

Intimate Partner Violence Among Male and Female Russian University Students

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This article reports data from three Russian sites of the International Dating Violence Study. Using a sample of 338 university students (54% female) from three Russian university sites, four different types of partner violence are examined: physical assault, physical injury, sexual coercion, and psychological aggression. High prevalence rates were found for all types of violence, aggression, and coercion. Consistent with previous research, male and female students were about equally likely to be victims and perpetrators of all violent and aggressive actions. Recommendations for prevention are made in the conclusions.

Keywords: *intimate partner violence; university students; International Dating Violence Study; cross-cultural studies of dating violence*

Intimate partner violence (IPV) has been systematically studied in North America and Western Europe since the 1970s; however, it has only recently become the subject of scholarly attention in Russia (Gondolf & Shestakov, 1997; Horne, 1999; Vannoy et al., 1999). Much of this research has built on the existing work of other scholars (Straus, 2004b), and it has provided important, even if sometimes incomplete, estimates of partner violence in Russia. This study expands the existing literature by examining IPV among college students from three different sites in Russia.

A 1996 study of roughly 2,500 married or divorced men and women in Moscow and two rural areas surrounding Pskov and Saratov, Russia, examined the prevalence of verbal and physical abuse among Russians (Vannoy et al., 1999). The researchers found that about 26% of the wives interviewed in Moscow indicated at least some physical abuse in their relationship. Shoving or pushing was found to be the most common physically

violent behavior for both men and women. When questioned who initiated the most recent physical aggression, equal numbers of married men and women (6.9%) reported being responsible for the initiation of the conflict. With regard to verbal aggression, 61% of the married women responded that they initiated the verbal argument, compared with 29% who said their husbands began the verbal conflict.

A study by Gorshkov and Tikhonova (2002) examined the rate of violent victimization among 1,406 women in 12 economical regions of Russia. Among the 13.4% of women who reported to be victims of any of three types of violence measured—including street violence, family violence, and legal intervention violence—4.3% reported to be victims of family violence. Although most of the women in the study were relatively young, the researchers found that older female respondents were subjected to more family violence than younger women.

The research on IPV in Russia indicates that the rates of victimization are fairly significant. The current findings on IPV victimization in Russia appear to be meaningful enough to constitute a real social problem in Russia. Furthermore, at least one set of researchers (Gondolf & Shestakov, 1997) suggests that the rates of violence in Russia between intimate partners is likely to be underestimated and may be higher than rates in the United States or the countries of Western Europe. They base this assumption on the high levels of normative violence and social disorganization in Russia, in addition to the high level of female murder victims. Much less attention has been paid to individual-level variables in the prediction of IPV. The associations between IPV and alcohol use in Russia may be very important. In Russia, rates of alcohol consumption are among the highest in the world (15 liters of alcohol per person per year), and the already high level of alcohol use increased dramatically after the breakup of the Soviet Union (Nemtsov, 2006). In addition, Russian women are consuming alcohol at rates that are becoming comparable with the rates of consumption for Russian men, especially among younger generations.

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The Present Study

This article provides information on the extent of violence committed against dating partners by Russian university students. Understanding IPV among students is important because they are in a formative period of their lives in relation to the habits that they develop with an intimate partner. More specifically, we examined rates of IPV, both victimization and perpetration, among Russian university students, with regard to four types of intimate conflict: (a) physical assault, (b) physical injury, (c) psychological aggression, and (d) sexual coercion. In addition, we examined the role of gender in the perpetration and victimization of these four types of violence.

Method

The data for this study came from the International Dating Violence (IDV) Study, which examines partner violence among college students in over 30 countries worldwide. The study consortium involves many members, each of whom use a core questionnaire to measure the incidence of IPV and psychological characteristics among university students. Each consortium member translated the questionnaire into the language of their target population. This study was initiated in the year 2000 at the University of New Hampshire and contains data from over 30 different countries in every major region of the world; the data for this particular article involve three Russian university sites: Vladivostok (Far Eastern region, Primorye Krai), Barnaul (Altai region, West Siberia), and St. Petersburg (Northwest region). The procedures to protect the rights and safety of the participants were approved by the appropriate boards of ethics at each of the three study locations and at the University of New Hampshire.

