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THE SOCIAL ROLE OF GENDER: HOW GENDER ROLES AND GENDER STRESS IMPACT DATING VIOLENCE ATTITUDES AND OUTCOMES

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

to the faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

of

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

at

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY

New York

by

Jin Lee

Date Submitted	Date Approved
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ABSTRACT

THE SOCIAL ROLE OF GENDER: HOW GENDER ROLES AND GENDER STRESS IMPACT DATING VIOLENCE ATTITUDES AND OUTCOMES

Jin Lee

Dating violence is a prevalent problem with many long-term deleterious effects, including difficulties with future relationships. Much of the research regarding beliefs about dating violence focuses on the acceptability of violence. The justification of violence in certain situations, such as self-defense, revenge, or playing around, has been found to be strongly related with dating violence, and even to predict dating violence perpetration, particularly among men. Further research has shown that individuals who adhere to traditional gender role attitudes display greater acceptance of violence against women in particular. Additional research has shown that when gender norms are violated, it leads to gender role discrepancy stress, which is associated with dating violence perpetration. However, the majority of the literature focuses on male gender role attitudes and male dating violence toward women, and less is known about the impact of gender role attitudes on female perpetration or experience of dating violence.

This study examined 291 young adults between ages 18 and 20. Participants completed anonymous online surveys on experiences of dating violence, gender role attitudes, acceptance of dating violence, and gender stress. Partial correlations revealed that dating violence perpetration is significantly related to attitudes accepting dating violence and gender role attitudes when controlling for victimization. Dating violence victimization is correlated with felt pressure for gender conformity and gender typicality after effects of perpetration are controlled. While traditional gender role attitudes

significantly moderated the relationship between acceptance of dating violence and perpetration, gender stress was not found to play a role between the predictor and outcome variables. Surprisingly, gender did not differentiate outcomes for any of the examined interactions.

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Introduction

Dating Violence

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines dating violence as "the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional aggression within a dating relationship, including stalking," and it can be described using a variety of phrases, including intimate partner violence, domestic violence, or relationship abuse (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). The National Institute of Justice defines relationship abuse broadly as including "physical and sexual violence, psychological abuse, and stalking by current or past romantic or consensual partners, including spouses," noting a differentiation in terminology between teen dating violence during adolescence and intimate partner violence in adulthood (2017). There is little consensus in either the definitional terms or the operationalization of aggression or violence within a romantic relationship, which has yielded a large range of prevalence estimates.

In a systematic review of 169 articles examining dating violence, teen dating violence, domestic violence, and/or intimate partner violence among adolescents and young adults, the prevalence of violence within a romantic relationship ranged from 6% of boys and 9% of girls to 21.8% of young men and 37.2% of young women (Jennings et al., 2017). National surveys tend to report similar prevalence rates of physical dating violence among adolescents at around 8-12% (Halpern, Oslak, Young, Martin, & Kupper, 2001; Halpern, Young, Waller, Martin, & Kupper, 2004; Kann et al., 2018). In a review of research on adolescent dating violence, Jouriles, Platt, and McDonald noted that higher prevalence estimates found in smaller, more localized samples might be due to a difference in sampling, conceptualization, and/or measurement of dating violence (2009).

Even with discrepancies in sampling and measurement, dating violence is a serious global issue. The International Dating Violence Study utilized the same questionnaire to assess rates of dating violence across 31 universities in 16 countries (Straus, 2004). At the median university, 29% of students reported physically assaulting a dating partner in the previous 12 months; overall, reports ranged from 17% (Portugal) to 45% (Louisiana). Looking at adults over the age of 18, the National Violence Against Women Survey found that 22.1% of women and 7.4% of men reported physical assault by a current or former romantic partner or date within their lifetime; 1.3% of women and 0.9% of men reported physical assault by a partner within the previous 12 months (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Other studies have looked beyond physical dating violence to examine the rates of sexual and psychological violence as well. The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS; Kann et al., 2018) found that 6.9% of high school students reported being forced to engage in sexual acts against their desire during the previous year, with females reporting a higher prevalence (10.7%) than males (2.8%). From adolescence through the fourth year of college, 88% of young women at a university in North Carolina reported experiencing at least one incident of physical or sexual victimization by a romantic partner, while 63.5% had experienced both (P. H. Smith, White, & Holland, 2003). In a systematic review of 101 studies of youth aged 13-18 (Wincentak, Connolly, & Card, 2017), the overall prevalence rate for physical dating violence was 20% (range 1-61%) and sexual dating violence was 9% (range <1-54%).

Yet psychological violence appears to be more common than either physical or sexual violence (Jouriles, Platt, & McDonald, 2009; O'Leary, Slep, Avery-Leaf, &

Cascardi, 2008). The National Survey on Teen Relationships and Intimate Violence (STRiV) found much higher rates of psychological violence perpetration and victimization than physical and/or sexual violence among U.S. youth between 12-18 years of age (Taylor & Mumford, 2016). A study of Canadian students in grades 7, 9, and 11 found that psychological abuse was the most common form of dating violence for both boys and girls (Sears, Byers, & Price, 2007). Furthermore, 19% of boys and 26% of girls reported having used two or more forms of dating violence. High school students in New Zealand reported emotional violence as most common, followed by unwanted sexual activity, then physical violence (Jackson, Cram, & Seymour, 2000). Psychological abuse has been found to be highly correlated with physical violence for both male and female high school students (Temple, Shorey, Tortolero, Wolfe, & Stuart, 2013).

Many studies assessing dating violence prevalence show overall rates among males and females to be similar, but differences between genders arise upon closer examination (Jouriles et al., 2009). A nationally representative sample of American teenagers between 12 and 17 years of age indicated that girls were more likely to be victims of dating violence than boys (Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2008). A study of American university students found comparable levels of aggression from dating partners, but men reported experiencing more psychological aggression than women and women reported more sexual victimization than men (Harned, 2001). Furthermore, in a Spanish sample of 16-20 year olds, significantly more women engaged in verbal aggression while males engaged in more severe physical aggression (Muñoz-Rivas et al., 2007). In this sample, women also faced worse health consequences due to the

relationship violence. Differences are also found in the severity of violence experienced, with females reporting experiencing significantly more severe violence and males being more likely to experience less severe forms of violence (Molidor & Tolman, 1998). Females are also more likely to experience feelings of fear and hurt, as well as a desire to leave their abusive situation for self-protection (Jackson et al., 2000; Molidor & Tolman, 1998).

