



Attitudes Towards Male Victims of Domestic Violence in Same-sex and Opposite-sex Relationships.

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Abstract

Aims: This paper investigated the attitudes to male victims of domestic violence and whether it differed depending on 1) age of respondent and 2) gender of the respondent. This paper also examined whether there is a change in police intervention recommendation and perceived empathy levels toward male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships, in comparison to male victims of domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships. **Method:** A questionnaire was distributed through social media channels ($n = 68$). For part B of the questionnaire the group was divided into two groups, each group viewed a Vignette describing domestic violence with a male victim and either a female or male abuser, police intervention recommendation was measured in this section. The difference in perceived empathy levels for each group was tested, this scale was based on the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1980). **Results:** The data collected indicated no statically significant difference in attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence for male and female respondents. There was a slight variation in attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence depending on the age of the respondent, but not enough to be statistically significant. There was no difference in empathy levels and police intervention recommendation for the group that viewed the same-sex vignette compared to the group that viewed the opposite-sex vignette. **Conclusion:** There was no difference in all the variables examined, however a larger sample size was needed to provide statistically significant data. More research needs to be conducted using a nationally representative sample.

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Introduction

The term domestic violence can be described as the use of physical abuse, mental abuse, isolation from loved ones and controlling behaviour by a person over their partner (McDermott, 2022). During Covid-19 lockdown, the number of people that reached out to domestic violence helplines including Women's Aid, increased by over 25% (Doyle, 2020). New ways to seek help were introduced including the nonverbal hand signal, shown on TikTok (Howard, 2022). When domestic violence was discussed, usually the victim was a woman, and the perpetrator was a man (Ramsey, 2015). With this gap in the research, It is critical to perform additional studies on male victims of domestic violence, In Ireland 1 in 7 males report to have experienced domestic violence in their lives (Men's Aid Ireland, 2022).

The term “battered husband syndrome” was introduced in 1977 by Suzanne Steinmetz. She describes how historically in some countries men that were beaten by their spouse were seen as the butt of the joke and ridiculed by being “paraded ignominiously through the booing populace” (Steinmetz, 1977). Generally, when research in the past studied domestic violence, the perpetrator was a man, and the victim was a woman (Kurz, 1993). This notion of the man always being the abuser and the woman forever the victim has spread throughout society. This is evident when comparing the quantity and quality of assistance offered to male and female domestic violence victims, this may be one of the reasons why male victims of domestic violence find it difficult to report their abuse (Hines & Douglas, 2019). When abuse with a female perpetrator and a male target is discussed, it is usually in the context of self-defense (Saunders, 1986). This can sway the public's opinion so no matter the scenario, the woman is always the victim.

The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual, and Gender-based Violence, in collaboration with Cosc, undertook a study in 2008 to determine how the Irish population felt about male and female victims of domestic abuse. (Horgan et al, 2008). According to the report the public

perceived more females to be victims of domestic abuse than men (83%) and they would help if they saw a person being abused by their partner only if the victim is known to them, otherwise they would not get involved. Other findings from the report showed that people's attitudes toward domestic abuse had not changed since the previous report was completed in 1998 (Horgan et al, 2008). This report looked at the public's attitudes toward male and female victims of domestic violence, however, there seems to be no research that compares two groups of male victims of domestic violence, specifically in terms of the type of relationships there in (same-sex and opposite-sex). That is why the aim of this research dissertation is to examine if there is a change in attitudes and empathy towards male victims of domestic violence, the three hypotheses of this study are:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a difference between men and women's attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence.

Hypothesis 2: Attitudes people have toward male victims of domestic violence will differ depending on the age of the respondent.

Hypothesis 3: There will be a difference in empathy levels towards male victims of domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships compared to male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships.

Perceived Empathy Levels

A major part of this current study was perceived empathy levels, empathy is defined as comprehending how another person is feeling by visualising how you would feel in the same situation (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). According to the “Empathy-Altruism hypothesis”, when an individual witnesses a person in distress, this situation elicits a behaviour to remove the person from the stressor. However, the research demonstrates that the main reason for a person’s altruism is not to help others but how helping others can benefit themselves. By helping someone, the individual feels a “internal” reward, If the risks outweigh the rewards the person will not intervene or help (Schroeder et al., 2015). This can be seen in domestic violence situations, more reasons why people do not intervene is discussed in the next section. This current research paper will focus on perceived empathy levels, this is how empathetic a person feels they are, empathy can be calculated by using the Emotional Intelligence Quotient (EQ) (Goleman, 1995). A person may score high in this scale, but may feel they are not empathetic, likewise a person may score low on this scale but are a self-proclaimed “empath”. A research paper that examined this, utilised the Kiersma-Chen Empathy Scale (KCES-R) (Kiersma et al., 2013) . This study focused on student pharmacists and their perception of their own empathy levels. The students perceived empathy levels were greater compared to the student’s actual empathy that the patients experienced (Blakely et al., 2021). This study demonstrates that people's opinions of their own empathy levels may not match up with how others see them or how empathetic they are in reality.

