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Aggression Among Same-Sex Couples

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Aggression among same-sex couples

(TITLE)

BY

Joshua Fourman

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Aggression among same-sex couples

Joshua Fourman

Abstract

Researchers have been studying intimate partner violence (IPV) since the 1970s but the majority of the research has focused on heterosexual couples. With little research on IPV among same-sex couples there is little knowledge, education, or resources among the people that are employed (or recruited) to assist victims of same-sex couple IPV. This means that social service and law enforcement agencies have not been able to properly meet the needs of the LGBT community.

A mixed-method research design using an online survey was used to gather data from a non-randomized convenience sample. Fifty-one respondents completed the survey. The findings showed that one of the most common motives for using verbal abuse against a romantic partner was due to the participants wanting to gain control over the situation; 42% of the participants indicated that this motive applied to their use of verbal abuse against their partner. Results also revealed that while the incidences of physical aggression were low in this sample, 5% of the participants that used physical aggression noted that they used it to get their own way.

In regards to the perception of agency and law enforcement by individuals from the LGBT community, 60% of participants that had reported abuse to a social service agency or law enforcement felt that they were treated disrespectfully by the officer/agency personnel. These findings imply that individuals in same-sex relationships do not feel entirely safe reporting IPV to social service agencies or law enforcement.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this to my son Tresuan Fourman for the hugs, kisses and words of encouragement during this long process.

I would like to dedicate this to the Eastern Illinois University School of Family and Consumer Sciences for standing by me through all of my surgeries and helping me to fulfill my dream of getting a Master's Degree.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV) has never been a problem limited to heterosexual couples, but most of the academic literature has focused almost exclusively on IPV in opposite-sex couples. This is problematic because the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) community already experiences unfair treatment from American society. Excluding same-sex couples from the academic literature on IPV reduces the impact of such research on public policies designed to protect all couples from IPV (Banks & Feweda, 2012). When this thesis proposal was written (2014), 31 out of 50 states had legalized same-sex marriages (Human Rights Campaign, 2014). On June 26, 2015, the United States Supreme Court made it illegal to ban same-sex marriage in any of the 50 states, thus altering the way in which we view marriage (Pew Research Center, 2015). In spite of this powerful legislation, there is still discrimination and hostility directed towards the LGBT community. Additionally, with legalized same-sex marriage relatively new to society, there are still a limited amount of public policies designed to protect and support same-sex couple relationships. This makes protecting victims of same-sex IPV difficult, because such couples are often still struggling to be viewed as “legitimate” (i.e., legal).

The Violence Against Women Acts (1994) most recent reauthorization in 2013), a federal law, was revised and updated to protect and include all types of victims of IPV, but the policy was originally created to protect victims of heterosexual relationships. Additionally, when the most recent revisions were put into place, individual states were still allowed to create their own laws regarding same-sex couple marriage (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2013). This meant that in states where same-sex

marriage was not legally recognized members of the LGBT community experienced hostility and discrimination. Citizens in states where same-sex marriage was banned were able to act upon their homophobia, putting victims of same-sex-couple IPV at an even greater risk than victims of opposite-sex-couple IPV (Burke, Jordan & Owen, 2002).

Brown (2008) stated that “empirical evidence shows that because of gender role stereotypes regarding domestic abuse, such abuse in heterosexual partnerships is viewed as more serious than abuse suffered in same-sex partnership.” (p. 460). Typically males are seen as the abusers and females as the victims, making this difficult to visualize and understand abuse in same-sex couple relationships. This is not only an incorrect assumption, but also a dangerous one as it puts victims of same-sex couple relationships in even more danger if they are invisible. If society does not acknowledge and recognize abuse among same-sex couples, resources will not be developed and allocated for individuals in same-sex (or other gender configurations, such as transgender males with cisgender males, or transgender females with cisgender females; see “Definitions” section) couples. In 2016, 12 states did not provide access to equal protection for domestic (or relationship) abuse (Jablow, 2000). While the Domestic Violence Protection Act of 1985 and the Violence against Women Act of 1994 and 2013 paved the way for the creation of shelters, hotlines, funding, and other resources for victims of intimate partner violence, or IPV, the resources were originally developed with heterosexual couples in mind. Victims of same-sex IPV do not need “special treatment,” but they do need equal treatment, including advocates, counselors, law enforcement, judges, lawyers, etc. that are educated about the LGBT population and sensitivity training so they do not continue to perpetuate the stereotypes and myths that threaten and/or alienate the LGBT

population.

The mistreatment of same-sex couples by agencies designed to support victims of IPV is most likely due to inadequate training and personal bias (Banks & Feweda, 2012). For instance, Ford, Slavin, Hilton and Holt (2012) found that only 10% of agency staff personnel (out of 54) indicated that their agency had resources designed specifically for same-sex couples, and of those 10%, most had difficulty describing what those resources were. Tesch, Bekerian, English and Harrington (2010) also found that victims of same-sex IPV do not typically call the police when abuse occurs due to strained relationships between law enforcement and sexual minorities. The risk of re-experiencing the victimization and having their sexual orientation exposed to the public is also too great if law enforcement officers are not sensitive in their handling of same-sex partner abuse.

Statement of the Problem

Previous research on IPV among heterosexual couples has indicated that 25-30% of women will become victims of IPV at some point during their life (Banks & Feweda, 2012). In addition, studies that have looked at IPV in the LGB community have found rates similar to or higher than those of heterosexual couples (Banks & Feweda, 2012). However, contextual factors associated with IPV, like fear of partner, motivations and justifications for the aggressive behaviors, and power and control dynamics in same-sex couples still need to be examined, as there is a lack of this type of research in the empirical literature. Most of the literature that has studied IPV among same-sex couples has focused almost exclusively on frequencies of abusive acts. Additionally, there is a lack of empirical literature regarding how the agencies that provide support and resources to victims of IPV are perceived by members of the LGBT community, and how that

perception affects the decision to report the abuse and/or seek help.

Purpose of the Current Study

The purpose of the current study is to examine incidences of IPV in a sample comprised of individuals that have been in or are currently in a same-sex relationship and that identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender. For the purposes of this study, same-sex relationships are defined as relationships where both partners identify as the same gender. This can include trans-men and trans-women; thus, if a cisgender female is in a relationship with a trans-woman, this would qualify as a same-gender relationship or two trans-males are in a relationship together, this would qualify as a same-gender relationship. Frequencies of abuse will be examined along with justifications (or explanations) for abusive behavior and how sexual orientation affects the decision to leave abusive partners. In addition, the sample will be asked about their perceptions of law enforcement and other agencies that provide resources to victims of IPV. More specifically, the current study seeks to explore the following research questions:

1. What explanations do individuals that identify as LGBT have for their use of aggression or violence (IPV) in romantic relationships?
2. How do members of the LGBT community perceive the agencies that provide safety and resources to victims of IPV?
3. How does one's sexual orientation affect the decision to stay or leave an abusive partner?

Limitations of the Study

The current study proposes to use a mixed method research design with self-report surveys that will be administered to a convenience sample. Because of this, there is

a risk of under or over representation of IPV in same-sex couples since the study is not a randomized representation of the population. This affects the ability to make generalizations about IPV in same-sex couples from the study to the population that is being studied. Participants who have experienced IPV may also limit their participation and/or not be entirely honest when completing the survey due to the sensitive nature of the topic. Another potential limitation is the online administration of the survey. Only individuals with access to the Internet will be able to participate.

Definition of Terms

Terms used throughout this study include:

Agender: An individual that does not feel that they have a gender identity (Gender Equity Resource Center, 2013).

Bi-sexual: Individuals that are attracted to both males and females; a tendency to direct sexual desire toward both sexes (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

Cisgender: An individual whose gender identity is consistent with the gender of the biological sex they were born with (Brydum, 2015).

Gay: Males that are sexually attracted to another person of the same sex (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

Genderqueer: An individual whose gender identity is neither male nor female, is between or beyond genders, or some combination of both genders (Gender Equity Resource Center, 2013).

