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Attitudes Amongst Refugee, Migrant &
Native Youth in Zurich, Switzerland
towards Violence against Women:
Risk factors, Predictors and Mediators

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Overview

- Brief Background
- Theory
- Research questions
- Refugee Data
- Summary of findings
- Discussion

VAW/adolescents background

- Limited data on attitudes towards violence against women (VAW) within migrant communities (El-Abani et al., 2020)
- Data on refugee/migrant adolescents' attitudes are even more **limited**
- In a study exploring Jordanian adolescents' attitudes towards wife beating, acceptance ranged from **6%-50%** across a **multi-item wife beating scale** (Schuster et al., 2020)
- A similar study in **South Asia** found that **51%** of male adolescents **in India, 42% in Bangladesh, and 28% in Nepal** justified wife beating (Dalal, Lee & Gifford, 2012)
- Overall, while mixed, suggests support for VAW in these regions is **relatively high**
- In contrast, a UK-based study by Blinkhorn, Lyons, & Almond, (2016) measured the attitudes of mainly university students towards intimate partner violence and found that, on a scale of **12-60**, the mean acceptance was only **16.25**, showing an overall **low acceptance**

Related theory

- **Patriarchal Ideologies**: Such societies support the notion of **male supremacy and female subordination**
 - To examine this, the influence of **violence legitimising norms of masculinity** on attitudes towards **VAW** was considered in this study
- **Social cognition**: Social cognition is the way in which an individual **processes, remembers, & uses information** in social contexts to **justify & predict** their own behaviour & that of others. Support of VAW may be part of **a broader** set of beliefs, norms and values that **legitimize** the use of violence and aggression against others **in general**
 - The influence of **moral neutralisation of aggression** on attitudes towards **VAW** was considered
- **Social learning theory**: Aggressive behaviour & attitudes in support of aggression are **learned** through socialization (witnessing or experiencing aggression)
 - The influence of **experience of corporal punishment** on attitudes towards **VAW** was considered

Research questions

1. Are there **differences in VAW attitudes** between second-generation refugee (parental experience of war), migrant (parents from countries with higher endorsement of VaW) & native Swiss adolescents (Westernised sample)?
2. What potential **risk factors** do refugees have in relation to attitudes that justify VAW?
3. What are the **predictors** to attitudes in support of VAW among refugee, migrant and native adolescents?
4. What factors **mediate** the relationship between migration status and attitudes in support of VAW?

Refugee data

No easily obtainable Migrant status variable to identify migrants vs. refugees

To create these, associated variables were considered to determine likely group membership. To do this several steps were taken:

- **Migration yearbooks** for Zurich were examined & a list of refugee countries was compiled
- New variables specifying the **mothers' and fathers' birth countries** were computed for the whole sample
- For non-natives, **reason for emigration** (open-ended and tick-box questions) was checked to see which could easily be identified as 'refugee/asylum', or 'work/marriage'. etc.
- These were cross-checked against **permit type** for the mother/father and/or to categorise when data were missing

Refugee data

- Where it was still not clear (e.g. missing data on multiple variables) participants' data relating to their **specific home cities** were checked and cross-checked with the **year** the participant **migrated**.
- In addition, **maternal and paternal main languages** were examined to further select refugee cases. For example, **Turkish people** who entered Switzerland during conflict years *and* who's **mother tongue was Kurdish** were considered **Kurdish refugees**, as were those who came from **Iraq** but spoke **Kurdish**.
- Participants from **Somalia and Sri Lanka** were all categorised as refugees.
- Where it was unclear, after checking the above, whether or not the participant was likely to be a refugee or non-refugee migrant, they were removed from the data for the purposes of analysis.

Refugee data

Some example cases:

- Case 987: Mother from Angola, father from Congo, left Kinshasa in Congo in 1991 and entered Switzerland in 1995.
- Cases 1673 and 486: Come from Ferizaj (Kosovo), dates leaving country coincide with Kosovo war.
- Cases 1470 and 301 are from Adiyaman, a province in Turkey, which is considered part of Turkish Kurdistan. Dates to leave Turkey coincide with civil war. These cases are most likely refugee Kurdish Turks.
- One case in Sarajevo not considered refugee as entered Switzerland/Left country in 1986 and Bosnian war was between 1992 – 1995. This is likely labour-migration, so this case was not included in the analysis. All other cases from Sarajevo were confirmed refugees as dates align with war/other refugees.

Refugee data

- 'Natives' were categorised based on **maternal birth country**.
- This variable done for several reasons:
 - The **vast majority of responses** by parents for the z-proso study are from **mothers (93.9%)**
 - There was also **a lot of missing data** with regards to the **father's birth country and information** in comparison to the mothers.
 - **Traditionally**, and within this dataset, the **main caregiver** is the **mother**.