Experiencing dating violence seems to put individuals at greater risk of further revictimization. Women who experienced physical dating violence during their teenage and college years are more likely to experience further dating violence than those who had never been victimized (P. H. Smith et al., 2003). Furthermore, women who were physically assaulted by a romantic partner during college were found significantly more likely to be sexually assaulted in the same year.

Dating violence against girls is associated with increased risk of substance use, heavy episodic drinking, unhealthy weight control behaviors, risky sexual behavior, pregnancy, suicidal ideation, depression, PTSD, and difficulties in future relationships (Exner-Cortens, Eckenrode, & Rothman, 2013; Silverman, Raj, Mucci, Hathaway, 2001; Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2008). Males reporting dating violence saw increased antisocial behaviors, suicidal ideation, and marijuana use (Exner-Cortens et al., 2013). The high prevalence rate and host of negative outcomes for young people who have experienced dating violence necessitate continued research into the specific factors that put an individual at greater risk for or protect against experiences of dating violence.

Cognitions About Dating Violence

Acceptability of Violence

Much of the research regarding beliefs about dating violence focuses on the acceptability or justifiability of violence. A review of the literature on attitudes towards violence against women found consistent evidence that attitudes that support violence are associated with actual perpetration of violent behavior at both individual and community levels (Flood & Pease, 2009). Among high school students in California, more widespread acceptance of the use of violence was significantly related to both dating violence perpetration and victimization (Malik, Sorenson, & Aneshensel, 1997). A study of Canadian high school students found that high acceptance of dating aggression was predictive of recurrent perpetration and victimization in their next relationship (Williams, Connolly, Pepler, Craig, & Laporte, 2008). However, for teenagers with low acceptance of dating aggression, the negative relationship characteristics of hostility and nonphysical conflict predicted aggression instead.

Negative attitudes toward women, as well as accepting attitudes about rape and violence predicted the use of violence and coercion in relationships for Canadian male university students (Reitzel-Jaffe & Wolfe, 2001). These negative attitudes also predicted association with peers who endorse violent attitudes and behaviors, which then predicted abuse toward dating partners. At even younger ages, eighth and ninth grade students in rural North Carolina who perpetrated dating violence reported more positive outcome expectations, fewer negative outcome expectations, and greater acceptance of dating violence (Foshee, Bauman, & Linder, 1999).

Researchers have found consistent gender differences in attitudes towards dating violence. Men were more likely than women to agree with violence-supportive beliefs, perceive a narrower range of behaviors as being violent, minimize the harm caused by physical or sexual assault, and see violence against women as being less serious or damaging (Flood & Pease, 2009). Among college students, females were less accepting of dating violence than their male counterparts (Cauffman, Feldman, Jensen, & Arnett, 2000). Students reported greater acceptance of dating violence when females were the aggressor than when males were the aggressor.

A study of college students found that violence in general, and specifically dating violence, is viewed by most as unacceptable (Cauffman et al., 2000). However, acceptance of dating violence seems to vary depending on situational changes. College students were more accepting of violence if done in self-defense, while being playful, or when seeking revenge, and those students who were more accepting of violence were more likely to engage in violent behaviors. The least acceptable justifications for dating violence included thinking that no one would find out, feeling entitled to decide how to treat one's partner, or imitating friends' behaviors.

Adolescents from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Shanghai were more accepting overall of female perpetration of physical violence against their partners than male perpetration (Shen, Chiu, & Gao, 2012). Male attitudes justifying dating violence towards girls were the strongest predictor of boys' perpetration of physical and sexual dating violence. The top three justifications for male-perpetrated dating violence were if the female partner was flirting with someone else, if she was cheating on him, or if she hit him first. Respondents reported being more likely to justify female violence towards

male partners if he hit her first, if he was cheating on her, or if he was flirting with someone else.

Gender Role Attitudes

According to a review of factors that contribute to attitudes toward violence against women, the most consistent predictor of such attitudes were gender role attitudes (Flood & Pease, 2009). Gender role attitudes are conceptualized on a continuum ranging from traditional to egalitarian. Traditional gender role stereotypes have been defined as attitudes in which the husband, or male partner, is seen as having the higher position in terms of personal attitudes and decision-making power (Finn, 1986). Individuals with egalitarian attitudes respond to other people in ways that are independent of their sex (Beere, King, Beere, & King, 1984).

Traditional gender role attitudes have been found to correlate with greater acceptance of violence against women, particularly among men (Berkel, Vandiver, & Bahner, 2004; Flood & Pease, 2009). Conversely, people with more egalitarian gender role attitudes were less accepting of violence against women. In an early study, traditional gender role attitudes were found to be the most powerful predictor of attitudes supporting marital violence (Finn, 1986). In a related field of study, traditional gender role attitudes consistently predicted attitudes that ascribed greater responsibility to victims of date rape, less responsibility to the perpetrator, and less likely to agree with legal consequences for the perpetrator (Black & McCloskey, 2013).

Gender role attitudes and acceptance of dating violence appear to work together to increase the likelihood of perpetration of dating violence. In the previously mentioned study of adolescents from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, those who endorsed

traditional gender role beliefs tended to have greater acceptance of dating violence (Shen et al., 2012). Adolescents' traditional gender role beliefs correlated with their attitudes justifying male-to-female violence, and this relationship was then associated with perpetration of dating violence.

