagine how you are to likely respond to witnessing domestic violence in real life. In addition to this, it was interesting to find that men were more likely to call the police than women were. At this time, there are no certain answers as to why this might be; it is possible that men feel more social pressure to protect, especially when the victim is female. Based on previous research of stereotypes, it is also possible that this could be part of the reason why men are more likely intervene in this way when compared to their female counterparts. Future researchers should look into this further to see to what extent stereotypes might play in this finding.

From the findings of the Pearson's *r* Correlation, we were able to confirm our hypothesis that an increase of Victim Concern Scales scores will be correlated with likelihood of intervening with the fighting couple. As stated previously, the Victim Concern Scale score is correlated with empathy thus indicating that those who were able to empathize with victims are more likely to intervene on behalf of the victim. There was one contrary finding, showing that women were less likely to say they would physically intervene, despite having high victim concern scale scores. A possible explanation for this is to consider the intervenor's safety and the stereotypes previously mentioned. It is thought that females cannot fight physically as well as males. If observers of domestic violence believe this it may lead them to be less likely to intervene, especially physically. Participants with high Victim Concern Scale scores were found to be negatively



correlated with rated likelihood of leaving the fighting couple alone for both male and female victims. This finding is consistent to with anticipated results since it can be assumed that those who have high levels of empathy are less likely to leave a fighting couple alone and walk away. Similarly, the correlation results also yielded that having high Victim Concern Scale scores were negatively correlated with watching the fighting couple because it is interesting.

The research was consistent with the findings of Hammock et al. (2017), in that participants are more likely to respond or intervene when the abuse is physical rather than when the abuse is verbal. Their research found that people rate the seriousness of physical violence higher than they do for verbal assault. Although it is good that the public finds physical abuse concerning and are willing to intervene, discovering that there is less intervention for verbal abuse is troubling. The National Domestic Violence Hotline (2018) states that often verbal abuse can escalate into physical abuse. Not only is verbal abuse still damaging to a person and their emotional well-being, but it also risks the chance of worsening and causing bodily harm to the victims. A lack of intervention on the public's part could result in victims not only suffering verbal assault but also physical assault.

It was originally anticipated that results would show a significant difference in participant response rate to domestic violence when the couple is a part of the LGBTQ+ community compared to a heterosexual relationships. Specifically, we expected that participants would be more likely to intervene with heterosexual relationships rather than LGBTQ+ relationships. Our results indicated that there was not a significant difference between the two groups, which appears to be good news. What these results may indicate is that the biases still found in society today are diminishing, or they could also indicate that despite biases, when people witness domestic violence they are still willing to intervene and help the victims no matter their sexual

orientation. Our results were consistent with the results of Seelau and Seelau (2005), in that they too did not find a difference between participants' responses to heterosexual and LGBTQ+ relationships. While there was not a significant difference between heterosexual and LGBTQ+ relationships, if you examine Figure 1, you can see that participants had the lowest likelihood of physical intervention for lesbian couples. This is concerning especially when considering that 50% of lesbians are likely to experience violence in their lifetime. This is a population that needs increased support from its community desperately to prevent future harm from befalling them.

A possible limitation of this study to consider is that the domestic violence scenario is hypothetical and does not contain the real world pressures of witnessing domestic violence and all of the emotions that could occur, as well as self-protection. Because of this, the participants' response to the abuse may not be an accurate reflection of what a real life response to this scenario would be. Based on this idea, it is also entirely possible that participants will be aware of their own implicit bias and not answer as honestly as they would if faced with a domestic violence scenario in real life. Another possible implication of this study is participants' aspirations or the desire to do good and respond heroically. A majority of the participants likely have not been in a situation of witnessing domestic violence, so they might be more aspirational in their answers and the desire to do good could influence their responses. In summary, the main limitation of this study is its inability to mimic real world stress and how this could affect participants and rating their responses as an accurate reflection of what they would actually do in the real world.

One surprising finding was from participants who were asked to answer who they believed the gender of the victim and abuser were of the undesignated vignettes. The results showed that the victim was assumed equally male and female. It was originally expected that a

majority of participants would assume the victim to be female. When assuming the gender of the abuser the results of participants' responses were far more skewed. A majority of participants assumed the abuser was a male, especially when the abuse was verbal. While these results are not uncharacteristically out of the ordinary, these findings are still an anomaly especially considering that the victims were assumed equally when we anticipated that more people would assume the victim is female. A possible explanation of this could be due to the fact that 344 out of 498 participants in this study were male. Participants might be more likely to empathize and assume the same gender of the victim as their own gender. This is a finding that future researchers should look into and see if their results differ in comparison to the findings in this study.

