

**The influence of Sociosexuality, Gender and Empathy of Participants and Depicted
Sexuality on Judgements of Intimate Partner Violence Perpetrated by Men Towards
Men and Women**

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Abstract

Background. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a multifaceted problem affecting individuals of all walks of life. The investigation of IPV judgements is important for identifying risk groups of IPV, unravelling harmful societal beliefs and other mechanisms leading to IPV, and the creation of IPV prevention/treatment interventions. Previous research indicates that their gender, empathy, and sociosexuality influences how participants perceive IPV incidents. Nevertheless, no research on how different facets of empathy (emotional contagion, cognitive empathy, and emotional disconnection) correlate with IPV judgements was done before. Additionally, the sexuality of the individuals experiencing the IPV influences judgements. It is still in question in how far and why these differences occur in western countries. Testing if and how strongly these variables correlate with judgements of IPV (severity, perpetrator perception, and the perceived need of punishment of the perpetrator) is the focus of the current study.

Methods. A questionnaire study employing scenarios and several multi-item scales to test in how far gender, empathy, and sociosexuality of the participant, as well as the sexuality of the couple entailed in the IPV scenario, predict judgements of IPV, was conducted with 106 participants aged 18-42. **Results.** As expected, strong differences in how the same IPV incident was judged between the heterosexual and the homosexual couple occurred. In line with previous research, the same IPV incident has been rated as less severe if depicted as occurring between a homosexual couple compared to a heterosexual couple. Against the expectations, the homosexual perpetrator was judged more negatively than the heterosexual perpetrator, but as expected, participants still indicated a lower perceived need for punishment in the homosexual condition. While the empathy facet “emotional contagion” unexpectedly did not significantly correlate with perpetrator perception, it did significantly correlate with judgements of IPV severity and perceived need for punishment, which is in line with previous expectations.

Conclusion. These findings underline the importance of counteracting bias towards the IPV experiencers’ sexuality. Further research should focus on factors influencing how the same incident is judged if between couples with different sexualities (e.g. prejudices towards homosexuals) and what problems these biases elicit. Results may help to create awareness about IPV between couples with different sexualities and which biases are in place in their evaluation. Through rising awareness, care for IPV survivors as well as design of awareness creating campaigns may be improved in terms of inclusivity and specialisation.

Keywords: IPV Judgements, Sexuality, Sociosexuality, Empathy, Gender, Perceived Need of Punishment, Perceived IPV Severity, Perpetrator Perception

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant health threat to people of all walks of life all around the globe (Gracia, 2004; Santambrogio et al., 2021; Stubbs & Szoek, 2021). It is estimated that at least one quarter of European women experience any form of IPV in their life (Gracia, 2004). Physical and/or sexual IPV was shown to affect 6.1% of European women (Sanz-Barbero, López Pereira, Barrio, & Vives-Cases, 2018). For example, despite low report rates, more than 20.000 cases of physical IPV were reported in Belgium from 2009 to 2019 (Federal Police Belgium, 2020). Averaged, that means that more than five incidents of physical IPV a day are reported in Belgium alone. Even though IPV research often focuses on women, Costa et al. (2015) showed in a population-based study with 18–64-year-old Europeans that survivors of physical IPV incidents are as often male as they are female. Regularly, IPV ends in death of perpetrators and/or victims. According to the European Commission (2007), in 2006, a total of 3413 deaths were linked to IPV in Europe. More than 70% of the victims of those crimes were female. This indicates that even though males and females seem to be similarly often targets of physical IPV (Costa et al., 2015), women more regularly die through IPV incidents than men (European Commission, 2007). In times of crises, the already large numbers of cases can rise further. During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, rising numbers of IPV incidents have been noted in Europe (World Health Organization, 2020). Beside death, IPV also poses a threat to the physical and psychological health and well-being of experiencers (Gracia, 2004; Santambrogio et al., 2021; Stubbs & Szoek, 2021). Due to the varying health consequences of IPV and the large prevalence rates, IPV research is of great importance.

Important for IPV research is a detailed conceptualisation of IPV. If any kind of violence is experienced by (ex-)partners, it is defined as “intimate partner violence” (IPV) (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015). IPV can be either physical, psychological, sexual, emotional or any combination of those (Breiding et al., 2015). Intimate partners may be spouses, boy-or girlfriends, dating partners or ongoing sexual partners who may, but do not need to, cohabit (Breiding et al., 2015). Physical IPV is defined as the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury, or harm against an intimate partner (Breiding et al., 2015). Contrary, psychological IPV is non-physical violence in which communication intends to harm or control the partner (Breiding et al., 2015). Even though all forms of IPV trigger serious consequences (e.g. psychological IPV has been shown to be a great risk factor for post-traumatic-stress-disorder (PTSD; Pico-Alfonso, 2005), and different types of IPV combined pose highest risks (Dillon, Hussain, Loxton, & Rahman, 2013; Krebs, Breiding, Browne, Warner, 2011), this study focuses solely on physical IPV.

A higher risk for being either victim or perpetrator of IPV is exposed through various

individual (e.g. unemployment), relational (e.g. marital instability), community (e.g. poverty), and societal factors (e.g. gender norms; Capaldi, Knoble, Shortt, & Kim, 2012; Vagi et al., 2013; Yakubovich et al., 2018). The largest number of so far identified IPV victims, especially of physical and sexual IPV, are women. A study of Franklin, Goodson, and Garza (2019) found that IPV may be even more prevalent in sexual minorities as nearly 30% of lesbian women and 16% of gay men have experienced severe physical IPV. Therefore, homosexual women and men form one of the IPV risk groups to consider. The importance of identifying IPV risk groups and taking actions to prevent IPV, as well as treating IPV victims, survivors, and perpetrators, becomes apparent when looking at the various negative health consequences of IPV. Physical IPV was shown to be a stronger predictor of great and extreme impairment of well-being, disabilities preventing work, as well as homicide in victims compared to other forms of IPV (Coker, Smith, Bethea, King, & McKeown, 2000; Dillon et al., 2013; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). While some studies seem to address physical violence as a greater risk factor, others present psychological IPV as the greatest risk-factor among IPV types (Antai, Oke, Braithwaite, & Lopez, 2014; Dillon et al., 2013). As the stronger with suicide associated IPV type is not clearly determined yet, but physical IPV was found to be a greater predictor of homicide, physical violence may be seen as the single most deadly form of IPV.

Beside risk-group identification, investigation of IPV judgements is also part of IPV research (Darteh, Dickson, Rominski, & Moyer, 2020; Eigenberg & Policastro, 2016; Waltermaurer, 2012). As judgements of intimate partner violence reflect under which circumstances people tolerate intimate partner violence, studying the judgements regarding IPV can be helpful, e.g., for unravelling harmful societal beliefs (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2005). Additionally, exploring which personality traits and past experiences influence judgements of IPV helps to identify risk groups (Gül, 2021; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2005; Santambrogio et al., 2021). Identifying risk groups and underlying mechanisms of IPV is vital for creating IPV prevention or treatment interventions (Barner & Carney, 2011; Edwards, Sylaska, & Neal, 2015). Through decades of research, many influencers of IPV have been detected.