Police Intervention

Part of this current study examined willingness to report domestic violence to the police. In 2005 the National Crime Council (NCC) completed a report on domestic abuse of Men and Women in Ireland, this study claimed that out of the 3,000 men and women surveyed only 29% of women and 5% of the men went to the Gardai to report domestic abuse (Watson & Parsons, 2005). One of the

biggest reasons that male victims do not call the police is that they fear being disbelieved, the NCC report states the respondent claimed they were afraid that the police would not believe that the claim was genuine, especially if the abuser was a woman. One male responder wrote “at that time it wasn’t accepted that a woman would do those things to a man” (Watson & Parsons, 2005).

Domestic violence is also not reported by men for fear of losing custody of their children, if the claim is brought to court the female abuser can make a “counter claim” that states that she was acting in self-defence. If this happens the woman is usually believed over the male victim and can lead to the mother getting sole custody of the children (McCarrick et al., 2015).

To collect information on people's attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence, a portion of this dissertation asked a sample population to fill out a questionnaire. The public's willingness to call the police if they know of someone who is in an abusive relationship or if they observe abuse occurring and whether they would advise the victim to report the abuse themselves is one of the variables that was researched and included in the questionnaire. Recent studies show that the reasons people have for not intervening include fear of repercussions towards themselves if they do call the police, fear of making the situation worse and a phenomenon known as the bystander effect. (McInnes, 2022). The bystander effect claims that a person is less likely to help a person in need, if there are other people present (Latane & Darley, 1968). This effect was studied after the murder of Kitty Genovese, this famous case should how dozens of people witnessed her murder and did not call the police (Manning et al., 2007). A research report conducted in Australia connected the Bystander effect with the reluctance of the public to intervene or call the police if they suspect domestic violence. If no one else is reporting the situation people frequently interpret this as an indication that a reaction is unnecessary or inappropriate (Lovatt, 2018).

Domestic Violence in Opposite-sex Relationships

The term “toxic masculinity” is utilised for violence towards women in previous studies, masculine traits that are seen as being toxic are overt sexism, lack of empathy and machismo. Berke et al (2016) found that men will act aggressively or violent in a situation if they feel they are not living up to expected ideals of a stereotypical man. For men, male stereotypes are impactful for victims of domestic violence. The man is usually seen as the perpetrator and the woman as the victim, this gender stereotype is outdated and can be dangerous. Due in large part to terminology like "violence" and "victim," which is connected with domestic abuse, men often do not think that what they are going through constitutes domestic violence. One study saw that when the term domestic violence was changed to “boundary crossing” the male victims interviewed in the study were more forthcoming with information of their experiences of abuse. The participants associated the term domestic violence with female victims, and they did not associate their experience with that term. By making a simple change of the language used, it helps the participants to link what happened to them as a form of domestic abuse (Meyer et al., 2020). The majority of the abuse a man will experience in Intimate partner violence is mental abuse, this is usually done through coercion, Intimidation, isolation, stalking and removal of financial control. A man may feel that the maltreatment they are receiving is nonaggressive, therefore they cannot be in an abusive relationship (Swan et al, 2008). In one study conducted in 2019 the men interviewed did not want to be seen as victims because it went against the typical masculine image, this lead them to reduce the seriousness of the abuse and it is why more men make excuses for their partners aggressive behaviour (Hines & Douglas, 2019).

Domestic Violence in Same-sex Relationships

Research has looked at the adverse effect of stereotypes to men in abusive same-sex relationships, not only do the victims have to deal with homophobia when making a claim of domestic violence but they also have to deal with authorities not taking the claim seriously (Rakovec-Felser, 2014). In a research study conducted, 171 university students were shown imaginary domestic violence scenarios. The scenarios had transgender couples, same-sex couples (male victim/ male abuser and female victim/ female abuser) and opposite-sex couples (female victim/ male abuser) . The results showed that most of the students did not believe the claim of domestic violence in the scenario of same-sex couples (particularly the male victim/ male abuser scenario), compared to the opposite-sex couple (Poorman et al., 2003). According to multiple studies, men prefer to conceal violence and view it as a normal component of a healthy sexual relationship. Male victims of domestic violence in same-sex partnerships may view their experience as part of being in a relationship with another man. This denotes that male victims of domestic violence in same-sex couples are less likely to report their abuse to the police or their friends in the LGBTQ+ community (Oliffe et al., 2014).

