

## **Review comment -1**

This topic is important for the scientific community because it advances understanding of how contextual framing influences the reporting and interpretation of intimate partner violence (IPV). Accurately assessing IPV is essential for both research validity and the development of effective prevention and intervention strategies. By examining how gender and contextual qualifiers affect self-reports of violence, this study highlights potential sources of bias or underreporting that can distort prevalence estimates and hinder service delivery. Furthermore, exploring gender differences in perception and disclosure deepens theoretical insights into social norms, power dynamics, and psychological processes underlying IPV. Ultimately, this research contributes to improving measurement accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and clinical assessment practices in IPV studies and interventions.

I recommend the following title: Does Context Change the Story? Gender Differences in Reporting Intimate Partner Violence Among College Students.

**Response: We appreciate the reviewer's thoughtful suggestion regarding the title. We have revised the title to: *"Does Context Change the Story? Gender Differences in Reporting Intimate Partner Violence Among College Students."***

I think the Abstract, while fine, could be improved by providing the following:

This study examines how contextual framing influences self-reported experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) and potential gender differences in reporting patterns. A web-based survey of 163 U.S. college students randomly assigned to a contextualized or non-contextualized version of an IPV measure was analyzed using chi-square tests and logistic regression. Results indicated that including contextual qualifiers (e.g., excluding joking or playful behavior) reduced overall IPV reporting and altered gender differences in victimization and perpetration rates. These findings underscore the importance of contextual interpretation in measuring IPV and suggest that gender disparities in prevalence estimates may partly reflect differences in how individuals perceive and report aggressive behaviors. Implications for IPV survey design, measurement validity, and future research directions are discussed. Keywords: intimate partner violence; college; victims; perpetrators; gender-based violence

**Response: We thank the reviewer for the thoughtful suggestion to revise the abstract for clarity and conciseness. We have revised the abstract following the reviewer's recommendation, adopting the proposed structure and language while ensuring that the results accurately reflect the study's findings. Specifically, we clarified that including contextual qualifiers affected reporting patterns, particularly increasing reports of psychological IPV victimization under contextualized conditions, rather than reducing overall IPV reporting.**

The Discussion section should include: Implications for Policy, Theory Directions for Future Research Limitations of the Current Study.

**Response: We addressed them.**

I recommend that the author include 7-8 citations published in 2025.

**Response: We added them.**

### **Specific Comments:**

This manuscript explores an important and often overlooked question about how context influences people's self-reports of intimate partner violence (IPV), and whether there are gender differences in how those reports are made. The focus on measurement validity and gendered interpretation adds valuable insight to both IPV research and quantitative methods. The paper is clearly written, well-structured, and well-supported by relevant literature. That said, some methodological concerns—mainly the small sample size, limited representativeness, and uneven randomization—make it harder to draw strong conclusions from the findings.

I enjoyed reading this manuscript very much and recommend revise and resubmit, with attention to improving theoretical integration and methodological justification. In the spirit of strengthening the manuscript, I highlight the strengths and weaknesses as well as offer the following recommendations:

### **Strengths**

The manuscript demonstrates strong significance and relevance by addressing a critical methodological and social issue—how contextual framing (e.g., excluding joking or playful behavior) influences the reporting of intimate partner violence (IPV) and its gender distribution. The findings hold important implications for survey design, prevalence estimation, and policy interpretation within IPV research. The literature review is comprehensive and situates the study effectively within the broader IPV scholarship. It clearly identifies existing gaps, particularly those related to contextual ambiguity in self-report measures and gendered differences in response patterns. The paper also exhibits a high level of transparency and methodological rigor, providing detailed information about recruitment, instrumentation, coding, and analytic strategies. The inclusion of reliability statistics (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) and justification for analytic decisions, such as dichotomization of IPV types, further enhance clarity and credibility. In addition, the discussion demonstrates thoughtful engagement with the complexity of IPV, acknowledging that perceptions and reporting behaviors vary by gender and socialization. Finally, the author's ethical and reflective approach—marked by transparency about limitations such as small sample size, lack of demographic diversity, and imbalanced randomization—reinforces the integrity and trustworthiness of the research.