Judgements of IPV have been proven to be highly dependent on different factors such as age, past victimisation, gender, heritage, culture, religion, education level, wealth status, place of residence, as well as occupation (Darteh et al., 2020; Eigenberg & Policastro, 2016; Smith, Ireland, Park, & Elwyn, 2011; Waltermaurer, 2012, Warren, 2015). The often in scenario form presented IPV incidents are judged differently based on the type of IPV depicted. Respondents often did not judge psychological violence as hard as physical violence and rated physical IPV as a more serious threat (Desombre, Przygodzki-Lionet, Durand-Delvigne, &

Debosscher, 2005; Witte & Kendra, 2009). On an individual level, respondents often justify IPV with provocation, the denial of sex, infidelity, neglect of children, men beating women as part of their culture and as a reaction to threats (Adams, Towns, Gavey, 1995; Darteh et al., 2020; Eigenberg & Policastro, 2016; Franklin et al., 2019; Raguz, 2019; Waltermaurer, 2012; Waltermaurer, Butsashvili, Avaliani, Samuels, & McNutt, 2013). Possible fields of judgements to research are e.g., IPV justification, and IPV intentions. This study focuses on judgements regarding IPV severity, perpetrator perception and perceived need for punishment. Four variables, namely gender, empathy and sociosexuality of participants, as well as sexuality of IPV experiencers, suspected to influence IPV judgements were further explored in this research.

In past studies, individuals of different genders judged IPV differently (Russell, Chapleau, & Kraus, 2015; Waltermaurer, 2012). Most studies find that women are more likely to justify IPV compared to men (Russell et al., 2015; Waltermaurer, 2012). A literature review of Waltermaurer (2012) underlined this finding by showing that, in the selected studies, women scored higher on IPV justification than men in two thirds of the time. Depending on the study, women scored 1 to 35% higher on justification than men. Nevertheless, women were also shown to more often identify situations as abusive compared to men (Russel et al., 2015). Thus, women more often identify abusive situations but justify the incidents more often than men. Therefore, it is expected that gender influences IPV judgements in the current study as well.

Empathy is another influencer of judgements of IPV to look at. Studies by Eigenberg and Policastro (2016) and Vaessen (n.d.) implied empathy might influence how people judge IPV and that empathy may vary for different genders. In the current study empathy is defined as the recognition and understanding, as well as the emotional response to the emotions and experiences of others, which can be split in cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection (Carre, Stefaniak, D'Ambrosio, Bensalah, & Besche, 2013; Cuff, Brown, Taylor, & Howat, 2016). Cognitive empathy comprises mechanisms leading to the understanding and comprehension of another's' feelings (Cuff et al., 2016; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). Emotional contagion refers to the automatic "transfer of moods or emotions from one person to another" (Barsade, Coutifaris, & Pillemer, 2018, p. 137). In contrast, emotional disconnection is defined as being able to protect and shield oneself from distress, pain, and extreme emotional impact (Carre et al., 2013). No specific research in how empathetic sub scales correlate with IPV judgement has been conducted yet. Nevertheless, as empathetic understanding often correlates with perspective-taking, higher levels of empathy may lead to harsher judgements of IPV (Stietz, Jauk, Krach, & Kanske, 2019). Overall, high empathy in individuals seems to correlate with judging IPV perpetrators worse (Sakallı-Uğurlu, Yalçın, &

Glick, 2007). Moreover, empathy scores were shown to correlate with acceptance of aggression (Godfrey, Kehoe, Bastardas-Albero, & Babcock, 2020). The correlation of empathy scores and acceptance of aggression (Godfrey et al., 2020), supports the hypothesis that empathy influences IPV judgements further. Based upon these findings, it is hypothesised that empathy positively correlates with judgements of IPV (H1). Besides, it is expected that emotional contagion and cognitive empathy positively correlate with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment, while emotional disconnection negatively correlates with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment (H1.1).

Not only does gender and empathy influence IPV judgements individually, but research also indicates a connection of both aspects. On average, women are more empathetic than men (Christov-Moore et al., 2014; Kamas & Preston, 2020). The research of Vaessen (n.d.) indicates that men rather empathise with perpetrators (given the perpetrator is male) instead of with the victim. Regardless of the victims' gender, women tend to rather identify themselves and empathise with them than with the perpetrators (Russell et al., 2015). Both men and women rather feel sorry for female victims of IPV than for male victims (Vaessen, n.d.). In general, respondents more often see the need to intervene in IPV with female victims (Seelau, Seelau, & Poorman, 2003). Sylaska and Walters (2014) implied that higher levels of empathy in females as compared to males, may lead to lower justification of IPV and a larger tendency to assign the fault to IPV perpetrators rather than to IPV victims. Based on the aforementioned studies, it is suspected that women on average score higher on empathy as well as higher on judgements of judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment compared to men (H3.1). Building upon that, less justification of IPV incidents by women than by men is suspected (H3.2).

Another factor influencing IPV judgements is sociosexuality. ‘Sociosexual orientation’ or ‘sociosexuality’ describes one’s degree of restrictedness in sexual attitudes and behaviour (Penke, 2011). It is composed of the number of changing casual sex partners, explicit attitudes towards uncommitted sex, as well as of the sexual desire for people besides the romantic relationship partner (Penke, 2011). One’s own sexual life and sexual norms correlate with how diverse sexual behaviours are judged in others (Seltermann & Koleva, 2015). As it is a “time-honored practice to concentrate on a woman's sexual behaviour as an excuse for victimization” (Eigenberg & Policastro, 2016, p. 47), it is interesting to investigate whether the perceivers’ own sociosexuality influences the perception of IPV. Additionally, it was shown that individuals scoring higher on sociosexuality judge ambiguous relational norm violations less

harsh than individuals scoring lower (Selterman & Koleva, 2015). As individuals with lower sociosexuality scores judge potentially relation norm violating behaviours more than individuals scoring high on sociosexuality, they might see the victims' sexual life more often as justifier of IPV. As a matter of fact, sociosexuality was found to be the strongest predictor of judgements towards sexual behaviours (Selterman, & Koleva, 2015).

As well as having an influence on empathy, gender seems to correlate with sociosexuality. Like empathy, sociosexuality varies strongly in genders. Still, men tend to score higher on sociosexuality than women (Gül & Kupfer, 2021). Sociosexuality was proven to influence the likelihood to perpetrate sexual violence among college men (Mouilso & Calhoun, 2012). Additionally, the sociosexual orientation of men and women were identified as influencers of the support for female honour norms (Gül & Kupfer, 2021). Honour norms are the societal norms posed to individuals based on behaviour which protects their honour. Female honour norms vary globally but often entail expectancies of sexually inactive or submissive behaviour (Gül & Kupfer, 2021). Respondents with lower sociosexuality values were more likely to support honour norms than respondents with higher sociosexuality values, also after checking for other correlates like age and religiosity (Gül & Kupfer, 2021). A meta-analysis of McCarthy, Mehta and Haberland (2018) suggests that people high in honour/gender norms are more accepting of IPV and therefore experience and justify it more often. As individuals scoring low on sociosexuality judged possibly relationship norm violating behaviour more negatively and more often support honour norms, it is theorised that sociosexuality positively correlates with IPV judgements overall (H2), while women score lower on sociosexuality than men (H3.3). These findings would implicate that individuals low on sociosexuality tolerate IPV incidents more often than individuals high on sociosexuality.

IPV between same-sex couples is evaluated differently compared to violence between different-sex couples (Russel et al., 2015; Seelau et al., 2003). IPV between same-sex couples is often perceived as less serious than IPV between different-sex couples, which seems to be linked to the belief that same-sex partners are similar in size and strength (Russel et al., 2015). IPV incidents in which male perpetrators harm female victims were judged as the most serious and IPV between two male intimate partners as the least serious in a study with American sample (Russell et al., 2015). However, Vaessens' research found no significant difference in how a Dutch sample judged IPV between homo- and heterosexuals, which might be due to the high acceptance of homosexuality and openness of Dutch people (n.d.).