After conducting the literature review the concerns that arise repeatedly is the lack of research conducted looking at male victims of domestic violence, the lack of services available for male victims of domestic violence and the damaging effect of gender stereotypes, these three issues need to be addressed in order to see a change in how male domestic violence is viewed. It is essential that the help the male victims receive is tailor made for male victims and not the same procedure that is used for female victims of domestic violence. To ensure that the first responders can manage a case of male domestic violence, law enforcement needs to receive better training. This includes knowing the signs of domestic violence and to have an unbiased opinion on the domestic violence. The police officer must not assume the perpetrator is the man and the victim is the woman without gathering the evidence. The information gathered from this current research also shows that the

harmful effects of stereotypes for both men in same-sex relationships and opposite-sex relationships as well as vulnerable groups such as the transgender and disabled community. Viewing all people from one community as the same can lead to the police, councillors, and justice system to have a biased view on a domestic violence case. This may result in the victim receiving the blame instead of the true offender, and it might even result in the victim being taken into custody.

Methods

Participants

For this dissertation the sample included 68 participants, the sample size was calculated using the G*power analysis, power analysis was conducted using the software G*Power version 3.1 (Faul et al, 2009). After conducting a priori analysis, It was determined the minimum sample size needed for this dissertation to ensure 80% power and a medium effect size needed to be $n = 64$. The participants were aged 18 and over, with the average age of 35. For this research, the sample population was chosen using non-random convenience sampling. The participants were recruited through social media channels, in particular Instagram, Facebook, and Reddit. The potential participant was given access to a link on these social media channels, If the person decided to complete the questionnaire, the questionnaire was designed and generated on Microsoft Forms (<http://www.forms.office.com>). The link brought them to the information sheet (Appendix B), due to the sensitive nature of this dissertation, a trigger warning sheet (Appendix C) was provided before the questionnaire this showed information for domestic violence services and general mental health service. This was to ensure the participant was made aware of the potential distress that may occur from completing the questionnaire, this complied with the NCI code of ethics guidelines.

Procedures

As mentioned above data was collected utilising a questionnaire, the link was posted onto various social media channels such as Instagram, Reddit, and Facebook. When the participant clicked on the link it brought them to an information sheet (Append B) which highlighted some key information on the study such as the objectives of the study and the possible risks that are involved. The participant was told that the questionnaire will take 10 to 15 minutes to complete and there are no obligations to complete the questionnaire. The participant was informed on how the data collected will be stored and what will happen to the information gathered in the future. Due to the subject matter of this thesis was on domestic violence, the language used may have caused stress to the participants. A trigger warning was placed at the start of the questionnaire (Appendix C), this allowed the participants that may be triggered by domestic violence to leave the study before they began. The trigger warning listed support networks contact information, the support networks listed were Safe Ireland, Men's Aid, and the Samaritans. The next step of the questionnaire involved the participant to read a consent form (Appendix D), in this form it asked the participants to "tick the box" for two statements. By doing so it demonstrated that the participant had read and agreed with all the information mentioned, that they were 18 or above, they were aware that there was no monetary reward for completing the questionnaire, they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time except after the questionnaire was submitted and is thus provided informed consent. The participant would not have been able to proceed with the questionnaire If the two statements were not ticked. After the consent form the participant were able to answer the questionnaire itself, Once completed a debriefing form (Appendix E) outlined more information on the study and contact information for the researcher and thesis supervisor. The support network contact information was listed again, in the event that the participant required support after completing the questionnaire. The information included in the questionnaire made sure that no ethical criteria were broken and that it complied with the NCI code of ethics.

Measures

This study utilised a questionnaire to gather the data needed (Appendix A), the questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part A consisted of demographic questions and 5-point Likert scale questions. After this the participants were split into two groups, this was determined by the participants answering a simple question. This brought the participant into Part B of the questionnaire; this got the participant to read a vignette. There were two different vignette that describes a domestic violence scenario, each one involved a male victim with either a female or male abuser, depending on the group the participant was in. The participant was then asked to answer 5-point Likert scale questions based on the vignette. The questions from Part A of the questionnaire were taken from the “The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating (Saunders et al, 1987) scale, due to the topic of the current thesis is on male victims of domestic abuse the scale was modified from female victim to male victim, the Likert scale was altered from a 7-point to 5-point. Part B scale was selected from Perceiving and Reporting Domestic Violence Incidents in Unconventional Settings (Aviram & Persinger, 2012) and the Interpersonal reactivity index (Davis, 1980).