IPV: Intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined as threatened, attempted, or completed physical or sexual violence or emotional abuse by a current or former intimate partner.

IPV can be committed by a spouse, an ex-spouse, a current or former boyfriend or

girlfriend, or a dating partner. (Canadian Bar Association, 2014)

Lesbian: Women whose primary emotional, romantic, sexual, or affectional attractions are to other women (Stanley, 2014).

LGBT: An abbreviation used for individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender. Sometimes a “Q” is included at the end and can stand for those that are questioning their sexual orientation or those that identify as “queer” (Stanley, 2014).

Outing: exposing the partner’s sexual orientation to others (Banks & Feweda, 2010).

Note, “*outing*” can occur in more than one context, such as work, family, social circle, church/religious organization, neighborhood, etc.

Pansexual: A type of sexual orientation that is not gender-specific; individuals that define as pansexual can be attracted to cisgender males/females, transgender males/females, bisexual males/females, asexual males/females, genderqueer or androgynous individuals, etc. (Jakubowski, 2014).

Queer: An alternative term that some people use to label categories such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, etc. (International & LGBT Terms and Definitions, University of Michigan, n.d.).

Questioning: someone who is questioning their sexual and/or gender orientation (Stanley, 2014).

Transgender: Person who identifies with or expresses a gender identity that differs from one which corresponds to the person’s sex at birth (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

Two Spirited: A name given to American Indian and Alaskan Natives that identify as having two gender identities, or a gender identity that is opposite of the genitalia that they were born with (Lehavot, Walters and Simoni, 2010).

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The purpose of the current study is to examine incidences of IPV in a sample comprised of individuals that have been in or are currently in a same-sex relationship and that identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender. Almost one third of women in heterosexual relationships will experience intimate partner violence (IPV) sometime within their life span (Peterman & Dixon, 2003). Although the research base of IPV has grown, much of the research literature looks at intimate partner violence among heterosexual couples as opposed to same-sex couples (Peterman & Dixon, 2003). There are similarities in IPV among opposite-sex versus same-sex couples, but there are also important differences that need to be explored in more detail.

Previous research has indicated that women in opposite-sex (i.e., heterosexual) relationships do not report IPV because they fear retaliation from their partner, consider the abuse a “private matter,” or do not think that anything will be done by the reporting agency (Greenfeld, Rand, Craven, Klaus, Perkins, & Ringel, et al., 1998). While these reasons could also likely apply to victims of same-sex IPV, the topic has not been studied as widely among this specific population. Members of the LGBT community are already at an elevated risk for discrimination and mistreatment by society as they represent a sexual minority in a heteronormative society. Thus, the principal investigator has speculated that the LGBT community is in greater need of protection than the heterosexual community when it comes to IPV.

The LGBT community experiences inequality, hostility, and unfair treatment from society due to homophobia, or fear of anyone homosexual. Sometimes the homophobia is derived from strict religious and/or moral beliefs, but it can also come

from ignorance about the LGBT community (Banks & Feweda, 2012). This can be dangerous to victims of same-sex couple IPV when considering treatment from institutions and agencies that work with directly and indirectly with victims of IPV. Such institutions include the police officers, court personnel, judges, family and couple therapists, crisis intervention volunteers and staff, and advocates from battered women's shelters. The mistreatment and lack of knowledge of the LGBT community by institutions that assist IPV victims can be attributed to inadequate training and personal biases (Banks & Feweda, 2012). Researchers have indicated that victims of same-sex IPV sometimes choose not to report IPV due to the already strained relationships between social institutions and sexual minorities (Tesch, Bekerian & English & Harrington, 2010). For example, if victims of IPV do choose report their victimization to the police or other IPV advocates, they risk having to endure re-victimization and/or having their sexual orientation exposed to the community (Tesch, Bekerian & English & Harrington 2010).

The Domestic Violence Prevention Act of 1985 and the Violence against Women Act of 1994 and 2013 are social policies that were created to provide support for victims of IPV. Such support includes shelters, hotlines, grant money for research, and stronger legal measures to protect victims of IPV from their abusive partners (Tesch, Bekerian, English, & Harrington, 2010). But while the policies were meant to apply to victims of same-sex IPV as well as victims of heterosexual IPV, they were originally designed with heterosexual couples in mind, without taking under consideration the different contextual factors affiliated with same-sex IPV. For example, at the time that this proposal was written, same-sex couple marriage was not yet legal in all 50 states. In spite of legalized same-sex couple marriage, many states still allow employers and landlords to openly

discriminate against individuals based solely on sexual orientation and/or gender identity (and presumed sexual orientation). Unfortunately, sexual orientation is often assumed based upon how individuals present themselves to the public. So gender-queer or androgynous individuals are often discriminated against simply because of their gender identity (Muraco & Russell, 2011). Same-sex couples experience other specific vulnerabilities like the lack of adequate legal protection that interact with the lack of resources and can result in more oppression than that experienced by heterosexual couples. This is why it is critical to study aggression among same-sex couples.

Intimate Partner Violence Among Same-sex Couples

Researchers have been documenting IPV since the 1970s, but the bulk of the literature has looked at violence among opposite sex couples, with a specific focus on the gendered nature of IPV. This is unfortunate as IPV is not limited to heterosexual couples and the laws and other preventative measures that have been established were formulated through a heteronormative lens. This section will look at research that documents IPV among gay and lesbian couples. IPV among same-sex couples is an area that was mostly overlooked in the IPV discipline up until the early nineties.

Quantitative research. The majority of research on IPV among same-sex couples has used quantitative research designs in order to determine the frequency of abuse. The most common method for collecting data was the use of self-report surveys. Frequencies of physical abuse ranged from 25% to 90% of the participants reporting perpetration and/or victimization at the hands of a same-sex partner. But most of the studies included individuals that identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender only, without a comparison group of heterosexual individuals (Balsam & Szymanski, 2005;

Carvalho, Lewis, Derlega, Winstead & Viggiano, 2011; Chong, Mak & Kwong, 2013; Eaton, Kaufman, Fuhrel, Cain, Cherry, Pope, & Kalichman, 2008; Lehavot, Walters & Simoni, 2010; Martin & Alessi, 2012; Stanley, Bartholomew, Tracy, Oram & Lamndolt; 2006). The one study included in this literature review that included heterosexual couples in addition to same-sex couples found that IPV was more common among same-sex couples than heterosexual couples (Messinger, 2010). Each of the studies mentioned in this introductory paragraph are reviewed in more detail below.

Balsam and Szymanski (2005) looked at the role of minority stress in bisexual and lesbian relationships. Lesbian and bisexual participants were recruited at two regional pride events; one in Atlanta, Georgia, the other in Burlington, Vermont. Participants were allowed to complete onsite or take the survey with them and mail survey back in the stamped envelope they received. The second method of recruitment involved inviting participants through emails that advertised the study on lesbian and bisexual women's list serves. Of the 600 surveys distributed, 272 were returned providing a response rate of 45%. Participants had to meet the qualifications of being at least 18 years old and had at least one sexual relationship with another woman at some point in their life. Participants' ages ranged from 18-66 ($M = 34.75$, $SD = 10.27$). Respondents answered demographic questions that assessed gender, age, ethnicity, education level, income and relationship status. Relationship status was measured by asking the participants if they were currently in a relationship, and if the answer was yes the participant was asked the gender of their partner and the length of the relationship. Of the 272 participants, 85% were European-American. Findings showed that of the 272 participants: 77% identified as lesbian or gay, 18% bisexual, 0.4% heterosexual and 4% of the participants identified themselves as

“other.” The results showed that 40% of the participants had been physically or sexually violent towards a female partner and 44% of the participants reported being the recipient of physical or sexual violence from their partner (Balsam & Szymanski, 2005).