These often-stereotyped beliefs are especially dangerous as IPV between same-sex couples has been revealed as equally if not more threatening to health (Franklin et al., 2019;

Rollè, Giardina, Calderara, Gerino, & Brustia, 2018; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). Even though less homicides can be found in same-sex relationships compared to different-sex relationships, it is notable that homicides between gay males occur 12 times as often as between lesbian women (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). It might be that this reflects toxic gender norms and shows how important further research into man against man IPV is. It is hypothesised that the same IPV incident is rated differently if it occurs between a heterosexual and a male homosexual couple in this study too. To be more precise, it is expected that IPV between a heterosexual couple is judged as more severe than between a homosexual couple (H4.1). As result of rating IPV between two men as less severe, it is hypothesised that participants judge a homosexual perpetrator less than a heterosexual perpetrator (H4.2) and see less need to punish the homosexual perpetrator than the heterosexual perpetrator (H4.3).

Summarised, IPV is an important topic affecting millions of people globally. Gender, empathy and sociosexuality are thought to be important factors to gather knowledge on how IPV judgements manifest themselves. The goal of this study is to specifically investigate the effect of gender, empathy, and sociosexuality of the participant, as well as of the sexuality of the couple experiencing IPV, on judgements of physical IPV perpetrated by men towards men and women. It is expected that empathy, sociosexuality and gender of the participant, as well as the sexuality of the IPV experiencing couple, all predict judgements of IPV.

Hypotheses

Empathy and IPV Judgements

H1. Empathy positively correlates with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for punishment

H1.1 Emotional contagion and cognitive empathy positively correlate with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment, while emotional disconnection negatively correlates with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment

Sociosexuality and IPV Judgements

H2. Sociosexuality positively correlates with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for punishment

Gender and IPV Judgements/ Sociosexuality

H3.1 Women on average score higher on empathy than men and score higher on judgements

of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment.

H3.2 Women justify the incident less often than men.

H3.3 Women on average score lower on sociosexuality than men.

Depicted Sexuality and IPV Judgements

H4.1 IPV between a heterosexual couple is rated as more severe than IPV between a homosexual couple.

H4.2 A homosexual perpetrator is judged less than a heterosexual perpetrator.

H4.3 Participants indicate a lower perceived need for punishment in a homosexual IPV scenario than in a heterosexual IPV scenario.

Methods

Participants

For the recruitment of participants, convenience sampling was used through the usage of the university's SONA system, as well as the personal social media pages of the researchers. Participants who took part via SONA were credited with 0.25 study credits. Besides, snowball sampling was applied as participants were encouraged to further share the survey with acquaintances. The only inclusion criterion was an age of 18 or higher. It was aimed to gather 100 participants. That goal was met with 137%. However, the data of 31 participants had to be removed because of technical issues regarding Qualtrics through which participants were not presented the whole or long enough parts of the questionnaire, making their responses unusable for analysis.

Of the remaining 106 participants, 26 identified as male ($M_{age} = 21.88$, age range: 18-34) and 78 identified as female ($M_{age} = 21.77$, age range: 18-42), one identified as non-binary transman and one did not want to disclose their gender. The nationalities of the participants were German (77 people, 72.64 %), Dutch (19 people, 17.92 %) and other (10 people, 9.43 %). 81 of the participants identified as heterosexual (76.42 %), 17 as bisexual (16.04 %), 4 as homosexual (3.77 %) and 4 with a different sexuality (3.77 %).

Measures

In this study, a survey was used (Appendices A - I). The demographics of participants were assessed through four questions (age, nationality, sexuality, and gender; Appendix G). Additionally, two multi-item scales were used to measure sociosexuality (Appendix F) and empathy (Appendix E).

The SOI-R

The participants' sociosexuality was measured with the revised Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (SOI-R; Penke, 2011; Appendix F). The SOI-R is applicable for the use with any normal-range educational level, different sexualities (hetero-, homo-, bisexual), as well as people of different relationship statuses (Penke, 2011). It consists of nine items. Participants could indicate their level of agreement through 9-Point Scale options ranging from "0" to "20 or more" for behaviour related items (1-3; Appendix F), e.g., "With how many different partners have you had sex within the past 12 months?", "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" for attitude related items (4-6; Appendix F), e.g., "I do not want to have sex with a person until I am sure that we will have a long-term, serious relationship", and "never" to "at least once a day" for desire related items (7-9; Appendix F), e.g., "How often do you experience sexual arousal when you are in contact with someone you are not in a committed romantic relationship with?". Item 6 needs to be reversed (Penke, 2011; Appendix F). Averaged, the total score ranges from 1 to 9, with higher scores representing higher sociosexuality. The internal consistency of the overall measure of sociosexuality was poor ($\alpha = .59$).

The BES-A

The Basic Empathy Scale in Adults (BES-A; Carree et al., 2013; Appendix E) was used to measure the participants' empathy. This scale consists of 20 Likert items and has subscales regarding cognitive empathy (8 items), emotional contagion (6 items) and emotional disconnection (6 items). The participants answered on a 5-Point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree" to indicate how much they agree with statements like "I can understand my friend's happiness when she/he does well at something." [cognitive empathy], "After being with a friend who is sad about something, I usually feel sad." [emotional contagion] and "My friends' emotions don't affect me much." [emotional disconnection] (Carree et al., 2013). The global scores could range from 1 (deficit in empathy) to 5 (high empathy). In the current study, the overall reliability was good ($\alpha = .87$). The subscales showed acceptable ($\alpha = .75$; emotional contagion), poor ($\alpha = .57$, cognitive empathy) and unacceptable ($\alpha = .48$; emotional disconnection) reliability.

IPV Judgements Questionnaire

Additionally, eight questions regarding the attitudes of the participants towards the depicted IPV were asked (Appendix D). These questions were derived from already conducted research (Capezza & Arriaga, 2008; Güll & Schuster, 2020; Vandello & Cohen, 2003). Of those items, four measured how participants perceive the perpetrator (e.g. "How justified is Tom's behaviour?"; $\alpha = .62$), two measured severity perception (e.g. "How serious was the incident?"; $\alpha = .62$), and two measured the perceived need for punishment (e.g. "Do you think he (Tom)

should be punished?”; $\alpha = .70$). All eight items were answered through a 7-Point Likert scale with options ranging from “Not at all” to “Very much”. The higher the “perpetrator perception” scores, the more negatively the perpetrator was judged.

Scenario Manipulation

Participants were randomly divided into two groups. Each group was presented with one IPV scenario, based on scenarios from Gül and Schuster (2020). Both scenarios were identical, except for the sexual orientation of the couple described (Appendices B and C). IPV was described either between a heterosexual couple (Appendix C) or a homosexual couple (Appendix B). The scenario entails a storyline in which a man is either cheated on by his boy- or girlfriend with their male neighbor. After the partner confesses to sleeping with their neighbor, the man gets physically abusive against his partner (Appendices B and C).