## Weaknesses

The study presents several notable limitations that warrant consideration. The sample (N = 163, 74% women, 90% White) lacks both gender and racial diversity, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the exclusion of sexual and gender minority participants reduces the inclusivity and theoretical depth of the analysis, particularly given the manuscript's early acknowledgment of these populations. The randomization procedure, based on participants' color choice, resulted in unequal group sizes (48 contextual vs. 115 non-contextual), thereby weakening statistical power and introducing the potential for selection bias. Measurement depth also poses a concern, as several IPV dimensions—especially sexual violence—were assessed using single-item measures, which compromises construct validity. Moreover, the contextual qualifier was not consistently applied across all items, weakening the core manipulation central to the study's research question. Statistically, many findings did not remain significant after Bonferroni correction, indicating limited power and a potential for Type II error; additional exploratory or multivariate analyses might have yielded deeper insights into the observed trends. From a theoretical standpoint, although the interpretations are thoughtful, some explanations—such as those related to emotional maturity or gendered reporting patterns—remain speculative. Greater alignment with established frameworks, such as feminist theory, social learning theory, or models of measurement bias, would strengthen the discussion. Finally, the study lacks an intersectional analysis exploring how gender interacts with other demographic or social variables (e.g., race, age, socioeconomic status). Future research could meaningfully extend this work by examining how multiple identities intersect to shape IPV reporting behaviors.

## Recommendations for Revision:

- Strengthen the theoretical framing in the introduction and discussion to better connect findings to broader gender and social psychology theories.

**Response: We used models of measurement bias in the introduction and applied them to the discussion.**

- Consider expanding or clarifying the contextual manipulation to ensure it meaningfully tests the central research question.

- Re-examine the randomization and group allocation procedures, and discuss potential bias introduced by unequal group sizes.

**Response: We discussed potential biases in the limitation section.**

Include additional analyses exploring potential moderating variables or qualitative explanations (if data permit).

**Response: We appreciate the reviewer's thoughtful suggestion to include additional analyses exploring potential moderating variables. As the primary focus of this study was to investigate the role of gender and the inclusion of a contextual qualifier in self-reported intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization, analyses of potential moderating effects of other demographic or social variables fall outside the scope of the current manuscript. Therefore, we did not include such analyses in the present study. In addition, we acknowledge that qualitative explanations could further enrich the interpretation of the findings. However, the present study relied exclusively on quantitative survey data, and no qualitative data were collected. We have noted these points as important directions for future research in the revised manuscript.**

- Include Implications for Policy, Theory, and Practice section in your Discussion Section. Discuss implications for survey design and measurement validity more explicitly, especially for policymakers and practitioners.

**Response: Currently policy and practice implications were included in the discussion and/or the conclusion sections. We reviewed them carefully to make sure they are clear and cohesive. We added theory implications to the discussion.**

- Include Directions for Future Research section in your Discussion section.

**Response: Currently they were included in the discussion and in the limitation sections. We reviewed them carefully to make sure they are clear and cohesive.**

- Incorporating qualitative research would broaden our understanding of this topic by capturing the nuanced experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of IPV from participants' own perspectives, revealing how context, relationship dynamics, and social norms shape reporting behaviors beyond what quantitative measures can detect.

**Response: We thank the reviewer for this suggestion. As noted in the seventh limitation, the present study relied solely on quantitative data; however, future research could incorporate qualitative methods to capture participants' nuanced experiences and perceptions of IPV, providing a deeper understanding of how context, relationship dynamics, and social norms shape reporting behaviors.**

- Include 7-8 citations published in 2025.

**Response: We added them.**

## **Conclusion**

This manuscript is a thoughtful and well-intentioned contribution that highlights the subtle yet significant effects of context in IPV self-report data. The study's findings open an important dialogue about how gender, social interpretation, and question framing interact to shape research outcomes. With revision to address methodological and theoretical weaknesses, the paper has strong potential for publication.

## **Other Questions:**

On Page 11, you wrote:

A convenience sample was drawn from a Midwest public university in the U.S., through an email with a brief introduction of the survey, an informed consent letter, and a separate link to win small incentives.

- What "small incentives" did the participants receive?

**Response: We described them - a raffle for \$50 Amazon.com gift cards.**

Technical Issues:

On Page 3, you wrote:

Change to:

For example, partners may engage in horseplay that one views as harmless fun, while the other perceives it as physical aggression.