Carvalho et al. (2011) examined same-sex intimate partner violence among a sample of 581 gay men and lesbians. All participants were volunteers that were recruited through announcements in gay and lesbian newspapers, email list serves, festivals, book stores, and organizations. Snowball sampling was used to allow participants of the gay and lesbian community to informally recruit additional members for the study.

Participants' ages ranged from 18-51 years old and 79% of the participants were Caucasian (Carvalho et al. did not specify the remaining ethnicities or identify the percentage of bisexual individuals). Participants completed questionnaires and the results showed that 25% of the participants were victims of IPV while 10% of the participants admitted to being the perpetrator. Interestingly, respondents that admitted to being a perpetrator also admitted to being a victim of IPV, illustrating the bidirectional nature of IPV among same-sex couples.

Chong et al. (2013) evaluated the substantial risk and protective factors for same-sex partner IPV. Participants were recruited through LGB friendly organizations and related Internet platforms between 2008-2009; emails and advertisements were distributed to subscribers and affiliated agencies within the Hong Kong area. Requirements to participate were that respondents had to be at least 18 years old and had to have been in a same-sex relationship at least once. Three hundred ninety eight participants completed the survey of which 79.4% of the participants reported that they were currently in a same-sex relationship, and 20.6 % of participants had been in a same-

sex relationship within the last two years. Participants completed a 35-item questionnaire. The final sample consisted of 49.4% self-identified lesbians, 33.3% gay men, 13.4 % of bi-women and 3.9% of bi men. The mean age was 26.27 ($SD = 6.94$). The average length of the relationship was 30.85 ($SD = 33.71$). Results showed that there were not any differences among the four groups regarding psychological aggression and physical assault. Findings also revealed that individuals who had more conflicts and disagreements with their partner and reported that they were the dominant partner in the relationship were 4.32 times ($p < .05$) more likely to express psychological aggression; participants who could manage their anger were 72% less likely to psychologically abuse their partner (Chong et al., 2013).

Eaton et al. (2008) studied IPV among a sample of 317 lesbian women. Participants were recruited at the Atlanta Gay Pride Festival. The mean age was 33 years old and 82% of the participants were Caucasian, 10% African-American and the remaining were Hispanic or Asian-American (3%). Participants of the study were instructed to think about current or previous same-sex partners and to report on the abuse that they had (potentially) experienced in that relationship. Forty-four percent of the participants experienced IPV. Of the participants that reported violence, 39% indicated that they experienced physical violence, 33% received threats of violence from their partner and 10% reported having their medication withheld from them by their partner.

Lehavot et al. (2010) examined relationship abuse among lesbian and bisexual American Indian and Alaska Native Women. The purpose of the study was to examine violence (such as trauma, discrimination and abuse) against American Indian and Alaskan Native Women. The study consisted of 152 female respondents. Of the 152

participants, 38% self-identified as lesbian, 45% reported that they were bisexual and 17% said that they identified as “two-spirit,” which is the equivalent of “transgender.” Participants had to fulfill the following requirements to participate in the study. The first requirement was that participants had to self-identify as American Indian, Alaskan Native or First Nation and be enrolled in one tribe or have at least one-fourth American Indian Blood. The second requirement was that participants had to self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit or indicate that they had engaged in sex with someone of the same-sex within the past 12 months. All participants also had to meet age requirements of being at least 18 years old and able to speak English. Findings showed that 78% of participants reported that they had been physically assaulted at some point in their lives, and 85% reported that they had experienced sexual assault at some point in their lifetime.

Stanley et al. (2006) examined the patterns of violence, resulting consequences, and underlying motives among a sample of 69 self-identified gay and bisexual men that were selected through a random digit dialing procedure. The participants completed a 15-20 minute telephone interview questionnaire and ranged in age from 25-63 ($M = 38.6$, $SD = 8.2$). The majority of participants were white/Caucasian (82.6%) and most of the sample identified as gay (95.7%; 4.2% bisexual). Forty-percent of the sample reported that they were perpetrators of IPV only, 65% of the participants indicated that both partners used violence in their relationship, and 42% of the participants reported that they were only the victims of IPV.

Qualitative research. While the majority of the published literature regarding same-sex partner abuse has relied on quantitative research designs, some have used

qualitative methodology, allowing for a more thorough examination of same-sex IPV. The frequencies of abuse reported by the participants that identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender were similar to those from quantitative studies, but other important findings were reported along with the frequencies. For example, Renzetti's (1992) research looked at frequencies along with motives for using violence in lesbian partnerships. Walters (2011) examined themes in lesbian relationship battering and Tellez et al. (2011) studied justifications for using abusive tactics in same-sex relationships.

Renzetti (1992) conducted one of the first studies on lesbian battering using interview methodology with 100 self-identified lesbians that reported that they were victims of lesbian battering. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they had been victimized by both psychological and physical violence and that the primary motives for violence were jealousy and control (Peterson & Dixon, 2003). Renzetti's study was critical to the IPV literature as up until that point in time, society primarily thought that only males could be batterers and Renzetti's study contradicted this assumption.

Walters (2011) conducted a qualitative study with four self-identified lesbian survivors of IPV. Sixty-to-ninety minute interviews were conducted at a location of the participants' choosing. Three of the participants were Caucasian and one was African-American. The participants' ages ranged from 30-50 years old. None of the participants were experiencing IPV in their current relationship when the study was conducted. However, the participants indicated that in their past relationships they had experienced four types of abuse: emotional, verbal, physical and sexual abuse. Specific acts of abuse

included pushing, shoving, being slapped, punched, forced sex, isolation, control, harassment, stalking, and financial abuse. Six common themes identified from the interviews included: 1) history of violence, 2) gendered beliefs about violence, 3) the reality of lesbian intimate partner violence, 4) help seeking behavior, 5) the silence of the lesbian community regarding lesbian intimate partner violence and 6) how homophobia and heterosexism impacts survivors of lesbian IPV. Results also showed that women that grew up in families where IPV was witnessed were more likely to experience lesbian IPV. This is also true of victims of heterosexual partner violence (The House of Ruth, 2003).

Tellez, Santaya, and Walters (2011) conducted a study that examined IPV among 35 self-identified gay male couples. Most of the participants were of Cuban nationality with ages ranging from 19-44 (the mean age was 29.6 years old). The median relationship length was two years and five months and ranged from 7 months to 14 years. In order to be included in the study, participants had to have been in a romantic relationship with their partner for at least six months and perceived that some type of IPV had occurred in the relationship. Both members of the couple had to be willing to take part in the study. Participants filled out questionnaires separate from their partners. After the questionnaires were completed the researchers conducted in-depth interviews in private rooms with each participant, separately from their partner. Joint interviews were then carried out days after the individual interviews. Interviews occurred in Spanish and were translated to English and examined for accuracy. Sixty-four participants (91.4%) reported that psychological abuse had occurred in their relationship, 48.6% reported physical abuse and 25.7% reported being sexually victimized by their partner. Tellez et al. (2011)

found four general justifications for the abuse: 1) jealousy, 2) infidelity, 3) incompatible sexual roles and 4) possessive controlling behaviors.

Kunuha's (2013) study investigated the duality of sexual and racial/ethnic intimacy in the context of IPV among Asian and Pacific-Islander lesbian and queer women's relationships. The study was conducted at four different sites, Seattle, Chicago, New York City and Hilo, Hawaii. Twenty-four participants were selected to partake in a 60-120 minute interview. Volunteers were selected for inclusion in the study if they self-identified as Asian or Pacific Islander and as lesbian, queer, and/or in an intimate relationship with another woman. They also had to have had direct experience (self or others) with sexual or physical IPV in a same-sex relationship. Of the 24 participants, 38% were Filipina, 21% South Asian and 25% were Chinese and Hawaiian. Participants' ages ranged from 20-52 years old and the mean age was 37 years old. Seventy nine percent of the participants in the Kunuha (2013) study reported that they had been in relationships that they identified as either abusive or violent, and all but one of those relationships were with women.