Migration Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Refugee	203	12.1	16.5	16.5
	Migrant - not war related	499	29.8	40.6	57.1
	Non-migrant - Swiss mother	528	31.5	42.9	100.0
	Total	1230	73.4	100.0	
Missing	System	445	26.6		
Total		1675	100.0		

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Methods: Sample:

- Age 15

- 159 second-generation refugees
- 420 second-generation migrants
- 454 native Swiss

- Age 17

- 138 second-generation refugees
- 368 second-generation migrants
- 408 native Swiss

Analysis plan

- **MANOVA** conducted to compare Natives, Migrants & Refugees (**Migration status**) at 15 & 17 on measures of:
 - VAW attitudes
 - Violence legitimising norms of masculinity (**Patriarchal Ideology**)
 - Moral neutralisation (**Social Cognition**)
 - Experience of corporal punishment (**Social Learning**)
- **3-step hierarchal regression analyses** with outcome variable of **VAW attitudes**:
 1. Demographics
 2. Demographics & Violence legitimising norms of masculinity
 3. Demographics, Violence legitimising norms of masculinity, moral neutralisation & corporal punishment
- **Mediation analyses** conducted to examine whether **moral neutralisation and/or experience of corporal punishment** mediated the relationship between migration status and VAW

Results: MANOVA

- Adolescents from a **refugee background** scored **significantly higher** on the **VAW attitudes scale** than migrants & natives (1.22; 1.15; 1.12 respectively, $p < .05$)
- At age 15 & 17 adolescents with a **refugee background** scored **significantly higher** for levels of **moral neutralisation, experience of corporal punishment & violence legitimising norms of masculinity** ($p < .05$)

Results: Regression

- Age 15

Refugee adolescents:

- moral neutralisation of aggression
- Parental corporal punishment

Migrant adolescents:

- Moral neutralisation of aggression
- Parental corporal punishment

Native Swiss adolescents:

- Moral neutralisation of aggression
- Parental corporal punishment
- Lower parental education

- Age 17

Refugee adolescents:

- moral neutralisation of aggression

Migrant adolescents:

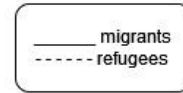
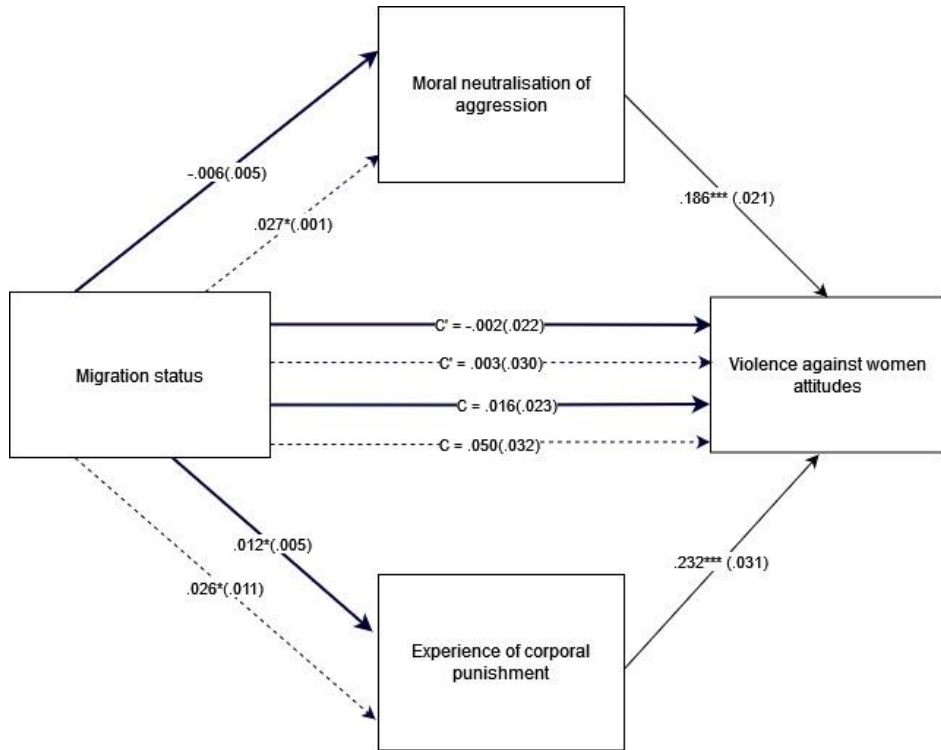
- Moral neutralisation of aggression
- Parental corporal punishment
- Lower parental education

Native Swiss adolescents:

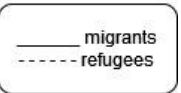
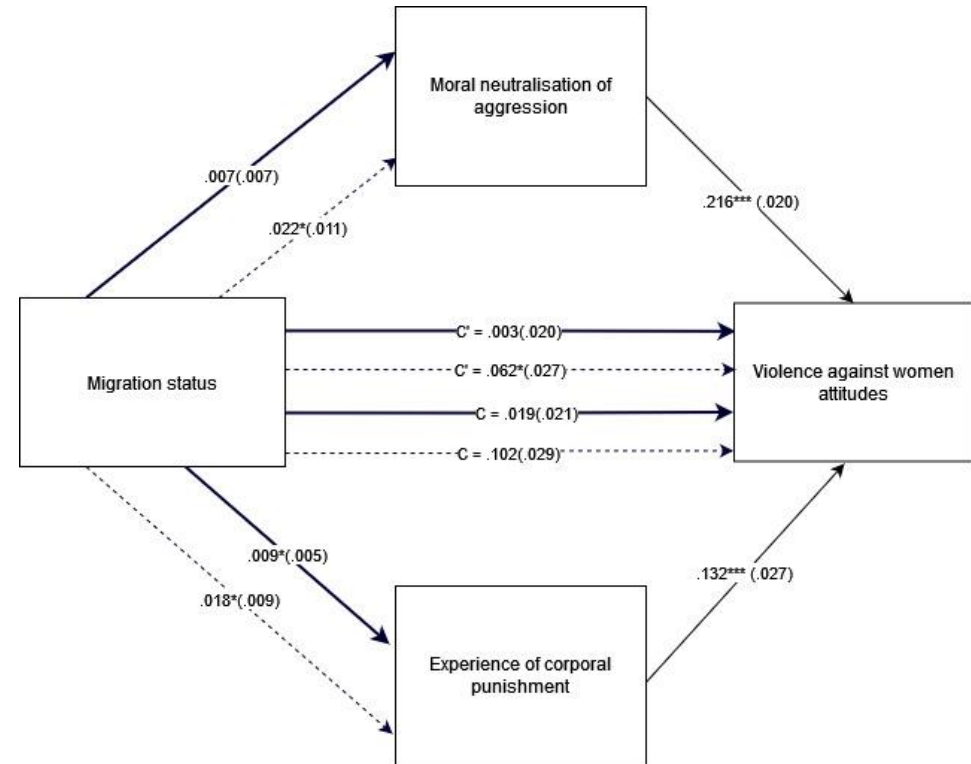
- Moral neutralisation of aggression
- Parental corporal punishment
- Lower parental education

Results: Mediation analysis

• Age 15



• Age 17



Discussion: MANOVA

- While those from a refugee background scored significantly higher in their attitudes supporting VAW, **overall scores** were **still very low** (1.22 on scale of 1-5)
- Given higher **overall support in countries of their parents' origin** (Dalal et al., 2012; Schuster et al., 2020), this suggests a positive picture of **successful integration & assimilation into the Swiss culture**
- MANOVA also suggests that higher **violence legitimising norms of masculinity** (Patriarchal Ideology), **moral neutralisation of aggression** (Social Cognition), and **experience of corporal punishment** (Social Learning) are **risk factors** for more supportive attitudes towards VAW

Discussion: Regression

- For refugees at age 15 significant predictors of VAW attitudes were higher levels of **moral neutralisation of aggression and experience of corporal punishment**
- At age 17, the **only** significant predictor was higher levels of moral neutralisation of aggression
- This result highlights the **important of the role of moral neutralisation of aggression** in adolescent attitudes towards violence against women and violence use in general, especially with youths who's families have witnessed/experienced, fled wars and violence.

- For migrant and native adolescents, significant predictors were higher levels of **moral neutralisation, experience of corporal punishment and lower levels of education** (at age 17).
- Since migrant adolescents in the sample come from **diverse countries** (lower income, non-Western, higher income, and Western countries), **acculturation processes** might have happened **quicker** than they have for adolescents with a refugee background.

Discussion: Mediation

With natives set as the reference category:

- **Moral neutralisation of aggression** mediated the effect of migration status on VAW for **refugees only**.
- Once again this highlights the **importance of social cognition**, especially among refugees. In order to tackle attitudes towards VAW, attitudes towards **violence in general** should be tackled.
- **Parental corporal punishment** mediated the effect of migration status on VAW attitudes for **both refugee and migrant adolescents**.
- Adolescents who have experience parental harsh discipline may have **internalised** that violence is the **acceptable** and proper way to deal with or **solve problem situations**.

For later... practice/policy

- Social Cognition (Moral Neutralisation)
 - Using **reading materials** allows for development of **bespoke tools** that can target **evidence-based** areas of development in a **cost effective** way and can be delivered cost effectively.
 - Example: Wang & Goldberg (2017) The **Bullying Literature Project-Moral Disengagement Version (BLP-MD)**. Uses Bibliotherapy (reading materials focussed at helping with personal problems). Targets both bullies & bystanders using social-cognitive process of moral disengagement.
- Social Learning/Patriarchal Ideology
 - Social learning/modelling is a **powerful driver** & seems to be the case here
 - Refugee attitudes towards VAW, while sig. higher than natives/migrants, comparatively lower than 'home' countries - evidence for **integration/adopting societal norms**
 - Corporal punishment increases support for VAW attitudes – evidence of social learning
 - Use of **peer social norms approach (SNA)** is common in psychology & could be a intervention, further emphasising possible differences between attitudes at home (from refugee parents) & those held in wider society (See Orchowsky, 2019)

Thank you!

- Questions?