**Response: We have revised it as suggested.**

On Page 4, you wrote this:

While similar IPV prevalence rates between college enrolled and non-enrolled young adults (CITE) have been reported (Coker et al., 2015; Daly et al., 2024), studies also have demonstrated the negative impact of IPV on college students, concerning health and mental health (e.g., Claydon et al., 2022; Lagdon et al., 2022) as well as their academic performances (Klencakova et al., 2021).

· Include one or more citations where you wrote (CITE)

**Response: That was a placeholder that should have been removed. We deleted it.**

On Page 20, you wrote:

Relatedly, due to some categories being small, some gender categories, such as transgender and gender non-binary, were not included in the analysis; all non-White race/ethnicity categories, such as Black and Hispanic, were combined together.

Change to:

Due to small subgroup sizes, certain gender identities (e.g., transgender and non-binary) were excluded from the analysis, and all non-White racial and ethnic categories (e.g., Black, Hispanic) were combined into a single category.

**Response: We have revised it as suggested.**

On Page 22, you wrote:

This study mostly focused on the intent of acts, but “joking around” can be as impactful to the survivors’ health and well-being as more aggressive acts.

Change to:

This study mostly focused on the intent of acts, but “joking around” can be as impactful to the survivors’ health and well-being as more aggressive acts.

**Response: We have revised it as suggested.**

## References

There is a total of 54 citations on the Reference page, and I noticed that this citation was listed twice:

Holland, K. J., Cipriano, A. E., Huit, T. Z., Volk, S. A., Meyer, C. L., Waitr, E., & Wiener, E. R. (2021). "Serious enough"? A mixed-method examination of the minimization of sexual assault as a service barrier for college sexual assault survivors. *Psychology of Violence*, 11(3), 276–285.

**Response: We thank the reviewer for noting this. We have removed the duplicate entry for Holland et al. (2021) from the reference list.**

The following 4 citations were published between 2020 and 2022:

1. Etaugh, C. (2020) – Prevalence of intimate partner violence in LGBTQ individuals
2. Hayes, B. E., & Kopp, P. M. (2020) – Gender differences in the effect of past year victimization
3. Henry, R. S., Perrin, P. B., et al. (2021) – Intimate partner violence and mental health among transgender/gender nonconforming adults
4. Holland, K. J., Cipriano, A. E., et al. (2021) – "Serious enough"? Minimization of sexual assault as a service barrier for college survivors

The following 7 citations were published between 2023 and 2025:

1. An, S., Welch-Brewer, C., & Tadese, H. (2024) – Scoping Review of Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Programs
2. Daly, K. A., Heyman, R. E., et al. (2024) – Interpersonal violence victimization among college-attending and non-college-attending emerging adults
3. Klenckova, L. E., Pentaraki, M., & McManus, C. (2023) – The impact of intimate partner violence on young women's educational well-being
4. Lagdon, S., Ross, J., Waterhouse-Bradley, B., & Armour, C. (2023) – Exploring distinct subclasses of intimate partner violence experience

5. National Center for Education Statistics (2024) – College Enrollment Rates

6. Paul, L. R., Kripp, S. S., & Capezza, N. M. (2024) – Comparing perceptions of transgender and cisgender survivors

7. Zapata-Calvente, A. L., Moya, M., & Megías, J. L. (2024) – Unveiling the gender symmetry debate

So,  $11/52 = 4.727$  citations were published between 2020 and 2024. Therefore, I recommend that the author include 7-8 citations published in 2025.

**According to the 7th edition of APA:**

**Response: All references and formatting have been revised to comply with the 7th edition of the APA Publication Manual.**

1. You should alphabetize in-text citations.
2. You should provide a period and a comma when using the initial of an author or author.
3. You should italicize journal titles.
4. You should italicize the volume number.
5. You should not italicize the issue number.
6. You should keep the volume number AND issue number together.
7. You should italicize book titles.
8. You should not provide the location for a book. Only provide the publisher.
9. You should capitalize journal titles.
10. You should capitalize the first word after a colon in a title (Only capitalize the proper nouns)
11. You should provide start and end page numbers for all references. (Several citations are missing end page numbers).
12. You should use the surname of the first author followed by et al and the year when citing 3 or more authors [This is the case for in-text citations and citations within a sentence]



13. You should not capitalize every word in your title. (Only capitalize the proper nouns)

14. You should provide DOI numbers for all citations on your Reference page.

Below is how you should cite a book:

Boss, P. (1999). *Ambiguous loss: Learning to live with unresolved grief*.