In a study of longitudinal associations between gender role attitudes and physical dating violence perpetration among adolescent boys in North Carolina, traditional gender role attitudes were associated with greater dating violence perpetration 18 months later for boys who reported high acceptance of dating violence (Reyes, Foshee, Niolon, Reidy, & Hall, 2016). A similar result was found in a small Canadian province, where adolescent boys with more traditional attitudes about females' roles, greater acceptance of boys' use of violence, and prior experience with any form of dating violence were more likely to report having used violence in their dating relationships (Sears et al., 2007). Gender roles were not significantly associated with dating violence for girls, who were more likely to use psychologically and physically abusive behaviors in their dating relationships when they were more accepting of girls' use of violence and had prior experience with dating violence.

Although much of the literature on gender role attitudes focus on traditional gender roles in which males have greater power over females, a review of the research found that power imbalance in either direction may play a critical role in relationship violence (Moore & Stuart, 2005). A study of South African families examined differences among families that were male-dominated, female-dominated, or shared joint decision-making power (Choi & Ting, 2008). There was a higher frequency of violence against wives in families in which either the male or female dominated the power

structure than in families that shared decision-making power. The International Dating Violence Survey among university students found that dominance by either the male or female partner within a relationship is associated with increased probability of violence by the dominant partner (Straus, 2008). Among the studies reviewed by Moore and Stuart (2005), male-dominant couples generally tended to experience the greatest rates of partner violence, followed by female-dominant couples, then equalitarian and divided-power relationships.

Gender Stress

To explain the mechanisms by which traditional gender role attitudes lead to greater perpetration of dating violence, some researchers have examined what happens when such gender roles are violated. Because much of the literature focuses on male violence towards women, gender role discrepancy stress is generally defined as the resulting stress when a man believes that he is insufficiently masculine or believes that he is perceived as such (Reidy, Berke, Gentile, & Zeichner, 2014). Males that adhere to traditional masculine norms have been found more likely to perpetrate violence in general, and dating violence in particular (Parrott & Zeichner, 2003; Reidy, Shirk, Sloan, & Zeichner, 2009). Traditional masculine norms are associated with dominance, aggressiveness, and power, and the extreme of such masculine norms has been characterized by a tendency to assert physical power and dominance, particularly in interactions with women (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984; Richardson & Hammock, 2007). When men experience a high degree of gender role discrepancy stress, aggression is part of their script to restore their gender status. A review of research about masculine gender status found that after gender-threatening situations, such as completing a stereotypically

female task, men were more likely to choose more aggressive or riskier activities (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). They were also more likely to report more physically aggressive thoughts.

In a review of the literature on masculinity and partner violence, Moore and Stuart (2005) found a consistent and positive relationship between gender role stress and the use of verbal and physical conflict resolution tactics for men. Furthermore, men's beliefs about appropriate male behavior may be more predictive of male-perpetrated partner violence than beliefs about acceptable female behavior. The interaction of masculine ideology and gender role stress has been found to be a significant predictor of aggression (Jakupcak, Lisak, & Roemer, 2002). At high levels of masculine ideology, gender role stress significantly predicts aggression; at low levels of ideology, gender role stress displayed no significant effect. At low levels of gender role stress, high levels of masculine ideology predicted lower levels of displayed aggression. Masculine discrepancy stress predicted men's historical perpetration of intimate partner violence independent of other masculinity-related variables (Reidy et al., 2014).

Although most of the literature has exclusively examined male stress, a recent study examined the role of masculine gender role stress for both males and females (McDermott, Naylor, McKelvey, & Kantra, 2017). They defined women's masculine gender role stress as the "psychological consequences of thinking, feeling, or behaving in ways that are considered stereotypically masculine." Masculine gender role stress was significantly related to acceptance of psychological, physical, and sexual dating violence for both men and women.

The vast majority of the literature studying cognitions about dating violence, including acceptance of violence and gender role attitudes, focuses on male cognitions and male-perpetrated dating violence toward females. Much remains unknown about female cognitions about dating violence, as well as cognitions of both males and females about female-perpetrated dating violence.

Current Study

It is clear in the body of research that gender plays some role in differentiating the types and outcomes of dating violence experiences. However, there is a lack of consistency in the research examining how gender influences dating violence. As Richardson and Hammock (2007) noted in their review of gender and aggression, gender alone has relatively weak effects on aggression. Instead, they suggest that the context of the social role of gender, types of aggression, and the interpersonal relationship might better explain the role of gender in aggressive behaviors. This study seeks to more closely examine the social role of gender within dating violence. As discussed above, the combination of traditional gender role attitudes and acceptance of dating violence has been found to be more strongly related to dating violence than either attitude alone (Reitzel-Jaffe & Wolfe, 2001; Reyes et al., 2016). While some studies have found that males with more traditional gender role attitudes display greater acceptance of violence against women and perpetration of dating violence (Berkel et al., 2004), Bookwala et al. (1992) concluded that men with less traditional gender role attitudes were more likely to commit dating violence. Additionally, much of the current body of literature has focused on male adherence to traditional gender roles, male acceptance of dating violence toward women, and male perpetration of violence. This study seeks to expand the current

literature by examining the impact of gendered attitudes on both males and females in the perpetration of or victimization from dating violence.

Furthermore, this study aims to better understand additional social roles of gender as related to dating violence by examining gender stress via an individual's felt pressure to conform to gender norms and felt gender typicality as a male or female, as well as attitudes about gender roles and norms. This study will examine if the interaction of these variables with dating violence acceptance attitudes is associated with either dating violence perpetration or victimization. The aim of this study is to investigate the interplay of dating violence attitudes, gender stereotypes, and gender stress on experiences of dating violence in men and women.

Hypotheses

1. We hypothesize that traditional gender role attitudes will strengthen the relationship between accepting attitudes of dating violence and experiences of dating violence.
2. We expect the relationship between dating violence acceptance attitudes to dating violence perpetration will be stronger as a function of greater gender typicality and felt pressure for gender conformity for males.
3. Females who report greater acceptance of dating violence will be more likely to be victims of dating violence if they experience higher gender typicality and felt pressure for gender conformity.
4. Females who endorse greater dating violence acceptance will be more likely to perpetrate dating violence if they also report lower gender typicality and felt pressure for gender conformity.