Lastly it is important to consider participants' own experiences with domestic violence. Approximately 54% of our participants knew someone who had been a victim to domestic violence or they themselves were a victim. One of the largest things to take away from this statistic is how impactful domestic violence is to our society. It is unsettling to know that 54% of participants knew someone or had possibly been a victim themselves. This statistic is very concerning and emphasizes the great need to continue education, advocacy, and improve upon the resources for victims. One out of three women. One out of six men. These victims need help and understanding the public's responses to domestic violence will help to fuel the change of domestic violence.

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## Appendix A

### Hypothesis and Corresponding Analysis

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
<i>Hypothesis 1a:</i> There will be a significant increase of participant interaction or intervention when the victim is female, and abuser is male.	<u>3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA</u> Gender of abuser X gender of the victim X rates of intervention
<i>Hypothesis 1b:</i> There will significantly be less participant interaction or intervention when the abuse is verbal, rather than physical.	<u>3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA</u> Participant interaction X physical abuse X verbal abuse
<i>Hypothesis 1c:</i> Male abuser/female victim will produce higher levels of participant intervention than the male abuser/male victim, female abuser/male victim, and female abuser/female victim relationships.	<u>3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA</u> Male abuser X female victim X rates of intervention  Female abuse X Male Victim X Rates of intervention
<i>Hypothesis 1d:</i> LGBTQ+ relationships will have a significantly lower participant intervention compared to heterosexual relationships	<u>3x3x2 Factorial ANOVA</u> Same sex abuser X same sex victim X rates of intervention  Opposite sex abuser X opposite sex victim X rates of intervention
<i>Hypothesis 2a:</i> There will be a significant correlation between participants' levels of concern ratings for domestic violence victims and likelihood of intervening.	<u>Pearson's R Correlation</u> Victim Concern Scale Ratings, Intervention ratings
<i>Hypothesis 2b:</i> There will be a significant correlation between participants' levels of concern for the different gender of victims and likelihood of intervening.	<u>Pearson's R Correlation</u> Victims Concern Scale Ratings, Intervention for female victims, Intervention for male victims

## Appendix B

### Victim Concern Scale

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Victim Concern Scale (22 items)

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Using the scale below, indicate to what extent you think people should be concerned about the following victims.

1	2	3	4	5
Not Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Concerned	Very Concerned	Extremely Concerned

**For example:** If you thought that people should be "somewhat concerned" about victims of home vandalism, you would put a "2" in the blank column next to the statement.

A. Victims of home vandalism	2
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Please consider each type of victim separately and give your rating (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) for each.

1. Victims of kidnapping	
2. Victims of violent assault	
3. Caucasian victims	
4. Drug dealers who are victims	
5. Victims of home break-ins and theft	
6. Drug users or addicts who are victims	
7. Victims of domestic assault	
8. Female victims	
9. Victims who are grandparents	
10. Heterosexual victims	
11. Victims of car break-ins	
12. Victims who are gang-members	
13. Victims of child molestation	
14. Victims of car theft	
15. Male victims	
16. Victims with a criminal history	
17. African American victims	
18. Victims of rape	
19. Physically handicapped victims	
20. Lesbian (female) victims	
21. Victims of theft of purse or billfold	
22. Victims of hate crimes	

Factor 1: General Concern. Items 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 17, 19, & 20

Factor 2: Vulnerable or Violent Crime Victims. Items 1, 2, 7, 13, 18, & 22

Factor 3: Property Theft Victims. Items 5, 11, 14, & 21

Factor 4: "Culpable" Victims. Items 4, 6, 12, & 16.