Harvard University Press.

Below is how to cite a journal article with 2 authors:

Kilgo, D. K., & Harlow, S. (2019). Protest, media coverage, and a hierarchy of

social struggle. *International Journal of Press/Politics*, 24(4), 508-530.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/194016121985317>

Below is how to cite a journal article with 3 authors:

McHale, S. M., Updegraff, K. A., & Whiteman, S. D. (2012). Sibling

relationships and influences in childhood and adolescence. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 74, 913-930. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2012.01011.x>

Below is how you should cite a journal with 4 authors:

Adams, V., Kaufman, S. R., van Hattum, T., & Moody, S. (2011). Aging

disaster: Mortality, vulnerability, and long-term recovery among Katrina survivors. *Medical Anthropology*, 30(3), 247-270. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01459740.2011.560777>.

Below is how to cite a journal article with 5 authors:

Montoro, J. P., Kilday, J. E., Rivas-Drake, D., Ryan, A. M., & Umaña-Taylor,

A. J. (2021). Coping with discrimination from peers and adults: Implications for adolescents' school belonging. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 50(1), 126-143.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-020-01360-5>

· Notice the volume number 50 is italicized while the issue number 1 is in parentheses and is not italicized.

How to cite a chapter in an edited book:

LaRossa, R., & Reitzes, D.C. (1993) Symbolic interactionism and family

studies. In P. G. Boss, Doherty, W. J., LaRossa, R., Schumm, W. R. & Steinmetz, S. K., (Eds.), Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach (pp. 135-163). Plenum.

## **Review comment -2**

This article adds important nuance (context!) to scientific conversations about reporting IPV and how professionals can better meet the needs within the community. The particular focus on college-age students also responds to an important gap in the literature about transition-age young adults who are at risk for many other concerning health outcomes and behaviors.

I appreciate the inclusion of the goals of the study, the primary results, and specific recommendations for providers going forward.

Lit Review: is overwhelming and confusing. While it seems clear that the literature is mixed, the authors need to find ways to interpret/summarize the findings more clearly. The current overview seems to make a claim and then to dispute it—it is difficult to follow. Stats are confusing in the overview of college samples. Some stats show males having higher rates while the narrative states that females have higher rates. (p. 5)

Your summary that states that women are more negatively impacted than men by IPV is an important overall take-away and can be useful in strengthening your overall argument/framing.

**Response: We revised the lit review section to be clearer and easy to follow.**

Your analysis of the context of reporting and how the scales impact the numbers is really important! (p.8). I would like to see this emphasized more/earlier.

**Response: We added them to the introduction and strengthened in the discussion section.**

The Current Study (this should be included under Method): Consider if the questions can be included in a table or figure.

**Response: We added subheadings to better organize the questions and move them to the Method.**

Results are interesting and important.

The sources cited in the introduction are very old—I would be interested to see these updated (or referenced if they are understood to be seminal in the field). p. 4 has an incomplete citation (CITE).

**Response: We updated old citations with recent ones. (CITE) was a placeholder that should have been removed. We deleted it.**

There is a lack of inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community (though there is focus on this community in the literature overview)—clearer information about the decision would be important to include.

In the intro you seem to report that the research about IPV across gender has been inconsistent at best, but you end with data about the LGBTQ+ community that sounds definitive. Consider if the T and + communities need to be differentiated from these statistics and/or if you can find research examining some of the other within-group differences that may exist. You bring in a great deal of research about this community (pg.7), but it needs to be included/reflected more earlier/throughout.

Overall, you have inconsistently included data and stats about the LGBTQ+ community. The victimization rates (p.4), for example, are only presented in the gender binary (male/female). Ultimately your study relies on a gender binary, so consider addressing this as a clear limitation and/or explaining how/why the decisions were made. It might be important to remove some of the literature focusing on the LGBTQ+ community if your study excludes the community from participation (and/or doesn't explicitly include the community).

**Response: As the LGBTQ+ community was not the focus of the study, and their numbers were too small, they were excluded from the analyses. We removed all the literature review sections that discussed them.**

The primary focus for revisions should be to update and clarify the literature review, better aligning it with the directions that the manuscript takes.