Procedure

The survey started with an information and consent form (Appendix A). After receiving consent, the study consisted of three parts: scenarios, questionnaires, and demographics. The participants were assigned to the conditions as described in the scenario manipulation section. After each scenario, the participants answered the same questions regarding the perception of the perpetrator and the severity of the incident as well as questions about whether the perpetrator should face punishment (Appendix D). Next, the participants were asked to fill in questionnaires (BES-A, Appendix E; SOR-R, Appendix F). Attention check questions like “**This is an attention check question. If you are reading this, please select "about once a month"**” were added into the questionnaires (Appendices E and F). Afterwards, the participants indicated their demographics, including age, gender, sexuality, and nationality. The debriefing (Appendix H) included the background of the study and possibilities to seek help in cases of current experiences with IPV or emotional affectedness. Last, consent was requested a second time to ensure the participants’ willingness to be included in the data collection after knowing what the data was used for (Appendix I).

Design

In this study an experimental between-groups 2 by 2 design was employed. The participants either responded on a heterosexual or a homosexual scenario. This study was created to test the correlations of sociosexuality, empathy and gender with IPV judgements. Besides, it aimed at revealing whether IPV incidents are rated differently if occurring between a homosexual couple compared to a heterosexual couple.

Data Analysis

The data for this paper was generated using the March to May 2021 Version of Qualtrics Software (Qualtrics, Provo, UT). For enabling data analysis, data was downloaded from Qualtrics into SPSS. Incomplete answers, responses in which consent was declined and outliers were excluded. An alpha level of 0.05 was used for all tests.

H1 - H1.1

In order to check whether overall empathy as measured by the BES-A positively correlates with IPV judgements (severity, perpetrator perception and perceived need for punishment), the BES-A items 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 18, and 19 had to be recoded. Next, all item scores were summed and divided by 20 to achieve every participant's overall BES-A score. The IPV judgement items were split in three subscales, namely IPV severity (item 5 – 6; Appendix D), perpetrator perception (item 1 – 4; Appendix D) and perceived need for punishment (item 7 – 8; Appendix D). After the recoding of item 2, the scores were summed per scale. Afterwards, a Pearson Correlation was run for each type of judgements and overall BES-A scores. IPV Judgements were the dependent variables, while empathy was the independent variable.

Similarly, for H 1.1 the scores of each participant per BES-A subscale (emotional contagion (6 items); cognitive empathy (8 items); emotional disconnection (6 items)) was computed. Afterwards, nine Pearson Correlations were conducted with either emotional contagion, cognitive empathy or emotional connection as independent variable and judgements of IPV severity, perpetrator perception, and perceived need for punishment as dependent variable.

H2

To check whether sociosexuality correlates with IPV judgements (IPV severity, perpetrator perception, perceived need for punishment), every participant's SOI-R's total score was computed. Therefore, item 2 needed to be recoded and all item scores needed to be summed and averaged. Three Pearson Correlation Coefficients were computed, each judgement scale as dependent and sociosexuality as independent variable.

H3.1 – H3.3

During gender related analysis, the two trans and nonbinary participants have been excluded. To determine whether gender influenced the judgements of IPV, IPV severity, perpetrator perception, and perceived need for punishment (H3.1) scores were compared by gender through t-tests. The same was done for overall BES-A-scores (H3.1). Similarly, to check whether women justify the incident less often than men (H3.2), item one of the judgements questionnaire ("How justified was Tom's behaviour?"; Appendix D) was compared by gender

through a t-test. The same process was repeated for SOI-R scores to check whether women on average score lower on sociosexuality than men (H3.3).

H4.1 - H4.3

For identifying if perception of IPV severity, perpetrator and need for punishment are dependent on the sexuality of the depicted couple, one t-test comparing judgements scores by gender was ran for each scale.

Results

I first checked for correlations among the study variables. A correlation matrix and descriptive statistics for the heterosexual Condition are presented in Table 1, and for the homosexual condition in Table 2.

Table 1

Correlations and Descriptives of the Study Variables in Heterosexual Condition

	1.	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.
1. BES	1	.85**	.78**	-.87**	.00	.12	.07	.01	-.11
1.1 Emotional Contagion		1	.44**	-.58**	.09	.20	.12	-.09	-.20
1.2 Cognitive Empathy			1	-.57**	-.04	-.12	.03	.12	.02
1.3 Emotional Disconnection				1	.07	-.18	-.01	-.02	.04
2. SOI-R					1	-.05	.09	-.02	-.14
3.1 Perceived Need for Punishment						1	.43**	-.57**	.11
3.2 IPV Severity							1	-.41	.25
3.3 Perpetrator Perception								1	.02
4. Age									1
<i>M</i>	78.75	22.50	30.73	10.47	3.91	5.22	6.18	3.11	22.20
<i>SD</i>	7.74	3.55	2.65	3.11	1.40	1.18	0.63	0.98	3.66

Note. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 2

Correlations and Descriptives of the Study Variables in Homosexual Condition

	1.	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.
1. BES	1	.89**	.88**	-.90**	-.11	.16	.27*	.03	-.15
1.1 Emotional Contagion		1	.66**	-.67**	-.18	.18	.31	.01	-.13
1.2 Cognitive Empathy			1	-.75**	-.03	-.07	.12	.22	-.16
1.3 Emotional Disconnection				1	.05	-.17	-.25	.10	.11
2. SOI-R					1	-.09	-.05	.19	.06
3.1 Perceived Need for Punishment						1	.62**	-.49**	.19
3.2 IPV Severity							1	-.47**	.14
3.3 Perpetrator Perception								1	-.03
4. Age									1
<i>M</i>	76.59	20.98	30.70	11.09	3.84	4.59	5.70	3.93	21.21
<i>SD</i>	10.10	4.37	3.08	3.89	1.29	1.34	0.72	1.03	1.83

Note. * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Empathy and IPV Judgements (H1 - H1.1)

If looked at the whole sample, a significant positive correlation was found between empathy as indicated by BES-A scores and judgements of IPV severity ($r(103) = .21, p = .04$),

indicating that individuals higher in empathy also score higher on judgements of IPV severity. No significant correlation between BES-A scores and judgements of IPV severity have been found for either the responses to the heterosexual ($r(59) = .07, p = .30$) or homosexual ($r(47) = .27, p = .07$) scenario. In the whole sample, BES-A scores did not significantly correlate with judgements of IPV perpetrators ($r(103) = -.03, p = .79$) and perceived need for punishment ($r(103) = .17, p = .09$). In the heterosexual condition responses showed no significant correlation between BES-A scores and perpetrator perception ($r(59) = .01, p = .95$), as well as for BES-A scores and perceived need for punishment ($r(59) = .12, p = .36$). Similarly, no significant correlations were found with BES-A scores for neither perpetrator perception ($r(47) = .03, p = .83$), nor perceived need for punishment ($r(47) = .16, p = .28$) in the homosexual condition.