## Appendix C

### Demographic Information (including Biological Sex)

- 1) What is your biological sex?
  - (1) Female
  - (2) Male
  - (3) Intersex
  - (4) Other: Please specify \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 2) What is your age: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3) What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If you're currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received.)
  - (1) Less than a high school diploma
  - (2) High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)
  - (3) Some college, no degree
  - (4) Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)
  - (5) Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)
  - (6) Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)
  - (7) Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM)
  - (8) Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)
  
- 4) What is your current employment status?
  - (1) Employed full time (40 or more hours per week)
  - (2) Employed part time (up to 39 hours per week)
  - (3) Unemployed and currently looking for work
  - (4) Unemployed and not currently looking for work
  - (5) Student
  - (6) Retired
  - (7) Homemaker
  - (8) Self-employed
  - (9) Unable to work
  
- 5) What is your ethnicity?
  - (1) White/Caucasian
  - (2) Hispanic or Latino/a
  - (3) Black or African American
  - (4) Native American or American Indian
  - (5) Alaska Native
  - (6) Asian
  - (7) Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - (8) Other
  - (9) Two or more races

If other is selected please specify your ethnicity here: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Vignettes (ten total)

Abuser: Male

Victim: Female

Type of abuse: Physical

You are walking alone outside when you notice a man beating a woman. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street and the woman is becoming more distressed. The situation seems to be escalating and you finally make the realization that this woman is in danger. The man continues to hit his girlfriend, and you are the only one around witnessing this violence.

Abuser: Male

Victim: Female

Type of abuse: Verbal

You are walking alone outside when you notice a man yelling at a woman. Then you realize that they are the couple from across the street. You can see that the woman is in danger, as the threats seem to be escalating, and that she is obviously in distress. The man continues to yell terrible things at his girlfriend, and you are the only one around to witness.

Abuser: Female

Victim: Male

Type of abuse: Physical

You are walking alone outside when you notice a woman beating a man. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street and the man is becoming more distressed. The situation seems to be escalating and you finally make the realization that this man is in danger. The woman continues to hit her boyfriend, and you are the only one around witnessing this violence.

Abuser: Female

Victim: Male

Type of abuse: Verbal

You are walking alone outside when you notice a woman yelling at a man. Then you realize that they are the couple from across the street. You can see that the man is in danger, as the threats seem to be escalating, and that he is obviously in distress. The woman continues to yell terrible things at her boyfriend, and you are the only one around to witness.

Abuser: Male

Victim: Male

Type of abuse: Physical

You are walking alone outside when you notice a man beating another man. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street and the man being beaten, is becoming more distressed. The situation seems to be escalating and you finally make the realization that this man is in danger. The other man continues to hit his boyfriend, and you are the only one around witnessing this violence.

Abuser: Male

Victim: Male

Type of abuse: Verbal

You are walking alone outside when you notice a man yelling at another man. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street. You can see that the man being yelled at is in danger, as the threats continue to escalate, and that he is obviously in distress. The other man continues to yell terrible things at his boyfriend, and you are the only one around to witness.

Abuser: Female

Victim: Female

Type of abuse: Physical

You are walking alone outside when you notice a woman beating another woman. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street and the woman being beaten, is becoming more distressed. The situation seems to be escalating and you finally make the realization that this woman is in danger. The other woman continues to hit her girlfriend, and you are the only one around witnessing this violence.

Abuser: Female

Victim: Female

Type of abuse: Verbal

You are walking alone outside when you notice a woman yelling at another woman. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street. You can see that the woman being yelled at is in danger, as the threats continue to escalate, and that she is obviously in distress. The other woman continues to yell terrible things at her girlfriend, and you are the only one around to witness.

Abuser: No Gender

Victim: No Gender

Type of abuse: Physical

You are walking alone outside when you notice two people, one of whom is being beaten by the other. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street and the person being beaten is becoming more distressed. The situation seems to be escalating and you finally make the realization that person being beaten is in danger. The other person continues to hit their partner, and you are the only one around witnessing this violence.

Abuser: No Gender

Victim: No Gender

Type of abuse: Verbal

You are walking alone outside when you notice a person being yelled at. You then realize that they are the couple from across the street. You can see that the person being yelled at is in danger, as the threats continue to escalate, and that they are obviously in distress. The other person continues to yell terrible things at their partner, and you are the only one around to witness.

## Appendix E

### Survey

After witnessing this domestic violence situation, what is the likelihood of you doing each of the following:

How likely are you to leave the couple alone and go about your business?

(1) Unlikely; (2) Somewhat Unlikely; (3) Neither likely or unlikely; (4) Somewhat Likely (5) Very Likely.

Call the Police

(1) Unlikely; (2) Somewhat Unlikely; (3) Neither likely or unlikely; (4) Somewhat Likely (5) Very Likely.