Sample

The sample consisted of 338 students attending the Far Eastern National University in Vladivostok ($n = 92$), Altai State University in Barnaul ($n = 138$), and St. Petersburg State University in St. Petersburg ($n = 108$). The universities are located in three distinct economical and geographical regions in Russia. The three cities are the financial and cultural centers of three economical regions in Russia. According to the Human Potential Index (2006) and Youth Development Index (Agranovich et al., 2005), however, St. Petersburg is more affluent than either Barnaul or Vladivostok. Thus, the

university in St. Petersburg is more elite, with academic institutions of higher quality than those in either Barnaul or Vladivostok. The total number of respondents for this sample initially was 475 Russian students. Sixty-two cases had questionable response patterns and were thus removed before we conducted the analyses. These were cases that had (a) implausibly high numbers of severe assaults or injuries (e.g., respondent attacked partner with a knife or gun 10 times or more) or (b) inconsistent responses between types of victimization (e.g., respondent reported injury to self but did not report being assaulted by partner). Another 67 cases were removed because respondents were not in intimate relationships that lasted more than 1 month, and 8 respondents were not 18 years of age and thus did not qualify for participation. Therefore, the final sample for analyses was 338 students.

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1 describes the characteristics of the study participants and their dating relationships. This sample is composed nearly equally of men (46%) and women (54%), which is a strength of the sample. The first row of Table 1 shows that most of the respondents were in their first, second, or fourth year of education, and the difference between males and females was statistically significant; yet, there was no difference between the student ages. The majority of students were in a dating or engaged relationship. Males were significantly more sexually active than females (78% vs. 66%, respectively). The mean family monthly income was 11,946 Russian rubles (nearly \$427 in U.S. dollars), which is somewhat higher than the estimate for the general population of Russia (Russian Demographic Barometer, 2003). The family income of male students was statistically higher than that of female students. About 50% of students' fathers and mothers had completed high school or some kind of professional education. Just over half of the students' fathers and mothers had graduated from a 5-year university or had received a graduate degree.

Procedure

The students completed the questionnaire in a classroom setting during the spring and fall semesters of 2004. The questionnaires were administered to a convenience sample of college students in psychology, sociology, and social work undergraduate courses. To be included in the study, students had to be at least 18 years old and had to have been in a romantic dating or marital relationship for 1 month or longer during the previous 12 months.

Table 1
Respondent Characteristics

Characteristic	Total (<i>N</i> = 338; 100%)	Male (<i>n</i> = 156; 46%)	Female (<i>n</i> = 182; 54%)	χ^2 or <i>t</i> test
Year in university (%)				
First year	27.6	32.9	23.1	
Second year	20.2	5.2	33.0	
Third year	8.9	6.5	11.0	66.4***
Fourth year	37.1	53.5	23.1	
Fifth year	6.2	1.9	9.9	
Mean age (in years)	19.6	19.8	19.5	2.94
Relationship type (%)				
Dating or engaged	85.1	87.7	82.8	8.25
Married	1.8	1.3	2.2	
Cohabiting	13.1	11	15	
Relationship status (%)				
Currently in relationship	54.1	51.3	56.6	0.954
Previously in relationship	45.9	48.7	43.4	
Sexually active	71.4	78.1	65.7	6.21*
Mean relationship length (in months)	9.3	7.9	10.5	7.32**
Means for family characteristics				
Monthly family income (in rubles)	11,946 (\$427 US)	12,900 (\$461 US)	11,111 (\$397 US)	8.92**
Years of father's education	13.6	13.7	13.4	2.26
Years of mother's education	13.48	13.52	13.46	0.035
Social desirability	2.55	2.53	2.56	0.484

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

To respect the privacy and the voluntary nature of participation, the instructors emphasized that participation was voluntary. Students who did not want to participate returned a blank questionnaire to the consortium member. They were also told that they could omit any questions they did not want to answer. Most students in the IDV Study completed the survey in 1 hour; the Russian students took 1.5 times as long. This may be explained by the lack of experience of Russian students with survey research. There is no indication of response bias in this sample, however. The mean score on the Social Desirability Scale for this sample did not substantially differ from the mean scores for other IDV sites: 2.55 in this sample, compared with 2.62 in 32 other sites (Straus, in press).