The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating Questionnaire (IVBW), designed by Saunders, Lynch, Grayson & Linz (1987) uses a 7-point Likert scale questions. This scale measures the attitudes people have towards wife beatings (domestic violence); every question uses 7 answer points. These answers rank from 1 = *Strongly Agree* to 7 = *Strongly Disagree*. The total for these can be used to measure the attitudes people have to wife beating (domestic violence). Lower scores suggest negative attitudes towards domestic violence and higher scores suggests a positive attitude towards domestic violence. Maximum score is 105 and the minimum score is 15 (Appendix A), this scale is reliable, satisfactory, and valid with a Cronbach alpha of ($\alpha = .75$).

Perceiving and Reporting Domestic Violence Incidents in Unconventional Settings designed by Aviram & Persinger (2009). The vignette and scale that was utilised for this study was taken from this research paper. Answers rank 0 = *No*, 1 = *maybe* and 2 = *Yes*. The participants' propensity to call the authorities if they suspect someone is being abused is gauged by this scale. Along with the other predictor variables (PV) may predict the empathy levels for male victims of domestic violence. The maximum score is 10 and the minimum score is 0 (Appendix A). this scale is reliable, satisfactory, and valid with a Cronbach alpha of ($\alpha = .60$) for the group with the same-sex vignette and Cronbach alpha of ($\alpha = .76$) for the group that saw the opposite-sex vignette.

Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) designed by Davis (1980), uses a 5-point Likert scale questions. This scale measures people's perception on their own empathy levels; every question uses 5 answer points. These answers rank from 0 = *not at all* to 4 = *extremely*. The total for these can be used to measure how empathetic people believe they are. Lower scores suggest very low perceived empathy levels and higher scores suggests very high perceived empathy levels. Maximum score is 35 and the minimum score is 0 (Appendix A) this scale is reliable and valid with a Cronbach alpha of ($\alpha = .65$) for the group with the same-sex vignette and Cronbach alpha of ($\alpha = .85$) for the group that saw the opposite-sex vignette.

Design & Analysis

Quantitative data collection was implemented for this cross-sectional study, this was achieved using a descriptive research design. A questionnaire was distributed via a link on various social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram) to gather the data that was needed for this study. For the first hypothesis, an independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences in attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence for male compared to female respondents. To investigate the second hypothesis a one-way Anova was utilised to determine the difference in attitudes towards male victims of domestic violence for different ages of the respondent. For the

third hypothesis an independent sample t-test was used to examine the difference in empathy levels for male victims of domestic violence in same-sex versus opposite-sex relationships

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The information used is from the sample population of 68 participants ($n = 68$). The participants completed the questionnaire that is mentioned above. Out of the 68 participants 64.71% were female ($n = 44$) and 35.29% were male ($n = 24$). The ages were put into 3 groups, 23.5% were in Group 1 aged 18 to 25 ($n = 16$), 63.2% were in Group 2 aged 26 to 45 ($n = 43$) and 13.2% were in Group 3 aged 45+ ($n = 43$). Out of the 68 participants 39.7% saw Vignette 1 with the same-sex couple ($n = 27$) and 60.3% saw Vignette 2 with the opposite-sex couple ($n = 41$). Descriptive statistics for each of the continuous variables are presented in Table 1. After examining the histograms and Q-Q plot, the normality was verified and there were no violations of assumptions. The mean for attitudes towards domestic violence was 23.17, this as stated by the The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating Questionnaire (IVBW), designed by Saunders, Lynch, Grayson & Linz (1987), signified minor positive attitudes to male victims of domestic violence. The mean for police intervention for the same-sex vignette was 8.44 and the mean for police intervention for the opposite-sex vignette was 7.87. This as stated by Perceiving and Reporting Domestic Violence Incidents in Unconventional Settings designed by Aviram & Persinger (2009), signified significant high levels of police intervention for both the same-sex and opposite-sex vignette. The mean for perceived empathy levels was 16.54, this was stated on Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) designed by Davis (1980), to signify moderate perceived empathy levels.