Verbally Intervene

(1) Unlikely; (2) Somewhat Unlikely; (3) Neither likely or unlikely; (4) Somewhat Likely (5) Very Likely.

Physically Intervene

(1) Unlikely; (2) Somewhat Unlikely; (3) Neither likely or unlikely; (4) Somewhat Likely (5) Very Likely.

Video the Altercation

(1) Unlikely; (2) Somewhat Unlikely; (3) Neither likely or unlikely; (4) Somewhat Likely (5) Very Likely.



## **Appendix F**

Questionnaire only for vignettes that do not specify gender of victim or abuser.

Based off of the story that you just read, what gender do you assume the victim is?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female
- (3) Not Sure

Based off of the story that you just read, what gender do you assume the abuser is?

- (1) Male
- (2) Female
- (3) Not Sure

**Appendix G**  
Informed Consent to Participate

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

**TITLE OF STUDY:**

Observer Reaction to Physical and Verbal Abuse in Relation to Gender and Sexual Orientation of Abuser and Victim

**INTRODUCTION**

You are being asked to participate in a research study titled “Observer Reaction to Physical and Verbal Abuse in Relation to Gender and Sexual Orientation of Abuser and Victim”. We will describe this study in detail to answer any potential question you may have. This study is being led by Rachel Stritt and Dr. Carol Patrick who is a faculty member of The Department of Psychology at Fort Hays State University.

The following information provided for you is to decide whether you wish to participate in this study. Your involvement is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate before the study begins, discontinue at any time, or skip any questions/procedures that may make you feel uncomfortable, with no penalty. Withdrawing from this study will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or Fort Hays State University. It should also be noted that monetary compensation will only be given to those who complete the study.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to explore the public’s perception of domestic violence and general responsivity to different types of intervention. Another factor of this study being examined is overall concern for victims of domestic violence.

**PROCEDURES**

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey/questionnaire. This survey/questionnaire will ask demographic information and if you or someone you know has experienced domestic violence. After this you will be given a short vignette describing a domestic violence scenario. You will then be asked to rate your willingness for different types of involvement in relation to the story you just read. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to electronically sign this consent form. The length of time of your participation in this study is 15 minutes. Approximately 500 participants will be in this study.

**RISKS**

We do not anticipate more than minimal risk with this study, and we do not expect you to experience more risk than what you might normally encounter in everyday life. The vignettes are not overly descriptive in nature, but it is possible that it may be triggering for some individuals.

If you feel distressed or uncomfortable by any of the questions you may choose not to answer and/or discontinue your participation. Participating in this study is completely voluntary and deciding to withdraw from the study will not impact your job status. If you feel uncomfortable while completing this study, please contact the researchers listed below.

### **BENEFITS**

Participants may better understand how research is conducted. Participants may also gain insight on their own perspectives and general reactions to domestic violence. Participants may benefit in the form of increased self-awareness about their feelings, experiences, and characteristics. In addition to personal benefits, participating in this study will help further research and understanding of domestic violence. All participants will receive monetary compensation of \$0.50 cents for their participation.

### **PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS**

You will be reimbursed \$0.50 cents for your participation and completion of this study. This compensation is through outside funding, provided by the Graduate Association for Students in Psychology (GASP).

### **PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY**

Maintaining your confidentiality is extremely important to us and we will be taking the following steps to keep information about you confidential. To prevent it from unauthorized disclosure: the principal investigator will be the only individual that has access to the original data in this study. Data will be stored on a storage device (password protected laptop) that only the principal investigator has access to. In addition, the principal investigator will only share such data with her faculty advisor, when necessary. Your name will not be associated in any publication or presentation with the information collected about you or with the research findings from this study.

### **REFUSAL TO SIGN CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION**

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without any penalty. However, if you refuse to sign electronically, you cannot participate in this study.

### **CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION**

You may withdraw your consent to participate in this study at any time. You also have the right to cancel your permission to use and disclose further information collected about you, in writing, at any time, by sending your written request to: Dr. Carol Patrick, Department of Psychology, 600 Park St. Hays, KS 67601.

If you cancel permission to use your information, the researchers will stop collecting additional information about you. However, the research team may use and disclose information that was gathered before they received your cancellation, as described above.

### **QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION**

If you have any questions that should be directed to the researcher(s), at the bottom of this consent form is our contact information.