Measures

Conflict Tactics Scale—Revised. The revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) were used to measure behaviors in the categories of physical assault, injury, sexual coercion, and psychological aggression. The CTS2 provides an overall score for each scale and also subscales for minor and severe forms of the behavior. The response categories for the CTS2 are as follows: (a) once in the past year; (b) twice in the past year; (c) 3-5 times in the past year; (d) 6-10 times in the past year; (e) 11-20 times in the past year; (f) more than 20 times in the past year; (g) not in the past year, but it did happen before; and (h) this has never happened. Each scale was dichotomized to create a prevalence score, coded 1 if any of the acts occurred in the past year and coded 0 if there were no assaultive acts. For the data in this article, we used the percentage of students at each university with a score of 1 (i.e. the percentage who assaulted or injured a dating partner). In the case of physical assault, distinctions between minor (e.g., pushed or shoved my partner; grabbed my partner) and severe assault (e.g., punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt; kicked my partner) reflect differences between simple and aggravated assault in U.S. criminal codes. The reliability coefficient for the Physical Assault subscale was 0.91; for the Severe Physical Assault subscale, it was 0.90.

The Injury subscale measures physical injury inflicted by the partner. The items in the Injury subscale are as follows: minor injury (e.g., had a sprain, bruise, or small cut because of a fight with my partner) and severe injury (e.g., went to a doctor because of a fight with my partner; needed to see a doctor because of a fight with my partner, but I didn't). The reliabilities for the Injury and Severe Injury subscales were 0.92 and 0.96, respectively.

Sexual coercion is defined as behavior that is intended to compel the partner to engage in unwanted sexual activity. Three different types of sexual coercion are measured: (a) insistence on sex (e.g., made my partner have sex without a condom; insisted on sex when my partner did not want to), (b) making threats (e.g., to make my partner have oral or anal sex; and to make my partner have sex), and (c) using physical force (e.g., hitting, holding down, or using a weapon to make my partner have oral or anal sex; and using force to make my partner have sex). The reliabilities for this scale are as follows: total Sexual Coercion scale = 0.81, Insistence subscale = 0.71, Threat subscale = 0.84, and Force subscale = 0.79.

Psychological aggression is the use of verbal and nonverbal acts that symbolically hurt the other or the use of threats to hurt the other. The communicative act may be active or passive, verbal or nonverbal. The coefficient of reliability for the total Psychological Aggression scale was 0.79,

and for the Severe Psychological Aggression subscale, it was 0.75. The items in Psychological Aggression are minor psychological aggression (e.g., insulted or swore at my partner; shouted or yelled at my partner) and severe psychological aggression (e.g., called my partner fat or ugly; destroyed something belonging to my partner or threatened to hit or throw something at my partner).

Gender. Males were coded as 1 and females as 2.

Socioeconomic status (SES). The SES scale was created by converting the scores for the education of the student's parents (response range = 1-6) and family income (response range = 1-10) to Z scores and summing the three Z scores. The scale was then converted to quintiles to allow cross-tabular analysis with the initial analysis.

Social desirability. Research that uses self-report data about socially sensitive topic areas often control for the tendency of respondents to alter their responses in ways that make them appear to be more socially acceptable. Thus, the IDV Study includes the Social Desirability subscale of the Personal and Relationships Profile (Straus & Mouradian, 1999). The scale measures behaviors that are slightly undesirable but true of almost everyone. The theoretical range of the Social Desirability subscale is from 1 to 4. For this sample, the scores ranged from 1.4 to 3.9 ($M = 2.55$, $SD = 0.4$). There was no statistical difference between male and female respondents.

Data Analysis

First, we calculated the prevalence and annual chronicity of each aggressive act measured by the CTS2: physical assault, injury, sexual coercion, and psychological aggression. Second, we used an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to test the hypothesis that there are no significant differences between males and females in the prevalence of violence against a dating partner. SES, social desirability, respondent's age, and respondent's year in school were included as covariates to estimate means adjusted for the dependent variables.

Results

The results show that the students in this sample experienced and perpetrated high rates of all four types of violence with a dating partner. Findings

for victimization and perpetration of each of the four types of violence against a dating partner are presented in Table 2. Results of the ANCOVAs testing gender differences in victimization are presented in Table 3, and differences in rates of perpetration are noted in Table 4.