Table 1*Descriptive statistics for continuous variables (n = 68)*

	Mean (95% CI)	Median	Std. Error Mean	SD	Range	Possible Range
Attitudes towards Male DV	23.17(21.86-24.49)	22.50	.65	5.42	15-41	15-105
Police Intervention for SS	8.44(7.85-9.03)	9.00	.28	1.50	5-10	0-10
Police Intervention for OS	7.87(7.21-8.53)	9.00	.32	2.08	3-10	0-10
Perceived Empathy Levels	16.54(15.80-17.29)	17.00	.37	3.07	7-20	0-10

Note: 95% CI = 95% confidence intervals of the mean; SD = standard deviation; DV = Domestic Violence;

SS = Same- sex; OS= Opposite- sex

Inferential Statistics

To test hypothesis 1 (*There will be a difference between men and women's attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence*) an independent t-test was conducted. There was no significant difference in scores between men and women ($t(66) = 1.57, p = .061$). Female score was ($M = 23.93, SD = 5.92$), which was slightly higher compared to the males scores ($M = 21.79, SD = 4.12$). The mean difference was ($MD = 2.1$) and the "95% Confidence Interval ($95\% CI = 0.58 - 4.9$), with a small effect size (Cohen's $d = .39$).

To test hypothesis 2 (*Attitudes people have toward male victims of domestic violence will differ depending on the age of the respondent*) A one-way between groups ANOVA was conducted to determine if mean levels of positive attitudes differed depending upon on one's age group. There was a statistically significant overall effect ($F(2, 67) = 4.20, p = .019$), and the effect size was small ($\eta^2 = .12$).

To test for hypothesis 3 (*There will be a difference in empathy levels towards male victims of domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships compared to male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships*) another independent sample t-test analysis was conducted. There was no significant difference in scores between the group that saw the same-sex vignette and the opposite-sex vignette ($t(.66) = 0.99, p = .16$). Vignette 1 (same-sex) score was ($M = 17.00, SD = 2.54$), while the participant from the second group with Vignette 2 (opposite-sex) score was ($M = 16.24, SD = 3.38$). The mean difference was ($MD = .75$) and the “95% Confidence Interval (95% $CI = 0.76-2.28$), with a small effect size (Cohen’s $d = .25$).

Discussion

Summary

The purpose of this current study was to analyse and compare the attitudes people have to male victims of domestic violence and to investigate the difference in empathy levels for male victims of domestic violence in a same-sex relationship compared to an opposite-sex relationship. The first hypothesis for this current study was there would be a difference in attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence depending on the gender of the respondent. The second hypothesis was there would be a difference in attitudes to male victims of domestic violence depending on the age of the respondent. The last hypothesis was there would be a difference in empathy levels towards male victims of domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships compared to male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships.

Interpretations & Implications

In relation to hypothesis 1, there was no statistically significant difference in attitudes to male victims of domestic violence for male and female respondents. For the questions relating to this hypothesis the Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating Questionnaire (IVBW) was utilised (Saunders, et al, 1987), this was modified for male victims of domestic violence. A high score with this scale indicated a positive attitude towards male domestic violence. Both male and females had a positive attitude to male victims of domestic violence. This means that both men and women think that men should not experience domestic violence under any circumstances. In relation to hypothesis 2, there was a slight difference in attitudes to male victims of domestic violence in the different age categories of the respondents. However, due to limitations that will be analysed more thoroughly further in this research paper, this difference was not large enough for it to be statistically significant. The questions for this hypothesis were taken from the same scale as hypothesis 1 the IVBW, (Saunders, et al, 1987), again it was modified for male victims of domestic violence. As before a high score with this scale indicated a positive attitude to male victims of domestic violence. The 3 age groups in this current study were 18-25 (Group 1), 26-45 (Group 2) and 45+ (Group 3). Group 1 and 3 had a positive attitude to male victims of domestic violence. Group 2 had primarily a positive attitude to male victims of domestic violence, however there were some of the respondents in this group that had a negative attitude to male victims of domestic violence. This denotes that some of the respondents feel there are times when a man should be abused. As mentioned above, the number of respondents that had a negative attitude to male victims of domestic violence was not large enough for it to be statistically significant. In relation to hypothesis 3 there was no statistically significant difference in empathy levels for the two vignettes. Group 1 saw the same-sex vignette and group 2 saw the opposite-sex vignette. The vignettes and some of the questions were taken from the Perceiving and Reporting Domestic Violence Incidents in Unconventional Settings (Aviram & Persinger, 2009),

To summarise the findings, there was no statistically significant difference in attitudes to male victims of domestic violence, regardless of the age or gender of the respondent. There was no difference in empathy levels for male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships compared to opposite-sex relationships. The findings from the current study supports the available research on attitudes to female victims of domestic violence, however there is no similar studies that analyse the attitudes of male victims of domestic violence. The current research paper is a good start, however more research needs to be conducted on this subject. Male domestic violence is not discussed enough, a campaign needs to be started that raises awareness to male domestic violence to replace the image of the stereotypical victim of domestic violence as a female and the abuser as a heterosexual man. Attitudes to male victims of domestic violence seems to be the same for both males and females, however it may differ depending on the age of the respondent. The age group that was slightly different in this current study was Group 2 (26-45), however, as mentioned the number was not large enough to be statistically significant. This study should be repeated with a large sample group to see if this finding is replicated. If it is replicated it signifies that people in this age bracket have a negative image to male victims of domestic violence, a good way to reach this demographic is through education, this could be done through colleges or workplace.