Motivations for using intimate partner violence. The qualitative research reviewed thus far included an examination of motives for IPV; however, other studies looked at motives, too. Stanley et al. (2006) asked participants why they used violence and found that the primary motive was to express frustration or to control their partner. Eaton et al. (2008) the motivation for withholding a partner's medication was control. Other motives for violence from the qualitative research included jealousy, infidelity, incompatible sexual roles, and a history of violence in the family. These motives are similar to motivations found in research on IPV among heterosexual couples (Taylor,

2002).

IPV among individuals that identify as transgender. The majority of the research on IPV among same-sex or opposite-sex couples excluded individuals that identify as transgender. Two studies that were reviewed for the current thesis looked specifically at IPV among individuals that identify as transgender. Lehavot et al. (2010) examined relationship abuse among transgender American Indian and Alaska Natives. Of 152 total participants, 17% identified as “two-spirit,” which is the equivalent of “transgender” in the American Indian culture. Participants had to fulfill the following requirements to participate in the study. The first requirement was that participants had to self-identify as American Indian, Alaskan Native or First Nation and be enrolled in one tribe or have at least one-fourth American Indian Blood. The second requirement was that participants had to self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit or indicate that they had engaged in sex with someone of the same-sex within the past 12 months. All participants also had to meet age requirements of being at least 18 years old and able to speak English. Findings showed that 78% of participants reported that they had been physically assaulted at some point in their lives, and 85% reported that they had experienced sexual assault at some point in their lifetime.

Summarization of intimate partner violence literature. This section examined the research on IPV among same-sex couples. The research illustrated that same-sex couples not only engage in IPV, but that they appear to do so for reasons similar to those of heterosexual couples (i.e., control, jealousy, emotions, and lack of effective conflict tactics skills). The studies in this section also disprove social stereotypes about IPV. For instance Renzetti’s (1992) study disproved the stereotype that only men could be

batterers. Prior to Renzetti's work, the belief was that men were always the batterers and women the victims. But samples comprised completely of women showed that this was not true. This section set the foundation for studying IPV in more depth, including factors related to IPV among same-sex couples, such as reporting abuse and barriers to reporting for same-sex couples.

Reporting Same-Sex IPV and Treatment by Institutions

Victims of IPV sometimes avoid reporting their victimization because of the fear of retaliation from their partner and the concern that reporting agencies will not do anything. Reporting abuse to someone that is homophobic or biased against the LGBT community heightens the possibility of re-victimization by an untrained employee. For example, a participant in a study conducted by (Walters, 2011) indicated that she had contacted the police about her partner abusing her, but that the police did nothing because of a perceived lack of concern or recognition of the seriousness of the issue. The victim in this case was not protected from her abuser, which sent the message to the abusive partner that this was completely acceptable to abuse her mate. "The gendered assumptions allow continued denial of lesbian IPV not only in the lesbian community, but among lesbian' friends and families" (Walters, 2011 p. 267). If victims of same-sex IPV cannot report the abuse to the police or other agencies, inaccurate statistics on the frequency of this type of abuse will weaken the seriousness of the issue. Furthermore, if same-sex IPV goes unreported and undetected, it is not possible to provide adequate support and resources to the LGBT population.

Tesch, Bekerian, English and Harrington (2010) examined police officers' general knowledge, experience and training in the area of same-sex IPV. Tesch et al. approached

five different police departments in the suburban Chicago area to recruit participants. Surveys were only given to officers that indicated that they dealt with domestic violence calls ($N = 91$). Of the officers responding to calls, 89% of the sample reported that they had responded to a call with gay or bisexual men and women. Findings showed that 81.3% of the sample stated that no procedures were in place for same-sex IPV calls and 32.6% reported that they felt that their department needed to improve on their response procedures. Findings also showed that only 1.1% of police departments had established departmental procedures in regards to IPV in the LGBT community. Tesch et al. noted that some of the law enforcement officers still held the belief that sexual minority relationships were immoral, and those officers responding to same-sex relationship violence calls may not ascribe validity to couples in a same-sex relationship.

Walters' (2011) qualitative study on the rates of IPV among lesbians also looked at how the police intervened with the participants. All of the participants of the study had at one time contacted the police. "In one case, when 911 was called, the police never responded" (Walters, 2011, p. 261). In that particular case, the participant did not call 911 again because they were too embarrassed for having to call in the first place. One of the participants reported that their neighbors contacted the police several times. And in one case, when the police showed up, they undermined the seriousness of the situation by telling the victim and the abuser to behave and act 'like ladies'. In another case, a victim was being attacked by their abusive partner when the police arrived. When the abuser stopped and looked at the police, the police turned around and left. Law enforcement labeled the abuse as "disturbing the peace" instead of domestic violence in another example. Because the police did not treat the IPV incidents equally and fairly, they

essentially gave the “green light” to continue the abuse. The message was received loud and clear.

Ford, Slavin, Hilton and Holt (2012) studied the challenges the LGBT population face when seeking help for IPV. The sample consisted of 54 shelter staff members, domestic violence intervention program staff, and law enforcement employees. Participants completed a 33 item questionnaire that was administered online. (Note: Ford et al. did not report the age, ethnicity or sexual orientation of the participants.) The results showed that fewer than 10% of the participants had not worked specifically with LGBT individuals within the last year. Additionally, of the non-LGBT affiliates, 54.1% stated that there were service/resources at their agencies/programs but when asked, they were unable to describe the resources that existed. Only two of the resources that were mentioned were actually tailored towards the LGBT community (i.e., pamphlets and counseling). Ford et al. stated that in order to properly assist the LGBT community, the following recommendations should be followed: 1) sensitivity training for all staff members, 2) material/resources geared towards the LGBT community, 3) safe housing, and 4) legal assistance.

Summary of responding institutions. The institutions and agencies that assist with IPV, including police officers, battered women’s shelters, domestic violence personnel, hospitals, and social service agencies have sent the wrong message to the LGBT community by denying them equal treatment when in crisis. Research reviewed in this section has indicated that when similar incidents of IPV have occurred among opposite-sex and same-sex couples, officers were more likely to ignore and/or look the other way when IPV occurred with the same-sex couples. While some agencies have

created training to educate officers on IPV among same-sex couples, many other agencies have yet to set up such training and programs. In addition, Jablow (2012) found that currently, in 12 states, same-sex IPV victims cannot access protection under domestic relationship statutes, further stigmatizing IPV in the LGBT community.

Conclusion

Law enforcement, reporting agencies, and society have looked past same-sex IPV due to the lack of knowledge about the LGBT community, preexisting biases, and homophobia. Studies have illuminated the fact that acts of IPV in same-sex relationships are similar to acts of IPV in opposite sex relationships. Victims of IPV report that they stay with their abuser because they have nowhere to go and fear for their life. Victims of same-sex IPV report the same types of reasons for not reporting the abuse, but also have additional barriers because resources for victims of IPV were developed with heterosexual couples in mind and most agencies are not prepared to adequately handle IPV in same-sex couples. In addition, victims of same-sex IPV could potentially risk being “outed” to their family, friends, employers, and community by partners and/or reporting agencies. “Outing” in this case could be a powerful tool for keeping victims in abusive relationships.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The current study sought to determine the frequency and types of intimate partner violence in a sample comprised of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. In addition, participants were asked specifically about their perceptions of the individuals who provide resources for victims of IPV and the factors that influence their decision to stay/leave an abusive partner. The specific research questions that were explored in this study include the following:

1. What explanations do individuals who identify as LGBT have for their use of aggression or violence (IPV) in romantic relationships?
2. How do members of the LGBT community perceive the agencies that provide safety and resources to victims of IPV?
3. How does one's sexual orientation affect the decision to stay or leave an abusive partner?

Research Design

A mixed-method research design was used in the current study. An online questionnaire was developed by the researcher and the researcher's thesis advisor and was used to collect data. The questionnaire contained both open and closed-ended items and was developed after reviewing current literature on the topic and modifying existing questionnaires.