Prevalence and Chronicity of Partner Assault

Physical assault. The first row of Table 2 provides the prevalence of physical assault victimization and perpetration for the entire sample, followed by rates for males and females. The results indicate that 25.5% of the students in this study were the victims of one or more physical attacks by their partner in the previous 12 months, and a slightly larger number (31%) reported perpetrating violence against their partner. The total rate includes both minor and severe acts of violence. The majority of the assaults were minor.

Physical injury. The results for injury show that 3.6% of the sample had a physical injury inflicted on them by their partner in the previous 12 months. The vast majority of injuries were minor. The reported rate for perpetration of injury was slightly higher than that for victimization.

Sexual coercion. About one quarter of the sample (24.1%) reported that their partner had used some form of coercion to have sex in the previous 12 months and 23.6% reported coercing their partner for sex. Of those who reported victimization of sexual coercion, most reported instances when a partner had insisted on sexual actions. Nonetheless, 3.1% of the respondents reported receiving threats to obtain sex and 3% reported victimizations that included physical force. Both males and females were victims of severe sexual coercion in the form of threats or force in the previous 12 months. Thus, the most severe coercion in the form of threatening the partner to get sex, or physically forcing sex, was experienced by almost 5% of the students. As for rate of perpetration, 2.9% reported perpetrating severe sexual coercion in the form of threats or force with a partner.

Psychological aggression. Psychological aggression was by far the most prevalent type of maltreatment examined in this study of Russian students. More than half of the students reported being victimized (61.6%) or perpetrating psychological aggression against a partner (61.6%). About one third of the psychological aggression acts on the perpetration scale were considered severe, such as calling a partner fat or ugly or destroying something belonging to the partner (20.3%).

Table 2
Prevalence and Annual Chronicity of Intimate
Partner Violence Among Russian Students: Physical Assault,
Physical Injury, Sexual Coercion, and Psychological
Aggression (N = 338)

Prevalence and Chronicity	Victimization			Perpetration		
	Total Sample	Male	Female	Total Sample	Male	Female
Physical assault						
Total						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	25.5 (12.8)	28.6 (10.7)	23.1 (14.8)	31.0 (13.0)	22.8 (9.8)	37.6 (16.2)
Minor						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	23.0 (10.98)	24.2 (8.6)	21.8 (13.4)	28.1 (10.7)	20.6 (8.4)	35.6 (13.0)
Severe						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	8.7 (9.1)	8.5 (11.9)	8.9 (6.4)	11.1 (7.7)	8.1 (6.2)	13.5 (9.1)
Physical injury						
Total						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	3.6 (2.8)	1.5 (0.0)	5.3 (7.7)	4.3 (11.6)	2.3 (16.6)	5.9 (6.5)
Minor						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	3.3 (0.0)	0.8 (0.0)	5.3 (6.9)	4.3 (10.6)	2.3 (15.3)	5.9 (5.9)
Severe						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	1.0 (0.0)	0.8 (0.0)	1.2 (0.0)	1.0 (0.0)	0.8 (0.0)	1.2 (0.0)
Sexual coercion						
Total						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	24.1 (13.7)	15.4 (14.3)	32.8 (13.1)	23.6 (13.6)	24.4 (16.4)	22.9 (10.9)
Insistence						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	23.3 (12.1)	14.6 (11.6)	32.0 (12.6)	22.0 (11.4)	21.2 (12.8)	22.8 (10.1)
Threat						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	3.1 (11.9)	1.5 (16.4)	4.7 (7.4)	2.6 (16.2)	1.4 (23.8)	3.8 (8.5)
Force						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	3.0 (5.2)	0.9 (8.5)	5.2 (1.9)	0.9 (0.0)	1.1 (0.0)	0.8 (0.0)

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Prevalence and Chronicity	Victimization			Perpetration		
	Total Sample	Male	Female	Total Sample	Male	Female
Psychological aggression						
Total						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	61.6 (15.5)	56.5 (19.1)	66.7 (11.9)	61.6 (15.6)	48.9 (16.9)	74.2 (14.3)
Minor						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	59.7 (12.8)	54.0 (13.9)	65.4 (11.7)	60.5 (13.1)	47.4 (12.7)	73.6 (13.5)
Severe						
Prevalence % (Chronicity)	13.5 (6.4)	14.0 (8.5)	13.0 (4.3)	20.3 (6.8)	18.5 (8.0)	22.1 (5.5)

Testing for Gender Differences

Physical assault. Table 3 shows that there was no statistical difference between gender with regard to victimization, with 23.1% of females reporting having been victimized by their intimate partners, compared with 28.6% of males. This finding was true for all levels of physical assault. There was, however, a statistically significant difference between the percentages of female (35.6%) and male students (20.6%) who physically assaulted their partner. This finding was true for total and minor assault but was not statistically significant for severe assault. These results are consistent with those from most other sites of IDV study (Straus, 2004b).