Method

Participants

To enhance validity, participants who were suspected of speeding through survey responses were screened out. Insufficient response time was defined as less than one-third of the median survey completion time of the initial 29 participants, resulting in a cutoff of three minutes. In total, 206 participants were excluded due to insufficient response times, resulting in the final sample of 291 participants. The final sample of survey data was collected from 151 male and 140 female young adults across the United States (115 age 18, 83 age 19, 93 age 20). Of the respondents, 50.5% identified as White Non-Hispanic, 21.6% identified as Black Non-Hispanic, 7.9% identified as White Hispanic, 6.5% identified as Other Hispanic, 6.2% identified as Asian Non-Hispanic, 4.1% identified as Mixed Race, 1% identified as Asian Hispanic, 1.4% identified as Other Non-Hispanic, and 1% identified as Black Hispanic. The majority of participants identified as heterosexual (80.4%), 9.6% bisexual, 5.2% gay or lesbian, 2.1% other, and 2.7% did not disclose their sexuality. At the time of survey collection, 57% of the sample were single, 32% in a relationship, 8.9% dating casually, and 2.1% were married.

Procedure

Individuals were invited to participate in an anonymous study that aimed to understand the role of gendered attitudes on the acceptability and experiences of dating violence. Qualtrics, an online data collection system that complies with Federal Acts and regulations related to private data security (i.e. HIPAA), was used to recruit participants and collect the data. Recruitment was complete with the following guidelines: individuals in the United States with ages between 18-20, and an even balance of males

and females. Once opened, the online link directed participants to a consent page that explained the purposes, risks, and benefits of the study. All consenting participants were given a demographic form. Individuals who endorsed any history of dating or dating relationships were given the remainder of the surveys described below. At the end the survey, all participants were provided with information about resources for dating violence, regardless of completion status. All participants who completed the survey were eligible to enter a raffle to win a gift certificate.

Measures

Demographics. A questionnaire was designed for this study to assess age, race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and relationship status at the time of response.

Dating Violence. Experiences of dating violence were measured using scales from the Safe Dates Project (Foshee et al., 1998). The Safe Dates Psychological and Physical Dating Abuse Scales are among the top three most commonly used measures in studies of adolescent dating violence (J. Smith et al., 2015). Physical and psychological abuse perpetration were measured by asking, "How many times have you ever done the following things to a person that you have been on a date with?" followed by 14 and 18 items, respectively (see Appendices A and C).

The physical abuse scales include two items that measure sexual violence. The items were rated on a four-point Likert scale such that 0 indicated no violence experienced or perpetrated, 1 indicated 1 to 3 experiences with dating violence, 2 indicated 4 to 9 times, and 3 indicated 10 or more times. Parallel scales were used to measure physical and psychological abuse victimization, which asked "How often has anyone that you have ever been on a date with done the following things to you?" (see Appendices B and D).

Internal consistency in this study was high for all four dating violence measures, with Cronbach's α of .96 for victimization and .97 for perpetration of physical abuse scales, and .95 for victimization and .94 for perpetration of psychological abuse. A scaled score for dating violence perpetration was created by standardizing and taking the mean of physical and psychological perpetration scores ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$). The same procedure was used to create a scaled score for dating violence victimization from scores of physical and psychological victimization ($r = 0.59$, $p < 0.001$).

Gender Role Attitudes. Gender role attitudes were measured using the gender stereotyping scale from the Safe Dates Project (Foshee et al., 1998). The 11 items on this scale were adapted from the Attitudes Towards Women Scale for Adolescents (AWSA; Galambos, Petersen, Richards, & Gitelson, 1985) and a measure of female stereotyping (Gunter & Wober, 1982). Scale questions asked participants how strongly they agreed or disagreed with normative belief statements about roles and expectations for men and women in society (see Appendix E). Response options ranged from "strongly disagree" (0) to "strongly agree (3). Item scores were averaged to create a composite score such that higher scores indicated endorsement of more traditional gender roles (Cronbach's α = .83).

Acceptance of Violence Attitudes. The Attitudes About Aggression in Dating Situations (AADS; Slep, Cascardi, Avery-Leaf, & O'Leary, 2001) measures attitudes about physical dating aggression within specific contexts. The measure includes five items describing a male aggressing against his girlfriend, five items describing a female aggressing against her boyfriend, and two describing aggression against a same-gendered peer in the context of a conflict that included that dating partner (see Appendix F). Participants indicate the

degree to which they agree or disagree with the aggressive behavior in that situation on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (6). Items were reverse-coded then averaged for a composite score, such that higher scores indicated greater acceptance of dating aggression (Cronbach's $\alpha = .87$).

The Justification of Verbal and Coercive Tactics Scale (JVCT; Slep et al., 2001) measures attitudes about emotionally aggressive behaviors toward romantic partners. There are two parallel sets of 12 items each about justification of male and female tactics regarding verbal aggression (4 items), controlling behaviors (4 items), and jealous behaviors (4 items). Participants are asked to indicate whether each tactic is justified in "many," "some," "few," "extreme," or "no" situations (see Appendix G). Items were reverse-coded then averaged to create composite scores such that higher scores indicated greater justification of emotionally aggressive dating behaviors. Cronbach's α was .92 for female aggression and .90 for male aggression.

Scores from the AADS and the JVCT were standardized and found to be significantly correlated ($r = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$). The mean of the standardized AADS and JVCT score was found to create a generalized dating violence attitudes score.

Gender Stress. Questions assessing Gender Typicality (6 items) and Felt Pressure for Gender Conformity (4 items) were taken from a measure of gender identity developed by Egan and Perry (2001). In order to reduce response biases, all items were presented with two options of gender attributes, and participants were first asked to choose which option they resembled more, then indicate whether that item was "very true" or "sort of true" for them. Items on the Gender Typicality scale assessed the participant's self-perception of feeling like he or she is a typical example of his or her gender category (see Appendix H).