There will be no follow up with you after this study. If you feel upset after completing the study or find that some questions or aspects of the study triggered distress, talking with a qualified clinician may help. If you feel you would like assistance, please contact **your local mental health agency or the National Helpline at 1-800-662- HELP (4357), or the Crisis Text Line text “HELLO” to 741741.** In the case of an emergency please call 911.

**PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:**

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. If you have questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the researchers, **(Rachel Stritt and Dr. Carol Patrick)**. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my rights as a research participant, I may call (785) 628-3478, Fort Hays State University, 600 Park St., Hays, Kansas 67601, or email irb@fhsu.edu.

By clicking “I agree” below you are indicating that you are at least 18 years old, have read this consent form and agree to participate in this research study. Please print a copy of this page for your records.

**RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Rachel Stritt  
Principal Investigator  
Department of Psychology  
600 Park St.  
Fort Hays State University  
Hays, KS 67601  
(785) 639-3761  
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Carol Patrick, Ph.D.  
Faculty Supervisor  
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Hays, KS 67601  
(785)628-4406  
clpatrick@fhsu.edu

## **Appendix H**

### Debriefing Form

#### **DEBRIEFING**

Thank you for your participation in our study!

Domestic violence is a serious problem all over the world and with your participation we hope to develop a better perspective of domestic violence and how as a community we respond to it. Often many victims in an abusive relationship are unable to reach out for help for fear of consequences. It is our goal of this study to assess the public's willingness to step in and offer assistance to those victims who may not have a voice.

If the questions or vignette included in this study caused you psychological distress it is encouraged that you contact your local mental health agency. In addition to this, if you are in an abusive relationship and need help, please contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline listed below. If you are unsure of the resources available near you, use this search engine (<https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/locator>) to find resources using your zip code.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact the principal investigator, Rachel Stritt ([rmstritt@mail.fhsu.edu](mailto:rmstritt@mail.fhsu.edu)) and Dr. Carol Patrick ([clpatrick@fhsu.edu](mailto:clpatrick@fhsu.edu)). If you have general questions about research, please contact the Office of Scholarship and Sponsored Projects (OSSP) Fort Hays State University, 600 Park St., Hays, Kansas 67601, call (785) 628-4349, or email [irb@fhsu.edu](mailto:irb@fhsu.edu).

#### **Hotlines:**

National Domestic Violence Hotline: (1-800-799-7233)

To chat with a Crisis Counselor at the Crisis Text Line, text: CONNECT to 741741

National Helpline at 1-800-662- HELP (4357)

## Appendix I

### IRB Exempt Letter



**FORT HAYS STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

*Forward thinking. World ready.*

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**OFFICE OF SCHOLARSHIP AND SPONSORED PROJECTS**

DATE: April 20, 2021

TO: Rachel Stritt  
FROM: Fort Hays State University IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1749546-1] Observer Reaction to Physical and Emotional Abuse in Relation to Gender and Sexual Orientation of Abuser and Victim

IRB REFERENCE #: 21-0131  
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS  
DECISION DATE: April 20, 2021

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The Fort Hays State University IRB Administrator has determined that this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

Please note that any changes to this study may result in a change in exempt status. Any changes must be submitted to the IRB for review prior to implementation. In the event of a change, please follow the Instructions for Revisions at <http://www.fhsu.edu/academic/gradschl/irb/>.

The IRB administrator should be notified of adverse events or circumstances that meet the definition of unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects. See <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/AdvEvtGuid.htm>.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Exempt studies are not subject to continuing review.

If you have any questions, please contact Leslie Paige at [IRB@fhsu.edu](mailto:IRB@fhsu.edu). Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

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To the fullest extent permitted by law, both during and after the term of this Agreement, I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless Fort Hays State University and its directors, officers, faculty, employees, affiliates, and agents, past or present, against all losses, claims, demands, actions, causes of action, suits, liabilities, damages, expenses, fees and costs (including but not limited to reasonable attorney's fees) arising out of or relating to any actual or alleged misrepresentation or breach of any warranty contained in this Agreement, or any infringement of the Thesis on any third party's patent, trademark, copyright or trade secret.

I understand that once deposited in the Repository, the Thesis may not be removed.

Thesis: Observer Reaction to Physical and Verbal Abuse

Author: Rachel Stritt in Relation to Gender and Sexual Orientation of Abuser and Victim

Signature: Rachel Stritt

Date: 08/03/2021