Injury. Many more female than male Russian students were injured by a partner (5.3% of females and 1.5% of males), which proved to be statistically significant for both total and minor injuries. This likely reflects the fact that men in general are taller, heavier, and stronger than females. The female students reported inflicting more minor injuries than the male students (5.9% vs. 2.3%), but this difference was not statistically significant.

Sexual coercion. Two times as many females reported being victims of sexual coercion, compared with males (32.8% of females vs. 15.4% of males). This was true for total sexual coercion and for "insistence." However, there was no significant difference for gender in victimization with regard to being the recipients of threats or force. At the same time,

Table 3
Analyses of Covariance of Four Types of Partner Victimization
as a Function of Respondent Gender and Age (*N* = 338)

Source	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>	Significance	Eta Squared
Physical Assault—						
Total—Victimization						
Gender	1	143.562	143.562	0.076	.783	.000
Age	4	595.688	148.922	0.079	.989	.001
Gender × Age	4	1469.521	367.380	0.195	.941	.003
Error	289	543604.352	1880.984			
Total	302	770000.000				
Physical Assault—						
Minor—Victimization						
Gender	1	254.091	254.091	0.148	.701	.001
Age	4	1933.424	483.356	0.281	.890	.004
Gender × Age	4	2647.885	661.971	0.385	.819	.005
Error	289	496654.636	1718.528			
Total	302	700000.000				
Physical Assault—						
Severe—Victimization						
Gender	1	28.201	28.201	0.035	.851	.000
Age	4	553.111	138.278	0.174	.952	.002
Gender × Age	4	2783.827	695.957	0.875	.479	.012
Error	288	228951.387	794.970			
Total	301	260000.000				
Physical Injury—						
Total—Victimization						
Gender	1	1406.501	1406.501	4.102	.044	.014
Age	1	109.672	109.672	0.320	.572	.001
Gender × Age	1	2743.817	2743.817	8.001	.005	.026
Error	296	101504.365	342.920			
Total	301	105993.377				
Physical Injury—						
Minor—Victimization						
Gender	1	1910.887	1910.887	6.126	.014	.020
Age	1	197.450	197.450	0.633	.427	.002
Gender × Age	1	2420.328	2420.328	7.759	.006	.026
Error	296	92336.227	311.947			
Total	301	96688.742				
Physical Injury—						
Severe—Victimization						
Gender	1	34.499	34.499	0.347	.556	.001
Age	1	1.014	1.014	0.010	.920	.000

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Source	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>	Significance	Eta Squared
Gender × Age	1	0.019	0.019	0.000	.989	.000
Error	295	29288.666	99.284			
Total	301	30000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Total—Victimization						
Gender	1	13012.414	13012.414	7.679	.006	.026
Age	4	2934.497	733.624	0.433	.785	.006
Gender × Age	4	803.926	200.982	0.119	.976	.002
Error	289	489755.021	1694.654			
Total	302	740000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Insistence (Minor)—						
Victimization						
Gender	1	12997.308	12997.308	7.834	.005	.026
Age	4	3525.848	881.462	0.531	.713	.007
Gender × Age	4	2251.508	562.877	0.339	.851	.005
Error	289	479459.809	1659.030			
Total	302	710000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Threat—						
Victimization						
Gender	1	396.186	396.186	1.180	.278	.004
Age	4	1333.278	333.319	0.993	.412	.014
Gender × Age	4	671.360	167.840	0.500	.736	.007
Error	278	93313.720	335.661			
Total	290	100000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Force—						
Victimization						
Gender	1	777.354	777.354	3.549	.061	.012
Age	4	801.587	200.397	0.915	.455	.013
Gender × Age	4	930.526	232.631	1.062	.375	.014
Error	289	63292.521	219.005			
Total	302	70000.000				
Psychological						
Aggression—						
Total—Victimization						
Gender	1	4520.527	4520.527	2.047	.154	.007
Age	4	6433.287	1608.322	.728	.573	.010
Gender × Age	4	8642.076	2160.519	0.978	.420	.013
Error	291	642664.091	2208.468			
Total	304	1950000.000				