Items on the Felt Pressure scale assessed the degree to which participants feel pressure from others and themselves for gender conformity (see Appendix I). This scale was originally developed to assess children's gender identity, thus developmentally inappropriate items were removed for this study. In past studies, reported internal consistencies for Gender Typicality and Felt Pressure were .78 and .92, respectively. In the current sample, Cronbach's α was .59 for Gender Typicality and .49 for Felt Pressure.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Of the survey participants, 69.4% reported perpetrating dating violence at least once, and 83.2% reported at least one experience of dating violence victimization. Consistent with previous studies, psychological violence was more common than physical violence. More specifically, 79.0% of participants reported being victims of psychological violence and 56.9% reported physical violence victimization, while 63.9% reported perpetrating psychological violence and 36.4% perpetrated physical violence in their lifetime. Overall, participants reported gender roles that were more egalitarian (M = .75, SD = .58). Lower scores on this scale, which ranged from 0 to 3, corresponded with egalitarian views and higher scores corresponded with traditional views. Overall responses on the JVCT, which ranged from 1 to 5 with higher scores indicating greater justification for emotional aggression, showed general acceptance of emotionally aggressive behaviors (M = 3.95, SD = .82). Responses on the AADS, which ranged from 1 to 6 with higher scores indicating greater justification of physical violence, suggested participants did not accept the use of physical violence in most situations (M = 2.97, SD = .94). As described above, the scores of the JVCT and AADS were standardized and combined to create a single dating violence attitudes score.

Zero-order correlations among predictor and criterion variables, as well as gender age, and sexual orientation were examined (see Table 1). Sexual orientation was recoded into a dichotomous variable, such that 1 = heterosexual and 2 = not heterosexual. Age was not significantly correlated with any variables. Participants who identified as heterosexual endorsed more traditional gender roles and reported greater gender

typicality than participants who identified as non-heterosexual. Consistent with the literature, male participants endorsed more traditional gender role attitudes than females ($r = -0.30$, $p < 0.001$). Males also reported greater gender typicality than females ($r = -0.15$, $p = 0.01$) and greater felt pressure to conform to masculine norms than females' felt pressure for feminine norms ($r = -0.33$, $p < 0.001$). As in previous studies, experiences of dating violence perpetration and victimization were highly correlated ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.001$).

Dating violence perpetration was significantly correlated with gender role attitudes ($r = 0.53$, $p < 0.001$), acceptance of dating violence ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$), and felt pressure for gender conformity ($r = 0.14$, $p = 0.02$). Dating violence victimization was also found to be significantly correlated with gender role attitudes ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$), acceptance of dating violence ($r = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$), and felt pressure for gender conformity ($r = 0.19$, $p = 0.001$). Victimization was additionally correlated with gender typicality ($r = -0.15$, $p = 0.01$).

Partial correlations between the predictor variables and each dating violence outcome were examined separately while controlling for age, gender, and the other dating violence outcome (see Table 2). When controlling for dating violence victimization, acceptance of dating violence ($pr = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$) and gender role attitudes ($pr = 0.44$, $p < 0.001$) remained significantly correlated with dating violence perpetration. However, felt pressure for gender conformity was no longer significantly related to perpetration when controlling for victimization. When controlling for perpetration, only gender typicality ($pr = -0.17$, $p < 0.01$) and felt pressure for gender conformity ($pr = 0.17$, $p < 0.01$) remained significantly correlated with dating violence victimization.

Interactive Effects of Dating Violence Acceptance, Gender Based Cognitions, and Dating Violence Perpetration

To test the hypothesized moderating relationship between dating violence attitudes and gender-based cognitions to predict dating violence perpetration, we tested two-way interactions with age and gender as covariates utilizing Model 1 in Hayes' PROCESS module v3.4 (Hayes, 2017). Simple slopes were then conducted to evaluate the relationships at various levels of the gender-based cognitions (high: +1 *SD*, medium: 0 *SD*, and low: -1 *SD*; see Table 3)). We then added victimization as a third covariate and tested the two-way interactions again.

Gender role attitudes significantly moderated the relationship between dating violence attitudes and dating violence perpetration ($\Delta F = 34.54$, $p < 0.001$). Simple slopes analyses found that dating violence attitudes were not significantly related to dating violence perpetration for those with more egalitarian gender role attitudes, or 1 SD below the mean ($B = 0.11$, $p = 0.14$). Dating violence attitudes were significantly correlated with dating violence victimization at the mean level of gender role attitudes ($B = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$), and at 1 SD above the mean for those with more traditional gender role attitudes ($B = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$). This pattern remained even after controlling for dating violence victimization.

Felt pressure ($\Delta F = 0.56$, $p = 0.45$) and gender typicality ($\Delta F = 0.32$, $p = 0.57$) failed to significantly moderate the effects of dating violence attitudes on dating violence perpetration. Gender also failed to qualify the above two-way interactions, either when controlling for dating violence victimization and not.

Interactive Effects of Dating Violence Acceptance, Gender Based Cognitions, and Dating Violence Victimization

We followed the same processes described above to test for prediction of dating violence victimization (see Table 4). Gender role attitudes moderated the relationship between dating violence attitudes and dating violence victimization (□$F = 4.87$, $p = 0.03$). Simple slopes analyses found that dating violence attitudes were not significantly related to dating violence victimization for those with more egalitarian gender role attitudes, or 1 SD below the mean ($B = 0.17$, $p = 0.08$). Dating violence attitudes were significantly associated with dating violence victimization at the mean level of gender role attitudes ($B = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$). The association was even stronger for those with more traditional gender role attitudes, or 1 SD above the mean ($B = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$). However, when we controlled for dating violence perpetration, moderation effects of gender role attitudes were no longer significant (□$F = 0.02$, $p = 0.90$).

Felt pressure (□$F = 3.54$, $p = 0.06$) and gender typicality (□$F = 0.01$, $p = 0.94$) failed to significantly moderate the effects of dating violence attitudes on dating violence victimization. Gender also failed to qualify the above two-way interactions, both when dating violence perpetration was controlled and not controlled.

Discussion

Dating violence has been consistently shown in prior research to be influenced by accepting attitudes of dating violence and traditional gender role attitudes. However, much of this research has focused on attitudes about and perpetration of violence against women in particular. The literature on gender role attitudes and dating violence has largely focused on male adherence to traditional gender roles and male perpetration of violence. Many prior studies have specifically examined correlates of dating violence perpetration alone. Much remains unknown about how these findings might converge or diverge from female attitudes related to dating violence, attitudes about female-perpetrated violence, and the influence of gendered attitudes on dating violence victimization for either gender.