For the combined sample, emotional contagion positively correlated with judgements of IPV severity ($r(103) = .27, p = .01$) and perceived need for punishment ($r(103) = .22, p = .02$), but not with perpetrator perception ($r(103) = -.11, p = .28$). In contrast, in the heterosexual condition alone emotional contagion did not significantly correlate with judgements of IPV severity ($r(59) = .12, p = .39$), perceived need for punishment ($r(59) = .20, p = .14$), and perpetrator perception ($r(59) = -.09, p = .52$). Similarly, in the homosexual condition emotional contagion did also not correlate with IPV severity ($r(47) = .31, p = .58$), perpetrator perception ($r(47) = .01, p = .96$), and perceived need for punishment ($r(47) = .18, p = .24$). In the whole sample, there was no significant correlation between cognitive empathy and judgements of IPV severity ($r(103) = .07, p = .46$), of the perpetrator ($r(103) = .16, p = .11$) or of the perceived need for punishment ($r(103) = -.02, p = .82$). If looked at the heterosexual condition, cognitive empathy also did not correlate with judgements of IPV severity ($r(59) = .03, p = .83$), perpetrator perception ($r(59) = .15, p = .35$), and perceived need for punishment ($r(59) = -.12, p = .36$). In the homosexual condition, there was no significant correlation between cognitive empathy and judgements of IPV severity ($r(47) = .12, p = .43$), perpetrator perception ($r(47) = .22, p = .14$), and perceived need for punishment ($r(47) = .07, p = .64$) as well. The combined sample also showed no significant correlation between emotional disconnection and judgements of IPV severity ($r(103) = -.16, p = .10$) or of the perpetrator ($r(103) = .07, p = .49$). Emotional disconnection marginally correlated with judgements of the perceived need for punishment ($r(103) = -.19, p = .05$). In the heterosexual condition, emotional disconnection did not significantly correlate with judgements of IPV severity ($r(59) = -.01, p = .92$), perpetrator perception ($r(59) = -.02, p = .91$), and perceived need for punishment ($r(59) = -.18, p = .17$). In a similar manner, emotional disconnection did not significantly correlate with judgements of

IPV severity ($r(47) = -.25, p = .09$), perpetrator perception ($r(47) = .10, p = .51$), and perceived need for punishment ($r(47) = -.17, p = .26$) either.

Sociosexuality and IPV Judgements (H2)

There was no positive correlation of sociosexuality scores and judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for punishment found as SOI-R scores did not significantly correlate with judgements of IPV severity ($r(102) = .03, p = .75$), perpetrator perception ($r(102) = .06, p = .55$) and perceived need of punishment ($r(102) = -.06, p = .56$). In the heterosexual condition SOI-R scores also did not significantly correlate with judgements of IPV severity ($r(59) = .09, p = .53$), perpetrator perception ($r(59) = -.02, p = .91$) and perceived need for punishment ($r(59) = -.05, p = .74$). Also in the homosexual condition, no significant correlations were found between SOI-R scores and judgements of IPV severity ($r(47) = -.05, p = .75$), perpetrator perception ($r(47) = .19, p = .20$), and perceived need for punishment ($r(47) = -.09, p = .54$).

Gender and IPV Judgements/Sociosexuality (H3.1 – H3.3)

An independent t-test indicated that there was no significant difference in how males ($M = 5.87, SD = .59$) and females ($M = 6.02, SD = .73$) rated IPV severity; $t(102) = -.97, p = .32$. Analogically, no significant difference was found in how males and females judge the perpetrator, ($M = 3.55, SD = 1.08$ for males; $M = 3.44, SD = 1.09$, for females) $t(102) = .43, p = .83$, or how males and females judge the perceived need for punishment ($M = 4.65, SD = 1.41$, for males; $M = 5.07, SD = 1.21$, for females) $t(102) = -1.46, p = .14$. There was no significant effect for gender on BES-A scores, $t(101) = -4.32, p = .60$, despite females ($M = 79.97, SD = 7.78$) attaining higher scores than males ($M = 72.08, SD = 8.47$). Although justification scores were on average higher in males ($M = 2.77, SD = 1.58$) than in females ($M = 2.68, SD = 1.46$), this difference was not significant; $t(102) = -.27, p = .28$. Though males indeed score on average higher on the SOI-R ($M = 3.96, SD = 1.51$) than females ($M = 3.87, SD = 1.31$), this difference is not significant $t(100) = -.131, p = .41$.

Depicted Sexuality and IPV Judgements (H4.1 – H4.3)

Participants rated the severity of IPV between the heterosexual couple ($M = 5.22, SD = 1.18$) as significantly more severe than between the homosexual couple ($M = 4.59, SD = 1.34$), $t(104) = 3.72, p < .001$ (Appendix J). The homosexual perpetrator ($M = 3.93, SD = 1.03$) was judged more negatively than the heterosexual one ($M = 3.11, SD = .98$), $t(104) = -4.20, p = .001$

(Appendix J). Significantly lower perceived need for punishment scores were found for the homosexual perpetrator ($M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.34$) compared to the heterosexual perpetrator ($M = 5.22$, $SD = 1.18$); $t(104) = 2.59$, $p = .01$ (Appendix J). Overall, the scenarios were rated differently in all three judgement aspects (Appendix J).

Discussion

The current study investigated how empathy, sociosexuality scores, as well as gender of participants correlate with IPV judgements (IPV severity, perpetrator perception, perceived need for punishment). Furthermore, this study intended to reveal whether the sexuality of the couple in IPV scenarios influences judgements. In general, the findings of this study partially confirm the before set hypotheses.

Findings in Scientific Context

The researcher expected that empathy positively correlates with all three IPV judgement variables (IPV severity, perpetrator perception, perceived need for punishment; H1). Indeed, if looked at the whole sample, empathy positively correlated with judgements of IPV severity. Still, no significant correlation was found between empathy and perpetrator perception or perceived need for punishment. The finding that people scoring high on empathy judge IPV incidents as more severe is in line with suggestions of Eigenberg and Policastro (2016). Nevertheless, it is not in line with research that empathy scores did not significantly correlate with perpetrator perception (Sakallı-Uğurlu et al., 2007) and judgements of the need of punishment. Therefore, the judgement of perceived need of punishment, as well as perpetrator perception, seem to be independent of empathetic skills. A possible explanation for this finding could be that the perception of criminally liable behaviours is guided by societal norms and official laws, rather than by one's own empathetic response to victims and perpetrators.

The researcher expected that emotional contagion and cognitive empathy positively correlate with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment, while emotional disconnection negatively correlates with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment. As part of the emotional contagion facet of empathy (Cuff et al., 2016; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006), it was expected that the negative emotions of the IPV victims transfer to the participants. It was therefore expected that emotional contagion positively correlates with judgements of IPV severity, IPV perpetrators and perceived need for IPV punishment. Indeed, emotional contagion scores positively correlated with judgements of IPV severity and need of punishment. However, this study did not create support for the hypothesis that emotional contagion influences perpetrator

perception. On similar grounds, it was expected that higher cognitive empathy scores lead to judging the incident as more severe, the perpetrator as less understandable, and therefore seeing the perceived need for punishment of the depicted IPV. However, this study found no significant support for correlations between cognitive empathy and IPV judgements. As individuals high in emotional disconnection tend to protect and shield themselves from distress (Carre et al., 2013), it was hypothesised that the higher emotional disconnection scores are, the lower judgement scores would be. There was no support found for this. Therefore, H1.1 can only be supported in its supposition that emotional contagion affects judgements of IPV severity and perceived need for punishment of IPV perpetrators.

Stated in H2, it was expected that sociosexuality positively correlates with judgements of IPV. As no significant correlations between sociosexuality and judgements of IPV severity, perpetrator perception, and perceived need for punishment were found either in the whole sample or one of the conditions, no support for this hypothesis was generated. This result is surprising considering the strong effect of sociosexuality on judgements towards sexual behaviours in Selterman and Koleva's study (2015). A possible explanation could be that their study focused on the judgment of various behaviours potentially overstepping relation norms, but not on the response towards them. Even though participants judged behaviours differently depending on their sociosexuality, this effect might become irrelevant when looking at consequences of behaviour or at violent responses towards these.