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

Source	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>	Significance	Eta Squared
Psychological						
Aggression—Minor—						
Victimization						
Gender	1	5607.011	5607.011	2.472	.117	.008
Age	4	6337.831	1584.458	0.698	.594	.010
Gender × Age	4	6679.244	1669.811	0.736	.568	.010
Error	291	660134.487	2268.503			
Total	304	1910000.000				
Psychological						
Aggression—						
Severe—						
Victimization						
Gender	1	40.855	40.855	0.037	.847	.000
Age	4	2569.673	642.418	0.587	.672	.008
Gender × Age	4	7065.753	1766.438	1.615	.170	.022
Error	287	313836.212	1093.506			
Total	300	390000.000				

Note: All analyses controlled for social desirability, socioeconomic status, and year in school. Results are available from the authors upon request.

nearly equal numbers of males and females reported perpetrating sexual coercion against a partner (24.4% of males vs. 22.9% of females); this rate was not statistically different for any of the different levels of coercion.

Psychological aggression. Although women more often reported being a victim of psychological aggression than males (66.7% vs. 56.5%), this difference was not statistically significant. The total rate of perpetration for female students (74.2%), however, was significantly higher than the rate for male students.

Discussion

In this study, we investigated rates of IPV among Russian male and female college students and found that the high rates of IPV among university students in the United States and parts of Western Europe seem to apply to Russian students as well. With roughly a quarter of the students reporting being a victim of a physical assault and close to one third of the students

Table 4
Analyses of Covariance of Four Types of Partner Perpetration
as a Function of Respondent Gender and Age ($N = 338$)

Source	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>	Significance	Eta Squared
Physical Assault—						
Total—Perpetration						
Gender	1	9179.647	9179.647	4.319	.039	.015
Age	4	2240.023	560.006	0.263	.901	.004
Gender × Age	4	3402.222	850.555	0.400	.808	.006
Error	289	614267.368	2125.493			
Total	302	950000.000				
Physical Assault—						
Minor—Perpetration						
Gender	1	9566.192	9566.192	4.592	.033	.016
Age	4	1640.360	410.090	.197	.940	.003
Gender × Age	4	2858.069	714.517	.343	.849	.005
Error	289	602065.397	2083.271			
Total	302	920000.000				
Physical Assault—						
Severe—Perpetration						
Gender	1	1324.826	1324.826	1.352	.246	.005
Age	4	2140.919	535.230	.546	.702	.008
Gender × Age	4	6357.900	1589.475	1.622	.169	.022
Error	288	282173.370	979.769			
Total	300	301594.684				
Physical Injury—						
Total—Perpetration						
Gender	1	1476.185	1476.185	3.655	.057	.012
Age	1	274.941	274.941	0.681	.410	.002
Gender × Age	1	2556.718	2556.718	6.331	.012	.021
Error	296	119541.189	403.855			
Total	302	130000.000				
Physical Injury—						
Minor—Perpetration						
Gender	1	1476.185	1476.185	3.655	.057	.012
Age	1	274.941	274.941	0.681	.410	.002
Gender × Age	1	2556.718	2556.718	6.331	.012	.021
Error	296	119542.189	403.855			
Total	301	124403.974				
Physical Injury—						
Severe—Perpetration						
Gender	1	34.499	34.499	0.347	.556	.001
Age	1	1.014	1.014	0.010	.920	.000

(continued)

Table 4 (continued)