Limitations

As mentioned above, the biggest limitation for this current study was the small sample size, as a result there was not enough data to show any meaning in the data. A larger sample size is needed in order for the results to be statistically significant. The age group that had a different attitude to male victims of domestic violence was the 26-45. However, there were more participants in this group than the other two groups, this can lead to the difference in data, with no significance. As is common in quantitative studies, more women completed the questionnaire than men, This can alter the results of hypothesis 1 which looks at the potential difference in attitudes in male victims of domestic violence, depending on the gender of the respondent. The current study must be repeated

with equal numbers of male and female respondents, or if that cannot be achieved eliminate some of the female respondents to make the numbers in each group equal.

Recommendations & Conclusions

This current research paper highlights the need to conduct further research in a nationally representative sample. As mentioned in the limitations the sample size utilised in this study was not large enough to reach a statistically significant result. A nationwide survey would supply the required amount of data. This could show if the differences in attitudes that were seen in the different ages groups was down to a variance in numbers for each group or is there a difference in attitudes towards male victims of domestic violence depending on the age of the respondent. More research needs to be conducted to investigate the possible link between perceived empathy levels and the possibility of contacting the police. There may be a correlation between the perceived empathy level and contacting the police or intervention for possible domestic violence. More research should be conducted on the bystander effect, a campaign to make the public aware of the Bystander effect has already begun and can be seen in Australia, with the “Say it Loud” campaign. (Acon, 2023). A similar campaign should be conducted on a governmental level in Ireland to highlight the bystander effect and may help people feel more comfortable in intervening when they see or know domestic abuse is taken place.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Gender:

Male

Female

Non-binary

Prefer not to say.

Age

- 1) **A man does not deserve to be abused by their partner:**
- 2) **Sometimes it is ok for a man to be beaten by their partner:**
- 3) **If a man is unfaithful, they deserve to be beaten:**
- 4) **There is no excuse for a man to be abused by their partner:**
- 5) **Men try to get beaten by their partners to get sympathy from other:**
- 6) **If I heard a man being attacked by their partner, I would feel obliged to help:**
- 7) **If I heard a man getting attacked by their partner, It would be best I do nothing:**
- 8) **Social Agencies should do more to help male victims of domestic violence:**
- 9) **If a man is being beaten by their partner, they should move out immediately:**
- 10) **If a man is beaten it is because of their behaviour leading up to the abuse:**
- 11) **A man who constantly refuses to have sex with their partner is asking to be beaten:**
- 12) **Men feel pain and no pleasure when beaten by their partners:**
- 13) **Men should be protected by law if they are victims of domestic abuse:**
- 14) **Men who are battered are responsible for the abuse because they should have foreseen it would happen:**

Note: Scale taken from The Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating Questionnaire (IVBW), (Saunders, et. al, 1987) Answers rank from 1 = *Strongly Agree* to 7 = *Strongly Disagree*.

Please answer the following question, this is entirely for randomisation purposes for Part B of the study:

Does your Mobile number end in an even number?

Vignette 1

Your best friend, Jimmy, has been in a two-year relationship with Keith. One night Jimmy asks you to come pick him up because he and Keith had a fight. When you arrive Jimmy is scraped up, has a black eye and a sprained shoulder. Keith's cheek is slightly bruised. After you leave the couple's home, concerned, you ask what happened. Jimmy tells you that he and Keith attended a party where they had too much to drink. Jimmy explains that after the party Keith accused him of flirting with another man and yelled at him, calling him a liar and a cheater. In response to these accusations, Jimmy says he slapped Keith on the cheek. Jimmy admits that Keith was so angry that he lost control and shoved Jimmy down the stairs, which resulted in the bruises and injured shoulder. Jimmy says, afterward, Keith was very sorry for pushing him and asked him not to tell anyone. You have noticed unexplained bruising on Jimmy's forearms in the past. Jimmy says that sometimes he is afraid of Keith, but he says it's his own fault for provoking Keith. Please answer the following questions:

- 1) **Would you report the incident to the police?**
- 2) **Would you recommend that Jimmy report the incident to the police?**
- 3) **.Should Jimmy leave Keith?**
- 4) **Would you recommend Jimmy see a therapist?**
- 5) **Would you recommend Keith see a therapist?**

Note: Scale and Vignette taken from *Perceiving and Reporting Domestic Violence Incidents in Unconventional Settings* (Aviram & Persinger, 2009). Answers rank 0 = *No*, 1 = *maybe* and 2 = *Yes*.