Sample

Participants were recruited from Facebook groups and email list serves that had been developed specifically for the LGBT community in a non-probability snowball sampling procedure. Snowball sampling procedures are appropriate when studying a

minority population like sexual minorities. An invitation to participate was posted by the researcher's thesis advisor that included a link to the survey. To participate, individuals had to self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, and/or transgender and either be in an intimate relationship for at least three months at the time of data collection, or indicate that they were in a relationship in the past that lasted at least three months. The participants reported on their current or most recent relationship. All of the data was collected anonymously but participants had the option to email an email address established specifically for this research to be entered in a random drawing for a \$25 Visa gift card.

Instrumentation

An anonymous survey was developed by the principal investigator and the principal investigator's thesis advisor (see Appendix A). The instrument included basic demographics, physical aggression experiences (measured with items from the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale, CTS2, Straus, Hamby, Boney-MCoy, & Sugarman, 1996), controlling behaviors (measured with the Psychological Maltreatment of Women Survey, Tolman, 1989), motivations for relationship aggression (Taylor, 2002), decisions to stay/leave, and agency responses. The stay/leave and agency sections were developed by the principal investigator after an examination of the literature on the topic as an existing survey was not yet available to the public to use for this purpose.

Procedures

The principal investigator recruited participants that self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender through list serves and Facebook pages that were developed specifically for the LGBT population. Information regarding how to

participate and a link to the online survey was provided to potential respondents by the researcher's thesis advisor. Participants were given the opportunity to be entered in a random drawing for a \$25 dollar VISA gift card after participating. An email address was offered to the participants after they completed the survey where they could email their own email address for the drawing. The email address for the drawing was developed specifically for the current study and the account was deleted after the drawing was completed to protect participants' confidentiality. After the timeline expired to complete the survey, the data was entered in SPSS for statistical analysis.

Reliability and Validity

The reliability of the entire survey was analyzed using Cronbach's alpha after the data has been collected to serve as a measure of reliability. The first three sections of the survey (physical violence, psychological violence and control, and motives for violence) have had reliability and validity determined in previous studies. Straus et al. (1996) reported an alpha of .86 for the physical aggression items on the Revised CTS2. Tolman (1999) reported alpha levels of .88 - .92 (depending on type of sample). Taylor (2002) reported Cronbach's alpha of .92 and .80, depending on whether the instrument was used to assess justifications for physical aggression or verbal aggression.

In the current data analysis, the controlling behaviors section had an alpha of .91; the physical and verbal aggression behaviors had an alpha of .91; the reporting agencies section had an alpha of .98; and the motivation items had an alpha of .96. All of these were deemed acceptable and all of the items were kept. The entire survey was also examined by several Family and Consumer Science Graduate Faculty members for

evidence of face validity.

Proposed Statistical Analysis

The subsequent analyses were carried out only with the respondents who indicated that either they or their current/most recent partner ever used verbal, physical, or controlling aggression. To answer the first research question, a frequency was computed on all of the 25 quantitative items that assessed justifications or reasons for using abuse (see page 53). The open-ended item for justifications was also analyzed by examining all of the responses for commonalities and developing themes. To answer the second research question, questions 8-12 were analyzed on the reporting agencies section of the survey (see page 52). Frequencies were computed for questions 8-11 and number 12 was analyzed by searching for commonalities in the open-ended responses and developing themes that best represented the data. Questions 5-7 on the “love” section of the survey (see page 48) was used to answer the third research question. The means and standard deviations were computed and reported.

The current study was approved by the Eastern Illinois University Institutional Review Board in 2015 (IRB #15-106).

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of the current study was to study relationship aggression in same-sex romantic relationships. Reasons for using physical, emotional, verbal aggression, and controlling behaviors were examined, along with law enforcement and social service agency responses to reports of abuse. The following research questions were explored:

1. What explanations do individuals that identify as LGBT have for their use of aggression or violence (IPV) in same-sex romantic relationships?
2. How do members of the LGBT community perceive the agencies that provide safety and resources to victims of IPV when they are in a same-sex relationship?
3. How does one's sexual orientation affect the decision to stay or leave an abusive partner?

Demographics

A total of 51 participants completed the survey. Ages ranged from 20 to 50 years old with a mean age of 34.11 ($SD = 9.24$). Findings showed that 25% of the participants identified as heterosexual, 20% as gay, 20% as lesbian, 12% as bisexual and 14% as pansexual. Of the 51 participants, 73% identified as female, 20% identified as male, 2% identified as transgender males, 2% identified as transgender females and 4% identified as gender queer. For ethnicity, 8% of the respondents identified as African-American, 80% Caucasian, 4% Hispanic/Latino and 8% mixed race. The number of months that participants reported that they were involved with their current or most recent relationship ranged from 6 to 276 months with an average of 88.70 months ($SD = 80.11$). Ninety-percent of the participants reported that they were in a relationship at the time the

data was collected. Only 38 of the 51 (75%) participants reported that they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or pansexual; thus it was this subgroup that was retained for subsequent analyses.

Research Questions

RQ1: What explanations do individuals that identify as LGBT have for their use of aggression or violence (IPV) in same-sex romantic relationships?

The top five explanations for participants' use of verbal aggression included ($n = 38$): wanted to gain control over the situation (42% said yes), wanted to retaliate against their partner's use of verbal aggression (42%), punish partner for belittling their thoughts and beliefs (39%), they were stressed out (39%), and because their partner scared them (39%). The top three explanations endorsed by the participants for their use of physical aggression included: the participant wanted to get their own way (5%), the participant wanted to punish their partner for making fun of them (5%), and the participant was reacting to their partner's threat of physical aggression against them (5%).

RQ 2: How do members of the LGBT community perceive the agencies that provide safety and resources to victims of IPV when they are in a same-sex relationship?

Of the 38 participants included in the thesis analysis, 12 participants stated that they reported the abuse to the police or law enforcement (all identified as LGBT). Five participants responded to the question: "I was treated with respect by the officer after reporting the abuse." Of the participants ($n = 5$) that answered this item, two answered that they strongly disagreed, one disagreed and one strongly agreed. This means that 60% of the answers for this question revealed that the participants did not feel respected by the

Table 1
Motivations/Justifications for using aggression (n = 38)

Motive/justification	% yes for verbal aggression	% yes for physical aggression	% yes for both verbal and physical aggression
I wanted to gain control over the situation	42	0	5
I was retaliating against my partner's use of verbal aggression	42	2	2
I was stressed out	39	2	2
I wanted to punish my partner for belittling my thoughts/beliefs	39	2	0
My partner scared me	39	0	2
I wanted to end the conflict	37	2	0
I was afraid of my partner	32	0	2
I was trying to protect my property	32	0	2
I wanted to get my own way	32	5	2
Wanted to punish my partner for insulting my family/friends	32	0	2
I wanted to get even with my partner	32	0	0
I was trying to protect my children	32	0	0
I was trying to protect myself	29	2	5
Wanted to punish my partner for embarrassing me	29	2	5
I was retaliating against my partner's use of physical aggression against me	29	2	5
I was trying to protect my pets	29	0	0
I wanted to punish my partner for making fun of me	26	5	0
Aggression helps me to get my way	26	0	0
I wanted to punish my partner for lying to me	26	0	2
My partner forced me to have intercourse	26	0	0
I was reacting to my partner's threat of physical aggression	24	5	5
I wanted to punish my partner for cheating on me	24	0	2
I think it's acceptable to use aggression to solve problems	24	0	2
I wanted to keep my partner from outing me	24	0	2
I was trying to intimidate my partner	24	2	0
I wanted to control my partner	24	0	0
I wanted to punish my partner for not telling me where they'd been	24	0	0
I honestly don't know why I use aggression	21	0	2
I wanted to punish my partner for outing me	21	0	0

responding police officer(s) when they made the choice to report the abuse they experienced.