Source	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>	Significance	Eta Squared
Gender × Age	1	0.019	0.019	0.000	.989	.000
Error	295	29288.666	99.284			
Total	301	30000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Total—Perpetration						
Gender	1	131.997	131.997	0.078	.781	.000
Age	4	1851.567	462.892	0.272	.898	.004
Gender × Age	4	1514.584	378.646	0.233	.926	.003
Error	289	491501.215	1700.696			
Total	302	700000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Insistence (Minor)—						
Perpetration						
Gender	1	110.049	110.049	0.066	.797	.000
Age	4	2408.505	602.126	0.364	.834	.005
Gender × Age	4	1046.923	261.731	0.158	.959	.002
Error	289	478600.083	1656.056			
Total	302	670000.000				
Sexual Coercion—						
Threat—Perpetration						
Gender	1	132.555	231.555	0.858	.355	.003
Age	4	1240.818	310.205	1.149	.334	.016
Gender × Age	4	516.230	129.057	0.478	.752	.007
Error	278	75041.697	269.934			
Total	291	80000.000				
Social Coercion—						
Force—Perpetration						
Gender	1	6.092	6.092	0.061	.806	.000
Age	4	156.518	39.130	0.389	.816	.005
Gender × Age	4	121.438	30.359	0.302	.876	.004
Error	289	29037.293	100.475			
Total	302	30000.000				
Psychological						
Aggression—Total—						
Perpetration						
Gender	1	27295.183	27295.183	13.054	.000	.043
Age	4	7522.389	1880.597	0.899	.465	.012
Gender × Age	4	9831.851	2457.963	1.175	.322	.016
Error	289	604297.996	2090.997			
Total	302	1920000.000				

(continued)

Table 4 (continued)

Source	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	<i>F</i>	Significance	Eta Squared
Psychological						
Aggression—Minor—						
Perpetration						
Gender	1	29462.829	29462.829	13.791	.000	.046
Age	4	5060.530	1265.133	0.592	.669	.008
Gender × Age	4	11002.128	2750.533	1.287	.275	.018
Error	289	617404.175	2136.347			
Total	302	1890000.000				
Psychological						
Aggression—						
Severe—						
Perpetration						
Gender	1	548.423	548.423	0.374	.541	.001
Age	4	5142.118	1285.530	0.876	.479	.012
Gender × Age	4	12615.220	3153.805	2.149	.075	.029
Error	288	422607.470	1467.387			
Total	301	560000.000				

reporting perpetrating partner assault, Russian students rank in the midrange when compared with other nations in the IDV study (Straus, 2004b).

This relative ranking of Russian students in comparison with students from other countries is surprising. We anticipated that the high homicide rate in Russia might be associated with the rate of dating violence. If we examine the distribution of IPV perpetration among other Eastern European countries in the IDV study, the rate of violence in Russia exceeds that of Hungary (22.7%) but lags behind Romania (31.9%) and Lithuania (33.9%; Straus, in press). As we expected, many well-developed Western countries with relatively low homicide rates (e.g., Germany, Greece, Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal, and Japan; Barclay & Tavares, 2002) have IPV rates that are lower than those in Russia. Some Asian and African countries that participated in the IDV study (e.g., Tanzania, South Africa, China, and Taiwan) have dating violence rates that are higher than those in Russia. Contrary to our expectations, two Latin American countries with a higher homicide rate per 100,000 persons than that in Russia (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, n.d.) has IPV rates lower than that in Russia (e.g., 24.3% in Venezuela and 24.2% in Guatemala). Some of the inconsistencies that exist between homicide and

IPV rates may be explained by the fact that university students in Russia constitute a low-risk group. Russians with a college education are 10 times less likely to commit violent crimes and to be killed than those with lower levels of education (Rivman & Ustinov, 2000).

The second probable explanation for why our results did not greatly differ from those for other sites in the IDV study is that the median age for committing homicides in Russia is much higher than in other Western countries, including the United States (e.g., 34 years old in Russia vs. 23 years old in the United States; Predimore, 2000). Thus, it is possible that the rate of interpersonal violence may be much higher among older young adults than among college-aged Russian students. Although the Russian IPV rate is not extremely high relative to other countries, we still found a substantial rate of physical assault. In addition, the perpetration rate for severe physical assaults among Russian students is higher than the median rate for universities in the IDV study: 11.1% in Russia versus 9.4% at other universities in the IDV study (Straus, 2004b).

Although it was not a focus of this study, we also found regional differences in the prevalence of physical violence against a dating partner that are consistent with the socioeconomic status of these three regions. The lowest prevalence rate of physical violence was found in St. Petersburg (22.2%), followed by Barnaul (31.8%) and Vladivostok (41.0%), $\chi^2(2) = 7.26, p < .05$.