In contrast to previously conducted research (e.g. Russell et al., 2015; Waltermaurer, 2012), this study has generated no support for the hypothesis that gender influences how individuals judge IPV severity, perceive the perpetrator or the perceived need for punishment. Similarly, there was no further evidence found for the through previous research implied empathetic (Christov-Moore et al., 2014; Kamas & Preston, 2020) or justification differences (Sylaska & Walters, 2014) between males and females. Additionally, the result of Gül and Kupfer (2021) that sociosexuality scores were dependent on gender could also not be reproduced. These missing values might occur as a large part of participants were with the researchers befriended psychology students. Psychology students were shown to be higher in empathy as other students in general (Dimitrijević, Hanak & Milojević, 2011). Moreover, being female, extroverted, not being heterosexual, and not being involved in a current relationship predicted higher scores in sexual behavior and attitudes (Fernández del Río, Ramos-Villagrasa, Castro, & Barrada, 2019). A high percentage of the current sample has been female, and or not in a heterosexual relationship. Additionally, a study of Gangopadhyay (2019) found students out of humanities majors as being more extroverted when compared to students doing

STEM majors. For these reasons, empathy and sociosexuality might have been high in most of the participants, leading to insignificant differences between the genders.

As expected, the same IPV incident is rated differently based on if it occurs between a heterosexual couple or a homosexual couple (H4). These findings are in line with previous research (Russel et al., 2015; Seelau et al., 2003). More specifically, like H4.1 suggested, the IPV between the heterosexual couple was indeed judged as more severely than the same incident between a homosexual couple. As Russel et al. (2015) suggested, these findings may stem from stereotyped beliefs that homosexual partners are more similar in size and strength than heterosexual partners. Since IPV from a male heterosexual perpetrator has been rated as more severely than from a homosexual perpetrator before, it was hypothesised that the heterosexual perpetrator would also be more harshly judged in the current study as well (H4.2). Unexpectedly, exactly the contrary holds true. The homosexual perpetrator was judged more harshly than the heterosexual one. Nevertheless, as expected, participants saw significantly lower need to punish the homosexual perpetrator than the heterosexual perpetrator (H4.3). It is notable, that the current mainly German and Dutch sample did not reflect Vaessens (n.d) study results with a Dutch sample, in which heterosexual and homosexual IPV incidents were not rated differently. As IPV was perceived differently between couples of different sexualities in the current study, German and Dutch nationality may not explain when these differences in judgements occur. This mechanism needs to be further explored. The hypothesis of Vaessen (n.d.) that high LGBTQ+ tolerance in the Netherlands leads to equal judgements may need to be retested.

An alternative explanation for the differences in how the homosexual and heterosexual offender are judged may be grounded in daily confrontation with IPV incidences. Most research papers, campaigns, as well as prevention and treatment programmes addressing IPV are focused on IPV occurring between heterosexual couples (Cannon, 2015; Donovan & Barnes, 2020; Laskey, Bates, & Taylor, 2019; Subirana-Malaret, Gahagan, Parker, & Crowther-Dowey, 2019). Additionally, the number of heterosexual couples is higher than the number of homosexual couples. Both can lead to individuals being regularly confronted with IPV between heterosexuals, but seldomly with IPV between homosexual individuals. Therefore, confrontation with IPV between two men might be more shocking than confrontation with IPV between a man and a woman. While participants may be blunt regarding IPV between a heterosexual couple, the topic of IPV between a homosexual couple might be new and the bluntness may not be transferred. This way, the perpetrator could be judged harsher, nonetheless. If this mechanism depicts reality, it is still unclear why homosexual perpetrators

are judged harsher while perceived need of punishment is lower in the homosexual scenario than in the heterosexual scenario. It might be that the new formulated hypothesis of not transferred bluntness combined with Russel et al.'s (2015) hypothesis of body symmetry in gay couples explain this occurrence. As participants may be shocked from the IPV occurrence between gay males they judge the perpetrator harsher. Nevertheless, they might still inherit the body symmetry bias, based upon which they judge the incident as less serious and perceive less need for punishment.

Practical Implications

The strong differences between how the homosexual IPV incident has been judged compared to the heterosexual IPV incident show biases of others due to the sexuality of IPV experiencers. This can be especially dangerous in regions and academic fields in which it is assumed that, based on overall low discrimination rates, those biases might not occur. These mechanisms are very dangerous as judgements of IPV of a society may correlate with willingness of victims to report their victimhood and how long they stay with violent partners. Previous research indicated that IPV is equally or more threatening to health among sexual minorities (Franklin et al., 2019; Rollè, Giardina, Caldara, Gerino, & Brustia, 2018; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018). That underlines the importance of unravelling biases in IPV judgements reflecting the missing attention to IPV between LGBTQ+ individuals. The judgements of IPV also pose implications for developing interventions. Results like the diminished perceived seriousness of the same incident between homosexual men compared to a heterosexual couple may be one factor explaining why LGBTQ+ focused IPV interventions are missing (Gahagan et al., 2019). In general, more prevention and treatment programmes should be designed targeted at homosexual couples specifically or targeting heterosexual, as well as homosexual couples. As IPV judgements correlate with actual behaviour, tasks working with emotional contagion and/or perspective-taking might help perpetrators to rethink their behaviour and understand victims as part of these treatment and prevention programmes. They might also help victims through empathising with other victims.

Limitations and Strength

Even though the study generated interesting results, it faced several limitations. The choice to recruit participants via SONA systems and snowball sampling led to a sample which does not represent the whole German or Dutch society. Generalisability was not the focus of this study but could have been better among some variables. The generalisability of the results is limited by the overall young age of participants as younger people have been shown to be

more accepting towards homosexuality than older people (Slenders, Sieben, & Verbakel, 2014). Additionally, participants were largely recruited out of a university context, implying an on average higher socioeconomic status of participants than in the general population, as well as a higher level of education. Higher level of education also leads to higher acceptance of LGBTQ+ members (General Social Survey, 2012). As Vaessen (n.d.) already implied, acceptance of homosexuality is very high in the Netherlands, which hinders the results' transferability on less acceptant European countries (e.g. Poland). A similar effect may occur if looked at religion. The Netherlands and Germany entail a high percentage of non-believers in comparison to other European countries like Portugal (48%, 24% & 15% respectively; McCarthy, 2018). Moreover, the participation of more than twice as many females than males could have influenced results.

Another limitation were problems occurring with Qualtrics, leading to incomplete responses of participants several times. Several participants voiced confusion about the short duration of the questionnaire, and it turned out that many participants were not presented with the whole questionnaire. As therefore often too much data was missing for analytical purposes, or consent was not given, responses had to be excluded. Unfortunately, it is uncertain how many of the 31 excluded responses are due to the malfunction.

Moreover, the study design and chosen materials pose some limitations as well. The chosen form to assess IPV judgments did not utilise previously validated scales. Instead, single items out of different sources were collected, combined, and treated as three subscales (judgements of IPV severity, perpetrator perception, and perceived need for punishment). The computed scales showed acceptable internal consistency values with α -values of .62, .62, and .70 for perpetrator perception, severity perception, and perceived need for punishment, respectively. Factor analysis was not possible with two of the three subscales as they did not have enough items. Therefore, expanding the scales will enable factor analysis and ease the path for collecting valid data. In spite of needed changes, the introduction of a multi-item scale assessing IPV judgements may also be seen as a strength of the study, easing the path for future research. Nevertheless, next to the IPV judgement scales, internal consistency of the BES-A scales was acceptable, poor, and unacceptable, with α -values of .75, .57, and .48 for emotional contagion, cognitive empathy, and emotional disconnection, respectively. Poor and unacceptable consistency values pose a threat to validity. Also the internal consistency of the overall measure of sociosexuality was poor ($\alpha = .59$). Therefore, it is advised to repeat the study while reaching sufficient internal consistency values.