The narrow scope of prior research has failed to examine correlates of dating violence perpetration and victimization simultaneously. Failure to control for the other dating violence outcome in prior research is especially important given how highly correlated the outcomes are in the literature and in this study. Indeed, in the current study, there was a very different pattern of correlates for each dating violence outcome when the other outcome was controlled.

Dating violence victimization was significantly related to all four predictor variables: acceptance of dating violence, gender role attitudes, felt pressure for gender conformity, and gender typicality. Dating violence perpetration was correlated with all but gender typicality. Interestingly, once we controlled for the other dating violence outcome, each predictor variable was associated with either perpetration or victimization alone. When controlling for victimization, dating violence perpetration was correlated

only with dating violence acceptance attitudes and gender role attitudes. Study participants who reported greater acceptance of dating violence as well as those reporting more traditional gender roles attitudes were more likely to have perpetrated dating violence. These associations are consistent with the existing literature that has established a strong relationship between accepting attitudes and gender role attitudes with dating violence perpetration (e.g., Flood & Pease, 2009; Reyes et al., 2016). However, the established connection between dating violence acceptance and gender role attitudes did not extend to experiences of dating violence victimization when effects of perpetration were controlled.

We anticipated that measures of gender stress would provide additional insight into these relationships. Contrary to our hypotheses, our measures of felt pressure for gender conformity and gender typicality had no significant correlation to dating violence perpetration either as main effects or in interaction with acceptance of dating violence. Measures of gender stress were instead uniquely correlated with dating violence victimization. Participants who experienced greater pressure for gender conformity as well as those who reported lower gender typicality were more likely to report dating violence victimization. These findings run counter to the consistent relationship between gender stress and use of violence by men (Moore & Stuart, 2005; Reidy et al., 2014). Our results may have been influenced by the highly egalitarian gender role beliefs among our participants. A prior study found that gender stress significantly predicted aggression only at high levels of traditionally masculine ideology (Jakupcak et al., 2002). It is possible that for those with more egalitarian views, aggression is not a necessary part of the script in response to gender stress. Rather, those who experience gender stress may

experience other mental health difficulties, such as depression or self-esteem, which were found to be significant risk factors for dating violence victimization in a recent meta-analysis (Spencer, Anders, Toews, & Emanuels, 2020). However, it is difficult to ascertain the directionality of this effect, and it is possible that victimization may impact an individual's gender stress as well.

It was expected that acceptance of dating violence would connect more strongly to dating violence outcomes depending on gender role attitudes and gender stress as moderators. Consistent with existing literature and confirming our first hypothesis, more traditional gender role attitudes strengthened the relationship between acceptance of dating violence attitudes and both dating violence perpetration and victimization. Those with more egalitarian gender roles attitudes had no such relationship to dating violence outcomes. However, when we controlled for the other dating violence outcome to examine the unique contribution of dating violence attitudes and gender role attitudes to each, victimization was no longer correlated with the predictor variables. This stresses the importance of controlling for the other dating violence outcome, indicating that the interaction between dating violence acceptance and gender role attitudes are uniquely related to dating violence perpetration.

While we gained insight into the nature of the relationship between dating violence acceptance, gender role attitudes, and dating violence outcomes, little evidence was found in support of gender stress as moderators. Contrary to our hypotheses, felt pressure and gender typicality had no significant effect on the relationship between dating violence acceptance and experiences of dating violence. There are several possible reasons we failed to find such interactions. The first is that felt pressure for gender

conformity and gender typicality simply have no meaningful relationship to dating violence acceptance. Given the body of literature establishing connections between gender stress and aggression, this may indicate that accepting attitudes of such violence are not part of this relationship. Alternatively, felt pressure and gender typicality may not be an adequate measure of gender stress in this context. These null interactive findings may have been influenced by compounding the low reliability of the felt pressure and gender typicality scales within this study. It should be noted, however, that despite the low reliability of these measures, they were both uniquely associated with experiences of dating violence as main effects. Nevertheless, in future research, efforts should be made to enhance the reliability of these measures among older populations. Perhaps the Harter format of both questionnaires confused participants, so this format could be removed in future studies or instructions could be rewritten to provide clearer instruction.

Surprisingly, gender did not differentiate outcomes for any of the examined interactions. These results are contrary to the remaining hypotheses of this study. Dating violence prevalence was similar between males and females in the current study. This is similar to findings in studies in which dating violence is defined broadly (Jouriles et al., 2009). More specific differences arise when violence is more strictly defined (i.e., Molidor & Tolman, 1998; Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2008). The lack of gender differences within our results may also be due to not differentiating the type of violence perpetrated or experienced. Women have been found more likely to engage in verbal or psychological aggression while men engage in more severe physical aggression (Harned, 2001; Muñoz-Rivas et al., 2007). Further investigation into gender differences within the

link between dating violence acceptance, gender role attitudes, and dating violence may do well to distinguish more specifically between forms and severity of violence.

Limitations

Multiple study limitations should be considered when interpreting the results of the current study. First, individuals participating in the study may have underreported their experiences of dating violence or their attitudes about gender and dating violence despite the anonymous nature of their responses, as is the concern with many self-report measures. Second, the Felt Pressure for Gender Conformity scale only had four items, while the Gender Typicality scale had six items. The limited number of items may have accounted for the low reliabilities of both scales within this study.

This study did not account for geographic or cultural differences within the study sample. There may be some variation in dating violence attitudes and gendered attitudes in different regions of the country. Our study also did not examine the effect of cultural backgrounds of the study variables. Finally, we did not distinguish between heterosexual and same-sex relationships within this study. There may be differences in the way gender roles and gendered experiences factor into same-sex relationships.

Suggestions for Future Study

Future studies should continue to explore the conditions that may enhance or diminish the likelihood that acceptance of dating violence is related to dating violence perpetration and victimization. Building on our findings, future research should be sure to control for the effects of one dating violence outcome when analyzing correlates of the other.