Our results concerning the role of gender in partner violence is consistent with previous research. For example, the similar percentage of male and female students who physically assault, injure, and sexually coerce their partners in this Russian sample is also consistent with the results for students at other universities in the IDV study (Straus, 2004b, in press) and in other countries (Krahe et al., 2005). For overall assaults (which were primarily minor attacks), the rate for women exceeded the rate for men in two thirds of the participating sites, whereas for severe assaults, the higher rate for perpetration by women occurred in somewhat fewer, but still a majority of, the sites (18 of 31 sites; Straus, 2004b).

Significant differences in the perpetration rate between men and women and the moderate level of IPV in our sample, compared with those reported for other countries, may be also explained by the deterrent effect of the Russian army on Russian male students. If it becomes known that the male student abused a female, he may be expelled from the university and immediately enlisted into military service in Russia. Students are well aware of *dedovshchina*, or "rule of the grandfathers," that daily life for first-year conscripts consists of menial and degrading tasks. Some maintain that young

Russian adults have ultimately three options from which to choose—army, prison, or university (Tomusk, 2004). According to a national Russian survey in 2005, over half (59%) of the young people aged 18 to 35 think that “many young people entered universities for the sake of draft deferments” (Public Opinion Foundation, 2005).

Compared with findings in U.S. studies, the perpetration of psychological aggression for this sample of male students was lower than the rates found for U.S. samples but nearly the same for female respondents in both samples (Straus & Sweet, 1992). Our finding that women initiate more verbal abuse than men is supported by other research in Russia (Vannoy et al., 1999). The results for these Russian university samples and for the other sites in the IDV study provide further evidence to support the notion of gender symmetry, or similar rates of perpetration among males and females in partner violence; these results have important implications for IPV theories. Increasingly, researchers are paying more attention to the notion that IPV is perpetrated by both men and women (Hines & Saudino, 2003) and there is evidence supporting the notion that dominance in heterosexual relationships by either the male or female partner is associated with partner violence (Straus, in press). It should be noted that the CTS is not intended to measure motivation, and we have no data that could explain the reasons for why females might engage in as much partner violence as males. Our results simply report on the behavior of couples in relationships. Nonetheless, the findings of this study have practical implications for primary prevention. The results suggest that prevention efforts may need to be addressed to all members of intimate relationships to prevent physical injuries and psychological maltreatment (Mills, 2003; O’Leary, 2001).

This study has a number of limitations. First, the students are from only three of many universities in Russia, and they were located in very different geopolitical regions of the country. Second, the data for this study are from a convenience sample, and the results of this study cannot be taken as representative of students in Russia in general, nor can they be said to be representative of all Russian citizens. Third, the differences in the context of aggression that may be significantly different for men and women (e.g., factors such as self-defense or retaliation) were not studied in this research. Finally, the survey for this study was translated from English into Russian. The lens through which Russian students understand questions regarding sensitive topics may be different from that of English-speaking American students, although it should be noted that the CTS2 has demonstrated good cross-cultural reliability and validity (Straus, 2004a).

We found that, in general, both male and female students had high rates of assault and aggression. However, we found some exceptions. First, women were more physically abusive and psychologically aggressive toward a partner than were men. At the same time, women suffered from more injuries as the result of violence and were more often victims of sexual coercion. The rates of severe sexual coercion reported by women in this study are many times higher than the rate of rapes known to the police in Russia in 2004 (Russian Police Crime Report, 2004) and suggest that in Russia, as in the United States, many sexual assaults, especially those that occur within the context of intimate relationships, may go unreported to the appropriate authorities.

The need for primary prevention of dating violence by university students is evident from the results of this study and other studies of students. The physical assaults and some of the sexual coercion experienced and perpetrated by these students are serious criminal violations, and they have grave consequences. In this study, about 3% of the Russian university students were injured as result of attacks by their partners. Given the number of all Russian students between the ages of 18 to 22, this means that nearly 120,000 students in Russia may suffer from such injuries. The harmful effects are potentially greater for women because they are more physically vulnerable, as evidenced by the fact that, among the Russian students in this sample, mostly women reported experiencing injuries. In addition, women are the primary victims of what may be the most traumatic type of dating violence—physically forced sexual acts. Our research shows that men are also victims of dating violence, and they also deserve the same quality of help and attention that is directed toward female victims. The results of the study, like many others, speak to the importance of primary prevention of violence in intimate relationships, regardless of age or national origin.

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