Additionally, some participants commented after the completion of the study that they were uncertain what some items were investigating and how their answer would be interpreted.

In particular the item “How intentional was Tom’s behaviour?” caused confusion, as participants commented that it would neither be good if Tom harms his partner on purpose, nor if he loses control. Some participants in the homosexual IPV condition also commented after the completion of the study that they were uncertain whether the questions about Tom (Appendix D) concerned the victim or the perpetrator of the incident. Therefore, it is recommended to repeat the role of the person in question before asking questions about them or choosing names which are easy to remember and differentiate.

A strength of the current study is the investigation of possible correlations which have not been studied before. Several hypotheses were built from scratch as no theoretical basis was found for them. For example, there are scarce to no previous results on the relationship between cognitive empathy, emotional contagion, and emotional disconnection with judgements of IPV severity, perpetrator perception or perceived need for punishment. Through investigating empathy as a construct consisting of three components, it was revealed that emotional contagion positively correlated with judgements of IPV severity and perceived need for punishment, while the other two components (cognitive empathy, emotional disconnection) did not. Therefore, it offers a great starting point for further exploration of how empathy in general, and emotional contagion specifically, influence IPV judgements. Besides, the current study makes use of concise conceptualisations of IPV, empathy, and sociosexuality, which enables recreation of the study and sets ground for further research. Empathy has been insufficiently defined in many studies throughout decades (Cuff et al., 2016). Furthermore, IPV definitions are often not concise and vary greatly among papers, disciplines, and countries (Saltzman, 2004). It is important to gather data upon the same or similar definitions to be able to derive valid conclusions upon the data. Therefore, professional, and openly published conceptualisations were used and supported. Attention check questions during the questionnaire regularly caught the participants’ attention and made not random answers more probable.

Future Research

Future research should replicate the current study for larger populations. In general, judgements of IPV have been shown to be highly dependent on factors such as age, gender, heritage, religion, education level, wealth status, place of residence, as well as occupation (Darteh et al., 2020; Eigenberg & Policastro, 2016; Waltermaurer, 2012; Warren, 2015). This indicates that one-dimensionality in these aspects might distort results. Studies like the current one should be repeated with a more diverse sample in regard to age, nationality and educational level. Further, studies should ask about the participants affiliation with religion to investigate

the results in light of religious influences. Overall, it should be considered that samples should reflect the society in question.

Furthermore, further research is needed to establish in how far empathy relates with judgements of IPV and why differences in judging IPV incidents between a heterosexual couple and a homosexual couple occur. The found relation of emotional contagion and IPV judgements may reflect a relation of perspective-taking and IPV judgements. In that matter, it is meaningful to investigate the relationship of empathetic traits, perspective taking and IPV judgements. As IPV judgements correlate with actual behaviour, tasks working with emotional contagion and/or perspective-taking might help perpetrators to rethink their behaviour and understand victims as part of treatment and prevention programmes. They might also help victims through empathising with other victims.

The current study underlines how important further research in the subject of men against men IPV is to raise awareness and, in the best case, prevent IPV incidents. Research investigating why men in relationships with men engage in so much more deadly IPV than for example lesbian couples (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2018), is highly recommended to unravel unhealthy beliefs and get a grasp on this multi-faceted problem. In general, homosexual couples should be taken included in IPV research.

Conclusion

Summed up, even though some of the hypotheses were denied, it holds true that empathetic characteristics of outsiders and the sexual orientation of the victim and perpetrator of IPV influence judgements of IPV severity, perpetrator perception, and perceived need for punishment. It was shown that homosexual IPV perpetrators are judged differently along all three judgements scales. Furthermore, it is advisable to check whether sociosexuality influences individuals' reactivity to jealousy and therefore might influence their likelihood to engage in IPV. The creation and use of one or several validated scale(s) to assess judgements towards IPV is encouraged. As investigating emotional contagion as a correlate of IPV judgements was fruitful, further research is recommended. As a way to create awareness and inform treatment as well as prevention programmes, especially research using the revelation of bias in how IPV is judged differently between homosexual couples and heterosexual couples is encouraged. The current study made a great contribution to IPV judgement research through introducing a multi-item scale assessing IPV judgements.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Information and Consent Form

Welcome to this survey!

We are currently working on our bachelor's theses and now starting to collect data for our study. Generally, we are investigating peoples' attitudes towards intimate partner violence or IPV. IPV is any form of violence (physical, sexual or emotional) directed at a romantic partner. In this study, you will be asked to read a violent scenario. If violence triggers you, you might like to withdraw from the study.

Procedure

If you agree to participate, you will fill in 7 different parts. Each part offers a short explanation and introduction of the entailed content. You will begin with reading an IPV scenario, which is followed by a questionnaire about your perceptions regarding the scenario. Afterwards, 4 more questionnaires follow. Next, we will ask you to fill out a short and general demographics questionnaire (age, gender, nationality, sexuality). At the end, a short debriefing will explain what we are investigating. Additionally, help opportunities for intimate partner violence victims and other impacted people will be displayed. The study will take you around 20 minutes to complete and if you are participating via SONA, you will be granted 0.25 credits.

Participants Rights

Your participation in this research is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time during this survey and without any reason, prejudice, or consequences.

Risks and Benefits

This study deals with a sensitive topic, intimate partner violence as well as discrimination against minorities, which might be triggering traumatic memories. This study is ethically

approved by the Ethical Review Committee of the Behavioural Management Sciences Faculty.

Confidentiality

Please be assured that your answers will be kept completely confidential and anonymous, as no personally identifying information (e.g. names) are asked. The information you provide will be used for scientific research only and not disclosed with any third parties.

Questions

If you would like to contact the Principal Investigators in the study to discuss the research, please e-mail Kira Lanze (k.m.lanze@student.utwente.nl) or Kim Nina Strohmeier (k.n.strohmeier@student.utwente.nl). If you would like to talk with someone other than the researchers, such as questions about the rights of research participants, please contact the Ethical Review Committee of the Behavioural and Management Sciences Faculty, University of Twente, Netherlands, at ethicscommittee-bms@utwente.nl.

By clicking the "I consent" button below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, you are 18 years of age, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

Please note that this survey will be best displayed on a laptop or desktop computer. Some features may be less compatible for use on mobile devices.

- I consent
- I do not consent

Appendix B

Homosexual IPV Scenario

In the following we will present to you a short scenario about Tom and Paul, who are in a romantic relationship. Please read the text carefully, because in the following pages we will ask you some questions about this scenario.

Tom and Paul (a homosexual couple) have been a happy couple for five years. Over the last few months, when Tom is away at work, Paul has been visiting their neighbour (a male) with whom they have been friends since they moved into the apartment. Over time, their meetings have become more regular, and the two have established an intimate relationship which they decided to keep secret from Tom. One day, Tom becomes suspicious that his boyfriend may be having an affair after accidentally seeing a text message with sexual content on his phone. When Tom comes home from work that evening, he confronts Paul, but Paul keeps silent. Tom asks Paul whether he has been sleeping with another man. Feeling uncomfortable and sensing Tom's anger, Paul turns around to leave the house. Tom grabs Paul's arm and repeats his question. Getting annoyed with Tom's persistence, Paul admits to sleeping with their neighbour. He then says "I don't want you, I want to be with him. He is an amazing lover and so much better than you in bed". In his rage upon hearing these words, Tom pushes Paul against the wall, and slaps him hard across the face.