Further exploration is warranted of the association between dating violence victimization and felt pressure for gender conformity and gender typicality. This may provide beneficial information to aid in identifying those at risk for victimization in dating relationships as well as to consider for clinical support for those who have been on the receiving end of relational violence.

Future studies should aim to address the limitations discussed in this study by expanding recruitment efforts to better understand the potential differences between those in heterosexual versus same-sex relationships. Given the high rate of reported dating violence perpetration and victimization in this study, future studies should distinguish severity levels of the violence reported within their analyses. Additionally, future studies should examine the differentiating impact of the examined cognitions on physical and psychological violence separately. Given the high correlation between dating violence perpetration and victimization, future research should consider examining unique correlates of both outcomes within bidirectional violence in comparison to individuals who experience perpetration or victimization alone.

To better understand the role of gender stress within dating violence attitudes and experiences, it may be valuable to explore situational triggers. Recent studies have found that men who perceived lower power in their relationship and experienced higher gender role stress reported more physical aggression toward their partner, particularly on days when they experienced lower power in specific situations (Harrington, Overall, & Cross, 2021; Overall, Hammond, McNulty, & Finkel, 2016). Further study into specific experiences of gender stress and its contribution to dating violence attitudes and experiences may yield more significant results than in the current study.

The current study expands the existing literature on attitudes that influence dating violence experiences by noting the importance of controlling for the other outcome when examining dating violence perpetration or victimization. Additionally, attitudes and experiences of both genders were measured, which expands on research that has largely focused on male attitudes and perpetration of violence against women. These findings open up many more avenues for research into factors that uniquely influence experiences of dating violence victimization and perpetration for both males and females.

Tables

Table 1

Zero-Order Correlations of Variables

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Perpetration of Dating Violence								
2. Victimization of Dating Violence	.68**							
3. Gender Role Attitudes	.53**	.35**						
4. Dating Violence Attitudes	.62**	.43**	.46**					
5. Felt Pressure for Gender Conformity	.14*	.19**	.30**	.20**				
6. Gender Typicality	-.03	-.15*	.14*	.04	.08			
7. Gender	-.02	.04	-.30**	-.11	-.33**	-.15**		
8. Age	.04	.00	.05	-.03	.05	.06	-.09	
9. Sexual Orientation	-.04	.08	-.17**	-.02	-.10	-.21**	.12*	.02

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

Table 2

Partial Correlations Among Predictor and Outcome Variables, Controlling for Age, Gender, and Other Outcome Variable

Measure	Perpetration	Victimization
1. Gender Role Attitudes	.438**	-.005
2. Dating Violence Attitudes	.491**	.021
3. Felt Pressure for Gender Conformity	-.016	.170**
4. Gender Typicality	.091	-.167**

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

Table 3

Relations Between Dating Violence Acceptance and Perpetration as a Function of Gendered Attitudes

	Gender Based Cognitions			
	Low	Medium	High	Acceptance x Cognitions
	β	β	β	ΔR^2
Gender Role Attitudes	.1134	.3598***	.6062***	.0562***
Felt Pressure for Gender Conformity				.0012
Gender Typicality				.0007

Note. All continuous variables were standardized within the sample. Acceptance x Attitudes = additional variance explained by the interaction term, and significance, between a gendered attitude dimension and dating violence acceptance after sex and age were controlled. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$. Low internalizing = 1 SD below the mean, medium internalizing is at the mean, and high internalizing is 1 SD above the mean. Simple slopes are provided only when the interaction is statistically significant.

Table 4

Relations Between Dating Violence Acceptance and Victimization as a Function of Gendered Attitudes

	Gender Based Cognitions			
	Low	Medium	High	Acceptance x Cognitions
	β	β	β	ΔR^2
Gender Role Attitudes	.1743	.2960***	.4177***	.0129*
Felt Pressure for Gender Conformity				.0096
Gender Typicality				.0000

Note. All continuous variables were standardized within the sample. Acceptance x Attitudes = additional variance explained by the interaction term, and significance, between a gendered attitude dimension and dating violence acceptance after sex and age were controlled. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. Low internalizing = 1 SD below the mean, medium internalizing is at the mean, and high internalizing is 1 SD above the mean. Simple slopes are provided only when the interaction is statistically significant.

Appendix A

Safe Dates: Physical Perpetration (Foshee et al., 1998)

How many times have you ever done the following things to a person that you have been on a date with? Only include when you did it to him/her first. In other words, don't count it if you did it in self-defense.

3 = 10 or more times

2 = 4 to 9 times

1 = 1 to 3 times

0 = Never

----

1. Scratched them.
2. Slapped them.
3. Physically twisted their arm.
4. Slammed or held them against a wall.
5. Kicked them.
6. Bent their fingers.
7. Bit them.
8. Tried to choke them.
9. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved them.
10. Dumped them out of a car.
11. Threw something at them that hit them.
12. Forced them to have sex.
13. Forced them to do something sexual that they did not want to do.

14. Burned them.

15. Hit them with my fist.

16. Hit them with something hard besides my fist.

17. Beat them up.

18. Assaulted them with a knife or gun.

Appendix B

Safe Dates: Physical Victimization (Foshee et al., 1998)

How many times has any person that you have been on a date with done the following things to you? Only include it when the dating partner did it to you first – don't count it if they did it to you in self-defense.

3 = 10 or more times

2 = 4 to 9 times

1 = 1 to 3 times

0 = Never

----

1. Scratched me.
2. Slapped me.
3. Physically twisted my arm.
4. Slammed me or held me against a wall.
5. Kicked me.
6. Bent my fingers.
7. Bit me.
8. Tried to choke me.
9. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved me.
10. Dumped me out of a car.
11. Threw something at me that hit them.
12. Forced me to have sex.
13. Forced me to do something sexual that I did not want to do.

14. Burned me.

15. Hit me with a fist.

16. Hit me with something hard besides a fist.

17. Beat me up.

18. Assaulted me with a knife or gun.

Appendix C

Safe Dates: Psychological Perpetration (Foshee et al., 1998)

How often have you done the following things to someone you have ever had a date with?