- 1) **Do you feel concerned for Jimmy?**
- 2) **Do you feel sorry for Jimmy?**
- 3) **Do you feel pity for Jimmy?**
- 4) **Do you think Jimmy was to blame for the abuse he received?**
- 5) **Do you think Keith's actions were justified?**

Note: Scale taken from Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1980). Answers rank These answers rank from 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *Slightly*, 2 = *Neutral*, 3 = *Very*, 4 = *extremely*, and 0 = *No*, 1 = *maybe* and 2 = *Yes*.

Vignette 2

Your best friend, Jimmy, has been in a two-year relationship with Kathy. One night Jimmy asks you to come pick him up because he and Kathy had a fight. When you arrive Jimmy is scraped up, has a black eye and a sprained shoulder. Kathy's cheek is slightly bruised. After you leave the couple's home, concerned, you ask what happened. Jimmy tells you that he and Kathy attended a party where they had too much to drink. Jimmy explains that after the party Kathy accused him of flirting with another woman and yelled at him, calling him a liar and a cheater. In response to these accusations, Jimmy says he slapped Kathy on the cheek. Jimmy admits that Kathy was so angry that she lost control and shoved Jimmy down the stairs, which resulted in the bruises and injured shoulder. Jimmy says, afterward, Kathy was very sorry for pushing him and asked him not to tell anyone. You have noticed unexplained bruising on Jimmy's forearms in the past. Jimmy says that sometimes he is afraid of Kathy, but he says it's his own fault for provoking Kathy. Please answer the following questions:

- 1) **Would you report the incident to the police?**
- 2) **Would you recommend that Jimmy report the incident to the police?**

- 3) **Should Jimmy leave Kathy?**
- 4) **Would you recommend Jimmy see a therapist?**
- 5) **Would you recommend Kathy see a therapist?**

Note: Scale and Vignette taken from Perceiving and Reporting Domestic Violence Incidents in Unconventional Settings (Aviram & Persinger, 2009). Answers rank 0 = *No*, 1 = *maybe* and 2 = *Yes*.

- 1) **Do you feel concerned for Jimmy?**
- 2) **.Do you feel sorry for Jimmy?**
- 3) **.Do you feel pity for Jimmy?**
- 4) **Do you think Jimmy was to blame for the abuse he received?**
- 5) **Do you think Kathy's actions were justified?**

Note: Scale taken from Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1980). Answers rank These answers rank from 0 = *not at all*, 1 = *Slightly*, 2 = *Neutral*, 3 = *Very*, 4 = *extremely*, and 0 = *No*, 1 = *maybe* and 2 = *Yes*.

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

I am a psychology student at the National College of Ireland. for my final year project, I have chosen to look at the attitudes the public has toward male victims of domestic violence. I will be conducting this project under the supervision of Dr. Robert Fox Assistant Professor of Psychology in NCI.

What will taking part in the study involve?

If you decide to take part in this research, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire., it will take roughly 10 to 15 minutes to complete. The questionnaire is broken into two parts, part A is demographic (Age, gender), as well as basic questions on domestic violence. Part B will describe a domestic violence vignette, with follow-up questions. You can take part in this study if you are aged eighteen or above and use at least one of the following forms of social media (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram). All genders are allowed to take part in the study including people that are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you can withdraw from participation at any time by closing the browser. Once you have submitted your questionnaire, it will not be possible to withdraw your data from the study, because the questionnaire is anonymous and individual responses cannot be identified.

What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?

There are no direct benefits (e.g., monetary) for you to part in this research. However, the information gathered will contribute to research that helps us to understand how male victims of domestic violence are perceived. There is a small risk that some of the questions may cause minor distress. If you experience this, you are free to discontinue participation and exit the questionnaire. Contact information for relevant support services is also provided on the next page.

Will taking part be confidential and what will happen to my data?

The questionnaire is anonymous, all data collected for the study will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Only the researcher and academic supervisor will have access to the data collected. In case further research is conducted on this subject the data collected may be archived in an online data repository and may be used for secondary data analysis. The information from this study will be presented in my final dissertation.