Participants were also asked if they felt that they had been treated respectfully by the police after they reported the abuse they had experienced. Only five participants responded to this item and two strongly agreed, one disagreed, and two strongly disagreed. The next item in this section asked if participants felt that they were treated respectfully by a social service agency if they reported the abuse. The four participants (that answered this item) indicated that one strongly agreed, one agreed, one disagreed, and one strongly disagreed. The third item in the agency response section asked if respondents felt that the hotline worker treated them respectfully if they reported the abuse to a hotline. Of the four participants that answered this item, one strongly agreed, one agreed, one disagreed, and one strongly disagreed. Participants were able to follow up this section with open-ended comments. The comments were examined and two were selected to help illustrate the responses. One participant said: “The police treated me almost in a dismissive manner. But upon follow up, one of the police officers advised me to arm myself and also advised me regarding the state's self-defense laws.” When discussing social services, one participant wrote “I was treated with condescension and distrust.”

RQ 3: How does one’s sexual orientation affect the decision to stay or leave an abusive partner?

Participants were asked if they were open about their sexual orientation to the people in their life. When the participants that identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual or pansexual were asked if they stayed with their partner due to the threat of being outed by

their partner (to anyone), of the ten respondents that answered this item, 30% said “yes” and 70% said “no.” As one can see from viewing Table 2, most participants were open with their close friends and family. In the survey participants were asked “If you identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or pansexual, how likely is it that you are staying with your current (or you stayed with your most recent) partner due to fear of being outed (having them disclose your sexual orientation without your knowledge or consent) by them?” Of the 33 participants that answered this question, 91% responded “not at all,” 3% responded “a little” and 6% responded by saying “some.”

|

Table 2

*Percentage of respondents who were open with their sexual orientation to various groups
(n = 38)*

Variable	% that said yes	% that said no
Are you out with family members?	80.0%	20.0%
Are you out with your close friends?	85.0%	15.0%
Are you out with your work colleagues?	68.0%	32.0%
Are you out with your neighbors?	53.0%	47.0%

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Discussion

Much of the empirical literature that examines intimate partner violence (IPV) looks exclusively at IPV among heterosexual couples as opposed to same-sex couples (Peterman & Dixon, 2003). This is a problem because agencies established to help victims of IPV are less educated about how to support and advocate specifically for same-sex couple IPV. Currently, agencies that support victims of IPV are often misinformed about same-sex relationships and IPV due to inadequate training. This is most likely due, in part, to the lack of empirical research on the topic (Banks & Feweda, 2012). At the beginning of 2015, 31 of 50 states had legalized same sex marriages leaving 19 states that did not. It is difficult to be able to protect victims of same-sex IPV when their relationships are not even perceived as valid. Same-sex marriage is now legal in all 50 states due to a Supreme Court ruling in June, 2015, but this is a new law and society has not yet caught up in understanding and supporting same-sex couple relationships. Thus, it is likely that unfair and unequal treatment continues to occur towards members of the LGBT community.

The purpose of the current study was to examine IPV in same-sex romantic relationships. In addition to looking at the frequency of aggressive behaviors perpetrated by individuals, contextual factors, such as reasons for using aggression, fear of partner, and controlling behaviors were examined. In addition, responses to reports of abuse in same-sex couples by law enforcement and social service agency were also studied. The research questions for the current study included:

1. What explanations do individuals that identify as LGBTQ have for their use of aggression or violence (IPV) in same-sex romantic relationships?
2. How do members of the LGBTQ community perceive the agencies that provide safety and resources to victims of IPV when they are in a same-sex relationship?
3. How does one's sexual orientation affect the decision to stay or leave an abusive partner?

A mixed-method research design using an online survey was used to gather data from a non-randomized convenience sample. Fifty-one respondents completed the survey, but only 38 were included in the analysis as they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or pansexual. The findings showed that one of the most common motives for using verbal abuse against a romantic partner was due to the participants wanting to gain control over the situation; 42% of the participants indicated that this motive applied to their use of verbal abuse against their partner. Results also revealed that while the incidences of physical aggression were low in this sample, 5% of the participants that used physical aggression noted that they used it to get their own way.

In regards to the perception of agency and law enforcement by individuals from the LGBT community, 60% of participants that had reported abuse to a social service agency or law enforcement felt that they were treated disrespectfully by the officer/agency personnel. These findings imply that individuals in same-sex relationships do not feel entirely safe reporting IPV to social service agencies or law enforcement. This is unlikely to change in the immediate aftermath of legalizing same-sex marriage in

all 50 states; even after segregation was outlawed it took years to fully implement the policy, particularly in the south where racism was much more overt and acceptable.

Respondents were asked how likely it was that they were staying with their current (or most recent) partner due to fear of being outed (disclosing one's sexual orientation without their knowledge or consent) by them. Of the 31 participants that answered this item, 9% indicated "a little" or "some." While the majority said that they did not stay in the relationship due to fear of outing, the fact that almost 10% of the sample answered affirmatively provides evidence that some participants stay with their same-sex partner for fear of having their sexuality exposed, even if they are experiencing aggression. Although this is not currently a control tactic listed in the IPV literature, clearly it is a type of control tactic for same-sex couples and more research should be conducted on this topic. Abusers in same-sex relationships can manipulate their partner into staying in a relationship that they do not want to be in. Having one's sexual orientation exposed to family, friends, neighbors, or coworkers against their wishes could be devastating to the individual, depending on the victim's social status as well as their type of employment. Martin and Alessi (2012) stated "Of the 297 participants, 27% were threatened with IPV by their partner, 25% were discriminated against at their jobs, housing or other services." The findings from the current study, along with Martin and Alessi's research clearly emphasize the destructive nature regarding the threat of being outed.

The findings from the current study highlight the role control plays in explaining and understanding intimate partner violence. Stanley, et al. (2006) also found that the violence used by gay and bisexual males ($N = 69$) could be attributed to trying to control

their partner in 10% of the cases. Tellez et al. (2011) also found that possessive controlling behaviors were the justification used for physical abuse their study with 35 gay males. Renzetti (1992) conducted one of the first studies on IPV among lesbian couples and found that one of the main reasons provided by the participants for using abuse among lesbian couples was due to jealousy and control issues. The current study showed that 42% of the participants wanted to gain control over the issue that was occurring so they admitted to using verbal aggression and that 5% of the participants that used physical aggression were doing so to gain control and get their own way.

Limitations

The biggest limitation for this study was the sample size. The principal investigator used a non-randomized, snowball convenience sampling procedure that resulted in only 51 participants. The small sample size limited the statistical power in the study and increased the likelihood of a Type II error. Another limitation in the study was the use of survey methodology. This is a limitation because the surveys were posted online and could only be accessed through Internet connections. Individuals without Internet access were not able to complete the survey, which limited the number of participants and the data that was collected. A third limitation was the fact that this was a cross-sectional research design, which provides a snapshot in time, as opposed to research over time. However, since the field of IPV is constantly changing, this was appropriate for the current thesis.

Although the current study had its limitations, it will still play an important role in educating society about IPV among same-sex couples. The current study adds to the growing foundation of empirical literature on this topic. In addition, the findings are

relevant to policymakers, law enforcement, hospital personnel, social service agencies, and others that work directly with victims of IPV.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research looking at IPV among same-sex couples should seek to obtain a large, randomly selected sample. Since sexual minorities are a part of a small population, it could be helpful for researchers to recruit participants from LGBT festivals or conferences in order to obtain a larger sample size. Research data should also be collected over time, in order to provide a more detailed examination of the dynamics of same-sex couples in abusive relationships. Finally, it is important to gather data from both members of the relationship so that an accurate picture can be provided and perceptions from both individuals can be studied.

Conclusion and Implications

Researchers have been studying IPV since the 1970s but the majority of the research has focused on heterosexual couples. With little research on IPV among same-sex couples there is little knowledge, potential biases and unfair and unequal treatment of members of the LGBT community. With little education or familiarization with IPV among same sex couples, social service and law enforcement agencies have been unable to properly meet the needs of the LGBT community. Unfortunately, the implications of poor or no training regarding the LGBT community and IPV among same-sex couples can be life-threatening (Banks & Feweda, 2012). Tesch et al. (2010) reported that victims of same-sex IPV choose not to report IPV due to strained relationships between police and sexual minorities, so this is already a problem that needs to be handled correctly.