3 = Very Often

2 = Sometimes

1 = Seldom

0 = Never

----

1. Damaged something that belonged to them.
2. Said things to hurt their feelings on purpose.
3. Insulted them in front of others.
4. Threw something at them that missed.
5. Would not let them do things with other people.
6. Threatened to start dating someone else.
7. Told them they could not talk to someone of the opposite sex.
8. Started to hit them but stopped.
9. Did something just to make them jealous.
10. Blamed them for bad things I did.
11. Threatened to hurt them.
12. Made them describe where they were every minute of the day.
13. Brought up something from the past to hurt them.
14. Put down their looks.

Appendix D

Safe Dates: Psychological Victimization (Foshee et al., 1998)

How often has anyone that you have ever been on a date with done the following things to you?

3 = Very Often

2 = Sometimes

1 = Seldom

0 = Never

----

1. Damaged something that belonged to me.
2. Said things to hurt my feelings on purpose.
3. Insulted me in front of others.
4. Threw something at me that missed.
5. Would not let me do things with other people.
6. Threatened to start dating someone else.
7. Told me I could not talk to someone of the opposite sex.
8. Started to hit me but stopped.
9. Did something just to make me jealous.
10. Blamed me for bad things they did.
11. Threatened to hurt me.
12. Made me describe where I was every minute of the day.
13. Brought up something from the past to hurt me.
14. Put down my looks.

Appendix E

Safe Dates: Gender Stereotyping (Foshee et al., 1998)

How often has anyone that you have ever been on a date with done the following things to you?

3 = Strongly Agree

2 = Agree Somewhat

1 = Disagree Somewhat

0 = Strongly Disagree

----

1. Most women can’t be trusted.
2. In a dating relationship the boy should be smarter than the girl.
3. Girls are always trying to manipulate boys.
4. In a dating relationship, the boy and girl should have about equal power.
5. Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy.
6. On a date, the boy should be expected to pay all expenses.
7. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in making family decisions.
8. It is all right for a girl to ask a boy out on a date.
9. It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school.
10. If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.
11. Girls should have the same freedom as boys.

Appendix F

Attitudes about Aggression in Dating Situations Scale (Slep et al., 2001)

Below is a list of situations and peoples' reactions to them. How much do you agree or disagree with the reaction that is underlined?

1 = Strongly agree

2 = Agree

3 = Somewhat agree

4 = Somewhat disagree

5 = Disagree

6 = Strongly disagree

----

1. Mark calls Tina a slut in front of their friends. Tina slaps him.
2. David is following Maria and won't leave her alone. Maria pushes him out of her way.
3. Tony is harassing Gina about her new haircut, saying that she looks like a poodle. Gina gets really angry at Tony and pushes him.
4. Tom and Yolanda are having an argument. Things are getting out of hand and Tom starts pushing and shoving Yolanda. When he won't stop, Yolanda slaps him.
5. Michelle gets really angry at Carlos for ignoring her, so she hits him to get his attention.
6. Jeff finds out that Debbie has been seeing someone else behind his back. He gets really mad and he slaps her.

7. Lisa won't stop making fun of Charlie in front of their friends. Charlie loses his temper and pushes her.
8. Jenny and Dan are arguing because Jenny wants to see other guys. She gets really mad and starts to hit Dan. Dan grabs Jenny and pushes her away.
9. John catches Janet flirting with Tyrone. John gets really mad and hits Tyrone for flirting with Janet.
10. Peter gets really angry at Patti and slaps her when she threatens to break up with him.
11. Karen is teasing Frank at a party about being too stupid to pass English. When she won't stop, Frank just loses it and hits Karen.
12. Keisha sees Rick flirting with Angie. Keisha gets mad and hits Angie and tells her to keep her hands off Rick.

Appendix G

Justification of Verbal and Coercive Tactics Scale (Slep et al., 2001)

How justified are each of these things? For Females? | For Males?

1 = Justified in MANY situations

2 = Justified in SOME situations

3 = Justified in a FEW situations

4 = Justified only in EXTREME situations

5 = Not justified NO MATTER WHAT

----

1. Insulting or swearing at boyfriend/girlfriend.
2. Stomping out of the room or house.
3. Doing or saying something to spite him/her.
4. Keeping him/her from seeing or talking to his/her family.
5. Turning his/her family and friends against him/her.
6. Keeping him/her from doing things to help himself/herself.
7. Interfering in his/her relationship with family members.
8. Being jealous and suspicious of his/her friends.
9. Being jealous of other girls/boys.
10. Checking up on him/her, making him/her say where he/she was.
11. Accusing him/her of seeing another girl/boy.

Appendix H

Gender Typicality Scale (Egan & Perry, 2001)

1. Some girls don't feel they're just like all the other girls their age BUT Other girls do feel they're just like all the other girls their age.

Very true for me	Sort of true for me		Very true for me	Sort of true for me

2. Some girls don't feel they fit in with other girls BUT Other girls do feel…
3. Some girls think they are a good example of being a girl BUT Other girls don't think…
4. Some girls don't feel that the things they like to do in their spare time are similar to what most girls like to do in their spare time BUT Other girls do feel…
5. Some girls feel that the kinds of things they're good at are similar to what most girls are good at BUT Other girls don't feel…
6. Some girls don't feel that their personality is similar to most girls' personalities BUT Other girls do feel…

Appendix I

Felt Pressure Scale (Egan & Perry, 2001)

1. Some girls think their parents would be upset if they wanted to learn an activity that only boys usually do usually do. BUT Other girls don't think their parents would be upset if they wanted to learn an activity that only boys

Very true for me	Sort of true for me		Very true for me	Sort of true for me

2. Some girls get really mad if someone says they're acting like a boy BUT Other girls don't…
3. Some girls don't think other girls would be upset if they wanted to learn an activity that only boys usually do BUT Other girls do think…
4. Some girls don't like girls who sometimes do things that boys usually do BUT Other girls don't dislike girls who…

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