Appendix C

Heterosexual IPV Scenario

In the following we will present to you a short scenario about Tom and Paul, who are in a romantic relationship. Please read the text carefully, because in the following pages we will ask you some questions about this scenario.

Tom and Emily (a heterosexual couple) have been a happy couple for five years. Over the last few months, when Tom is away at work, Emily has been visiting her neighbour (a male) with whom they have been friends since they moved into the apartment. Over time, their meetings have become more regular, and the two have established an intimate relationship which they decided to keep secret from Tom. One day, Tom becomes suspicious that his girlfriend may be having an affair after accidentally seeing a text message with sexual content on her phone. When Tom comes home from work that evening, he confronts Emily, but Emily keeps silent. He asks her whether she has been sleeping with another man. Feeling uncomfortable and sensing Tom's anger, Emily turns around to leave the house. Tom grabs Emily's arm and repeats his question. Getting annoyed with Tom's persistence, Emily admits to sleeping with their neighbour. She then says "I don't want you, I want to be with him. He is an amazing lover and so much better than you in bed". In his rage upon hearing these words, Tom pushes Emily against the wall, and slaps her hard across the face.

Appendix D

Questions about Attitudes towards Scenario

After you read the text above we would like you to answer the following questions regarding your perception of what just happened:

Attention!

There are attention check questions in this survey. They are there to ensure that participants read the information carefully and provide quality data. If you are paying attention to the questions and instructions, it is very easy to pass these checks.

1 How justified is Tom's behaviour?

- Not at all justified
 - Not justified
 - Somewhat unjustified
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat justified
 - Justified
 - Very justified
-

2 How intentional was Tom's behaviour?

- Not at all intentional
 - Unintentional
 - Somewhat unintentional
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat intentional
 - Intentional
 - Very intentional
-

3 How understandable is Tom's behaviour?

- Not at all
 - Not understandable
 - Somewhat not understandable
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat understandable
 - Understandable
 - Very understandable
-

4 How much do you sympathise with Tom?

- I do not sympathise at all
 - I do not sympathise
 - I do somewhat not sympathise
 - Neutral
 - I somewhat sympathise
 - I sympathise
 - I much sympathise
-

5 How serious was the incident?

- Not at all serious
 - Not serious
 - Somewhat not serious
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat serious
 - Serious
 - Very serious
-

6 Was Tom being aggressive?

- Not at all aggressive
 - Not aggressive
 - Somewhat not aggressive
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat aggressive
 - Aggressive
 - Very Aggressive
-

7 How strongly do you think should Tom held criminally liable for the incident?

- Not at all
 - Should not be held criminally liable
 - Should be held somewhat not criminally liable
 - Neutral
 - Should be held somewhat criminally liable
 - Should be held criminally liable
 - Should be held very criminally liable
-

8 Do you think he (Tom) should be punished?

- Not at all punish
- Do not punish
- Somewhat not punish
- Neutral
- Somewhat punish
- Punish
- Very punish

Appendix E

BES-A with added Attention Check Question

In the following you are presented with 20 items about empathy. Please indicate how much you agree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
My friends' emotions don't affect me much.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After being with a friend who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can understand my friend's happiness when she/he does well at something.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get frightened when I watch characters in a good scary movie.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't become sad when I see other people crying.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other people's feeling don't bother me at all.	<input type="radio"/>				
When someone is feeling 'down' I can usually understand how they feel.	<input type="radio"/>				
I can usually work out when my friends are scared.	<input type="radio"/>				
I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in films.	<input type="radio"/>				
I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.	<input type="radio"/>				
This is an attention check question. If you are reading this, please select "strongly agree".	<input type="radio"/>				
Seeing a person who has been angered has no effect on my feelings.	<input type="radio"/>				

I can usually work out when people are cheerful.	<input type="radio"/>				
I tend to feel scared when I am with friends who are afraid.	<input type="radio"/>				
I can usually realize quickly when a friend is angry.	<input type="radio"/>				
I often get swept up in my friends' feelings.	<input type="radio"/>				
My friend's unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.	<input type="radio"/>				
I am not usually aware of my friends' feelings.	<input type="radio"/>				
I have trouble figuring out when my friends are happy.	<input type="radio"/>				

Appendix F

SOI-R with added Attention Check Question

Below you will be asked 12 questions about your sexual behaviour and attitudes. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please answer what you think about the questions below as honestly as possible, using a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 9 (strongly agree).

With how many different partners have you had sex within the past year (12 months)?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5-6
- 7-9
- 10-19
- 20 +

With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse on one and only one occasion?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5-6
- 7-9
- 10-19
- 20 +

With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse without having an interest in a long-term committed relationship with this person?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5-6
- 7-9
- 10-19
- 20 +

How often do you have fantasies about having sex with someone you are in a committed relationship with?

- never 1
- very seldom 2
- about once every two or three months 3
- about once a month 4
- about once every two weeks 5
- about once a week 6
- several times per week 7
- nearly every day 8
- at least once a day 9

This is an attention check question. If you are reading this, please select "about once a month"

- never 1
- very seldom 2
- about once every two or three months 3
- about once a month 4
- about once every two weeks 5
- about once a week 6
- several times per week 7
- nearly every day 8
- at least once a day 9

How often do you experience sexual arousal when you are in contact with someone you are in a committed romantic relationship with?

- never 1
- very seldom 2
- about once every two or three months 3
- about once a month 4
- about once every two weeks 5
- about once a week 6
- several times per week 7
- nearly every day 8
- at least once a day 9

In everyday life, how often do you have spontaneous fantasies about having sex with someone you just have met?

- never 1
- very seldom 2
- about once every two or three months 3
- about once a month 4
- about once every two weeks 5
- about once a week 6
- several times per week 7
- nearly every day 8
- at least once a day 9

Appendix G

Questions about Demographics

Please indicate your age in complete numbers

Please indicate your gender

- Male
 - Female
 - Self-describe _____
 - Prefer not to say
-

Please indicate your sexuality

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Self-describe _____
- Prefer not to say

Please indicate your nationality?

- German
- Dutch
- Other _____

Appendix H

Debriefing & Help Possibilities

Thank you for your participation!

Your responses will help us to analyse how different people judge intimate partner violence between homosexual and heterosexual couples. Moreover, we are investigating the influencing factors of judgements regarding intimate partner violence.

If you find yourself in a violent situation and/or feel the need to reach out, you can call the below-listed hotlines

Student Affairs Coaching & Counselling UT: +3153 489 2035 (English)

Weißen Ring: Victims of Violence 116 006 (German, English)

Veiligthuis: National Domestic Violence, Child Abuse & Elderly Abuse Hotline: 0800 2000 (Dutch, English)

Seelsorge: 0800/111 0 111, 0800/111 0 222 or 116 123 (German)

De Luisterlijn: 088 0767 000 (Dutch)

Appendix I
Second Consent

After being informed about the intention of this study, would you still like your response to be saved?

- Yes
 No

Appendix J

T-Test Table Conditions & IPV Judgements

Table 3

t-test Results Comparing Participants with Scenario 0 or 1 on IPV Attitudes

variable	condition	n	M	SD	t	df	p
IPV punishment	0	59	5.22	1.18	2.59	104	.01
	1	47	4.59	1.34			
IPV severity	0	59	6.18	.63	3.72	104	.001
	1	47	5.69	.72			
perpetrator	0	59	3.11	.98	-4.20	104	.001
perception	1	47	3.93	1.03			

Note. *n* = Participants, *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation, *df* = degrees of freedom.

Condition 0 = heterosexual scenario, Condition 1 = homosexual scenario