Findings from this study can be used to help establish more positive relationships between the LGBT community and social service/law enforcement agencies. The results can also be used to educate youth, counselors, community members, role models and families, too. Now that marriage among same-sex couples is legal in every state, education about the LGBT community is needed to update old policies regarding relationships, conflict, and IPV.

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APPENDIX A: Research instrument

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Joshua Fourman, a graduate student in the School of Family and Consumer Sciences at Eastern Illinois University under the direction of Dr. Lisa Moyer. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The purpose of the current study is to examine relationship aggression in romantic same-sex relationships. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete an on-line survey developed by me, in consultation with my advisor and committee, after review of the literature on this topic. The survey takes about 20-30 minutes to complete.

After completion of the survey, if you would like to have your name entered into a random drawing for one of two \$25.00 Amazon gift cards, you can send an email to lgbtqresearch2015@gmail.com (an address that was set up specifically for this purpose). You do not have to have your name entered if you do not want to. It is possible that discussing and reporting on relationship aggression could result in some discomfort for you. At the end of the survey, links to free support resources will be provided. It is also possible that disclosing information about relationship aggression through this survey could be beneficial to you. The findings from this study will be used to help educators, LGBTQ advocates, practitioners, law enforcement, medical personnel and administrators, and policymakers make informed decisions when it comes to relationship aggression.

The IRB has reviewed and approved this study (IRB #15-106). If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

**Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217) 581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu**

You may stop the survey at any time or skip any questions without any penalty to you. All of the information will be collected anonymously and the data will be stored on my thesis advisor's computer in a locked office on EIU's campus. If any illegal information is reported, it will be reported in an anonymous manner and will not be reported to the authorities. The data collected in this study is for research and educational purposes only.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jkfourman3@gmail.com. If you are willing to participate in this research, please click on the "yes" button below. Otherwise, simply close this window or press the "no" button. I thank you in advance for your consideration of participation.

Demographics

Age: _____ **Gender (circle one):** Male Female Transgender
 Androgynous Gender queer Other: _____

Sexual orientation:

_____ Straight/heterosexual _____ Gay _____ Lesbian _____ Bisexual
 _____ Pansexual _____ Queer _____ Asexual _____ Other: _____

Race/ethnicity:

_____ Caucasian _____ African-American _____ Hispanic/Latino
 _____ Asian _____ American-Indian _____ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
 _____ Native Alaskan _____ Mixed _____ Other: _____

Relationship status: _____ Currently in a romantic relationship _____ Currently single

If you are currently in a romantic relationship, how long have you been with this partner?

If you are not currently in a relationship, how long did your **MOST RECENT** relationship last?

Love questions

Thinking of your current or most recent romantic relationship please give your responses to the statements below by using the scales to the right					
1. In general, how satisfied are/were you in this relationship?	Extremely Dissatisfied				Extremely Satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5
2. How much do you or did you love this partner?	Not Much				Very Much
	1	2	3	4	5
3. How many problems are/were there in this relationship?	Very Few				A Lot
	1	2	3	4	5
4. If you are in a romantic relationship <i>at this point in time</i> , how likely is it that you will leave your partner in the next few months?	Very Unlikely				Very Likely
	1	2	3	4	5
5. If you are thinking about leaving your partner in the next few months, how much does this decision have to do with your sexual orientation?	Not Much				Very Much
	1	2	3	4	5
6. If you are NOT thinking about leaving your partner in the next few months, how much does this decision have to do with your sexual orientation?	Not Much				Very Much
	1	2	3	4	5
7. How likely is it that you would stay with or DID stay with your current or most recent partner because of the fear of being outed (revealing your sexual orientation) by them?	Very Unlikely				Very Likely
	1	2	3	4	5

In this next section, you will respond to two sets of questions based upon YOUR PARTNER'S behavior towards YOU.

<p>This questionnaire asks about action your partner may have taken against you in your current or most recent relationship. Answer each item as carefully as you can by circling the number that best describes the frequency of the behavior under consideration, according to the scale to the right.</p> <p>In my current or most recent romantic relationship <u>MY SAME-SEX PARTNER</u>,</p>	<p>1 = never 2 = rarely 3 = occasionally 4 = frequently 5 = very frequently</p>
1. Called me names, swore at me, yelled, or screamed at me.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Treated me like an inferior.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Monitored my time and made me account for my whereabouts.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Was overly jealous or suspicious of my friends.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Interfered with my relationships with my family members. or tried to keep me away from them.	1 2 3 4 5

6. Tried to keep me away from my family members.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Used our money without consulting me.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Made important financial decisions with consulting me.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Threatened to out me (reveal my sexual orientation) to family, friends, coworkers, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Outed (revealed my sexual orientation) me to family, friends, coworkers, etc.	1	2	3	4	5
ANSWER NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS ONLY IF YOU LIVED WITH YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT ROMANTIC PARTNER					
15. Locked me out of the house or apartment we shared on purpose.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Punished me following an argument by ignoring me for several <u>hours</u> .	1	2	3	4	5
17. Punished me following an argument by ignoring me for <u>days</u> .	1	2	3	4	5

Thinking of your current or most recent romantic relationship please indicate whether, and how often, the following occurred using the scale below.

0	1	2	3
No,	Yes, 1-2	Yes, 3-5	Yes, more
never	times	times	than 5 times

In your relationship with your current or most recent partner, did THEY ever:

1. Throw something at you that could hurt you?	0	1	2	3
2. Grab you?	0	1	2	3
3. Slap you?	0	1	2	3
4. Use a knife or gun on you?	0	1	2	3
5. Choke you?	0	1	2	3
6. Slam you against a wall?	0	1	2	3
7. Beat you up?	0	1	2	3
8. Insist that you have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal) with them when you did not want to?	0	1	2	3
9. Use force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make you have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal)?	0	1	2	3
10. Use threats to make you have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal)?	0	1	2	3
11. Hurt you bad enough to cause a sprain, bruise, cut, etc.?	0	1	2	3
12. Hurt you bad enough that you felt physical pain the next day?	0	1	2	3
13. Hurt you bad enough that you had to see a doctor or go to the hospital?	0	1	2	3
14. Break a bone (or bones) in your body?	0	1	2	3
15. Make you feel afraid of them?	0	1	2	3

ANSWER ONLY IF YOU OR YOUR PARTNER WERE EVER PHYSICALLY AGGRESSIVE (i.e., answered 1-3 for ANY of the items above)

0 **1** **2** **3**
Never **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**

In your current or most recent relationship, how often did YOUR PARTNER:

1. Become physically aggressive FIRST?	0	1	2	3
2. Become physically aggressive only after YOU initiated it?	0	1	2	3

In this next section, you will respond to two sets of questions based upon YOUR behavior towards YOUR PARTNER.

<p>This questionnaire asks about action you may have taken against your partner in your current or most recent relationship. Answer each item as carefully as you can by circling the number that best describes the frequency of the behavior under consideration, according to the scale to the right.</p> <p>In my current or most recent romantic relationship <u>I</u>,</p>	<p>1 = never 2 = rarely 3 = occasionally 4 = frequently 5 = very frequently</p>
1. Called my partner names, swore at them, yelled, or screamed at them.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Treated them like an inferior.	1 2 3 4 5
3. Monitored their time and made them account for their whereabouts.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Acted or was overly jealous or suspicious of their friends.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Interfered with their relationships with my family members or tried to keep them away from them.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Used our money or made important financial decisions without consulting them.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Threatened to out them (reveal their sexual orientation) to family, friends, coworkers, etc.	1 2 3 4 5
8. Outed (revealed their sexual orientation) them to family, friends, coworkers, etc.	1 2 3 4 5
ANSWER NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS ONLY IF YOU LIVED WITH YOUR CURRENT OR MOST RECENT ROMANTIC PARTNER	
15. Locked them out of the house or apartment we shared on purpose.	1 2 3 4 5
16. Punished them following an argument by ignoring them for several <u>hours</u> .	1 2 3 4 5
17. Punished them following an argument by ignoring them for <u>days</u> .	1 2 3 4 5

Thinking of your current or most recent romantic relationships please indicate whether, and how often, the following occurred using the scale below.