Appendix C: Trigger Warning Information

Due to the subject matter of the research, the language used in the scenarios and the follow-up questions may be triggering for people that have experienced or are currently experiencing domestic violence. If you are affected by any of the issues raised, please reach out to support networks such as the organisations shown below:

Female victims of domestic violence:

Safe Ireland,
www.safeireland.ie
(090-6479078)

Male victims of domestic violence:

Men's Aid
www.mensaid.ie
(01-5543811)

General Mental Health:

Samaritans Ireland
www.samaritans.org/ireland/samaritans-ireland/

Who should you contact for further information?

If you need anything from this study clarified contact:

Research supervisor:

Dr. Robert Fox (Assistant Professor)
National College of Ireland
robert.fox@ncirl.ie

Researcher:

X18100503@student.ncirl.ie

Appendix D: Consent Form

In agreeing to participate in this research I understand the following:

- The method proposed for this research project has been approved in principle by the Departmental Ethics Committee, which means that the Committee does not have concerns about the procedure itself as detailed by the student. It is, however, the student's responsibility to adhere to ethical guidelines in their dealings with participants and the collection and handling of data.

If I have any concerns about participation, I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw at any stage by exiting my browser.

- I understand that once my participation has ended, I cannot withdraw my data as it will be fully anonymised.

- I have been informed as to the general nature of the study and agree voluntarily to participate.

- All data from the study will be treated confidentially. The data from all participants will be compiled, analysed, and submitted in a report to the Psychology Department in the School of Business.

- I understand that my data will be retained and managed per the NCI data retention policy and that my anonymised data may be archived in an online data repository and may be used for secondary data analysis. No participant's data will be identifiable at any point. After my participation, any questions or concerns I have will be fully addressed.

Please tick the following statements (you must tick the two statements in order to proceed)

Please tick this box if you have read and agree with all the above information and that you are providing informed consent to participate in this study. You are aware that the data collected from this questionnaire may be used in future research.

Please tick the box if you are aware there will be no rewards or incentives for you to complete this questionnaire. You are aware that you may withdraw from taking part in this study at any time, except after submitting the questionnaire. You are also confirming that you are aged eighteen and over.

Appendix E: Debriefing Sheet

If you have been affected by the issues raised in this study, please reach out to one of the following organisations:

Male victims of domestic violence:

Men's Aid

www.mensaid.ie

(01-5543811)

Female victims of domestic violence:

Safe Ireland,

www.safeireland.ie

(090-6479078)

General Mental Health:

Samaritans Ireland

www.samaritans.org/ireland/samaritans-ireland/

(01-671 0071)

Thank you for choosing to complete this questionnaire. The following information will explain the study and the how the information gathered from the questionnaire will be used.

This research paper will be on attitudes toward male victims of domestic violence in same-sex (male-male) relationships compared to opposite-sex (male-female) relationships. The information from the questionnaire that you completed will tell the researchers if male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships (male victim and male abuser) are viewed differently than male victims of domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships (male victim and female abuser).

The first theory the researchers are studying is there will be a difference in attitudes of male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships compared to opposite-sex relationships. The second theory is there will be a difference in empathy levels towards male victims of domestic violence in opposite-sex relationships compared to male victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships.

If you are interested to see the results of this study, please contact the researcher on the email listed below:

X18100503@student.ncirl.ie

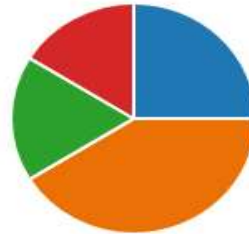
Thank you again for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix F: A Selection of Pie Charts from Questionnaire Results

12. The best way to deal with male domestic violence is to arrest the abuser (0 point)

[More Details](#)

● Strongly Agree	17
● Agree	28
● Neutral	12
● Disagree	11
● Strongly Disagree	0



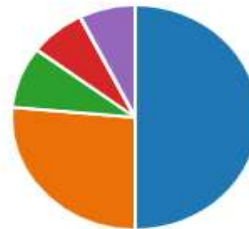
Rectangular 5

16. Men feel pain and no pleasure when beaten by their partners (0 point)

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Strongly Agree	34
● Agree	18
● Neutral	6
● Disagree	5
● Strongly Disagree	5

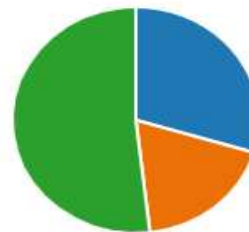


Vignette 1 (Same-sex Relationship)

20. Would you report the incident to the police (0 point)

[More Details](#)

● Yes	8
● No	5
● Maybe	14



Rectangular 5

Vignette 2 (Opposite-sex Relationship)

30. Would you report the incident to the police (0 point)

[More Details](#)

● Yes	9
● No	9
● Maybe	23