0 **1** **2** **3**
No, **Yes, 1-2** **Yes, 3-5** **Yes, more**
never **times** **times** **than 5 times**

In your relationship with your current or most recent partner, did YOU ever:

1. Throw something at your partner that could hurt them?	0	1	2	3
2. Grab your partner?	0	1	2	3
3. Slap your partner?	0	1	2	3
4. Use a knife or gun on your partner?	0	1	2	3
5. Choke your partner?	0	1	2	3
6. Slam your partner against a wall?	0	1	2	3
7. Beat your partner up?	0	1	2	3
8. Insist that your partner have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal) with you when they did not want to?	0	1	2	3
9. Use force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make your partner have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal)?	0	1	2	3
10. Use threats to make your partner have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal)?	0	1	2	3
11. Hurt your partner bad enough to cause a sprain, bruise, cut, etc.?	0	1	2	3
12. Hurt your partner bad enough that they indicated that they felt physical pain the next day?	0	1	2	3
13. Hurt your partner bad enough that they had to see a doctor or go to the hospital?	0	1	2	3
14. Break a bone (or bones) in your partner's body?	0	1	2	3
15. To your knowledge, how often was your partner afraid of you?	0	1	2	3

ANSWER ONLY IF YOU OR YOUR PARTNER WERE EVER PHYSICALLY AGGRESSIVE (i.e., answered 1-3 for ANY of the items above)

0 **1** **2** **3**
Never **Sometimes** **Often** **Always**

In your current or most recent relationship, how often did YOU:

1. Become physically aggressive FIRST?	0	1	2	3
2. Become physically aggressive only after YOUR PARTNER initiated it?	0	1	2	3

Reporting agencies section

Verbal aggression is defined as calling your partner names, swearing, yelling, or screaming at your partner, saying something to spite your partner, calling your partner fat or ugly, or being overly jealous of your partner or the time they spend with others.

Physical aggression is defined as throwing something at your partner, pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping, or punching your partner, using a weapon against your partner, choking, your partner, or beating up your partner.

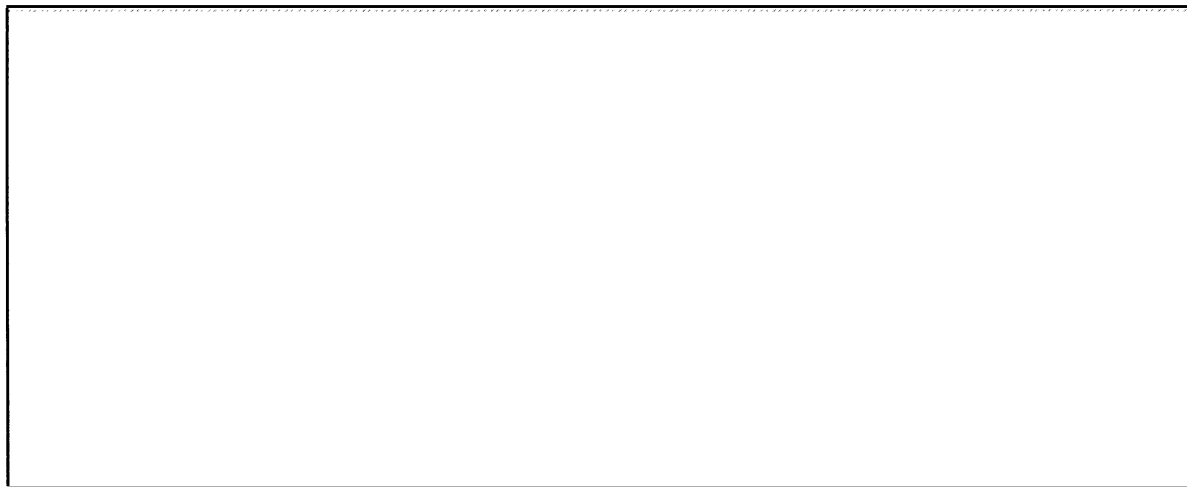
If you were ever abused in any way by your current or most recent partner, did you EVER:

1. Contact the police?	Yes	No	N/a
2. Tell your family/friends about the abuse?	Yes	No	N/a
3. Call a relationship violence hotline?	Yes	No	N/a
4. Request a no-contact order from the court? (i.e., an order from the stating that the accused is not to contact you in person, by text, by phone call, by email, etc.)	Yes	No	N/a
5. Report the abuse to the police, only to be treated poorly (i.e., not taken seriously)?	Yes	No	N/a
6. Want to report the abuse, but were afraid of having your partner retaliate against you?	Yes	No	N/a
7. Want to report the abuse, but were afraid of society's reaction to your situation?	Yes	No	N/a
IF YOU DID REPORT THE ABUSE TO THE POLICE OR A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGENCY, PLEASE ANSWER THE NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS – OTHERWISE SKIP TO THE NEXT SECTION			
8. Were you treated with respect by the police?	Yes	No	N/a
9. Were you treated with respect by the domestic violence agency?	Yes	No	N/a
10. Were you treated with respect by the domestic violence hotline?	Yes	No	N/a
11. Were you treated with respect by the hospital (if you were treated for injuries)?	Yes	No	N/a
12. Could you please describe how the policy, agency, hospital, etc. staff treated you after you reported the abuse?			

Motivations/justifications section

<p><u>This questionnaire asks about motivations for using aggression in relationships. For the purposes of this questionnaire: Verbal aggression is defined as calling your partner names, swearing, yelling, or screaming at your partner, saying something to spite your partner, calling your partner fat or ugly, or being overly jealous of your partner or the time they spend with others.</u></p> <p>Physical aggression is defined as throwing something at your partner, pushing, shoving, grabbing, slapping, or punching your partner, using a weapon against your partner, choking, your partner, or beating up your partner.</p> <p>Read the statements below and indicate whether you have ever used verbal and/or physical aggression against your partner for the reason stated by circling "yes" or "no."</p>		
1. I wanted to punish my partner for insulting my family or friends.	Yes	No
2. I wanted to punish my partner for embarrassing me.	Yes	No
3. I wanted to gain control over the situation.	Yes	No
4. I wanted to get my own way.	Yes	No
5. I wanted to punish my partner for lying to me.	Yes	No
6. I wanted to punish my partner for cheating on me.	Yes	No
7. My partner forced me to have sex (oral, anal, or vaginal).	Yes	No
8. I'm afraid of my partner.	Yes	No
9. I think it is acceptable to use aggression to solve problems.	Yes	No
10. Aggression helps me to get my way.	Yes	No
11. I was trying to protect my children.	Yes	No
12. I was trying to protect my property and/or pets.	Yes	No
13. I was trying to punish my partner for belittling my thoughts or beliefs.	Yes	No
14. I was retaliating against my partner's verbal aggression.	Yes	No
15. I was retaliating against my partner's physical aggression.	Yes	No
16. I wanted to punish my partner for making fun of or insulting me.	Yes	No
17. I wanted to control my partner.	Yes	No
18. I wanted to end the conflict and aggression seemed like the only way to do so.	Yes	No
19. I was stressed out.	Yes	No
20. I wanted to punish my partner for not telling me where they had been.	Yes	No
21. My partner scared me.	Yes	No
22. I was trying to protect myself.	Yes	No
23. I was reacting to my partner's threat of aggression.	Yes	No
24. I wanted to get even with my partner.	Yes	No
25. I was trying to intimidate my partner.	Yes	No

Have you ever used aggression for a reason that was not listed on the previous page? If so, please explain:



Thank you for participating!