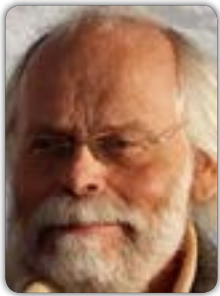


4th International Conference on

Mental Health and Human Resilience

April 26-27, 2018 | Rome, Italy



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Low intensity intimate partner aggression in Ghana: support for the revised gender symmetry theory in an African country

There is an ongoing controversy about whether there are sex differences regarding the use of different forms of intimate partner aggression (IPA). The traditional view, that men are more aggressive than women, has been referred to as gender asymmetry theory, while the theory that men and women are more or less equally aggressive has been called gender symmetry theory. Archer (2018) has suggested a revised gender symmetry theory, according to which gender symmetry holds only for low intensity aggression, while as far as high intensity aggression leading to injury or death is concerned, males are perpetrators to a higher degree than females. Furthermore, Archer suggests that gender symmetry should be expected to be found only in societies with a relatively high degree of gender equality. In developing countries, with a patriarchal society structure, such as African countries, gender symmetry should not be expected to occur. In this study, sex differences regarding the perpetration and victimization of low intensity IPA in Ghana were investigated. The sample consisted of 1,204 adults (mean age 44.1 yrs., SD=13.5), 602 males and 602 females. IPA was measured with the DIAS-Adult questionnaire. Males scored higher than females on being victimized by their partner from physical, indirect and nonverbal aggression, while females scored higher than males on being perpetrators of physical, indirect, nonverbal and cyber aggression. This is the second study to report men being more victimized by low intensity IPA than women in an African nation, thus finding support for Archer's (2018) revised gender symmetry theory of IPA but showing that it holds not only in Western, but also in African countries with patriarchal structure.

Recent Publications

1. Björkqvist K (2018) Gender differences in aggression. *Current Opinion in Psychology*.
2. Makinde O, Björkqvist K and Österman K (2017) Mediating factors between overcrowding and adolescent antisocial behavior in Lagos, Nigeria. *Pyrex Journal of African Studies and Development* 3(3):24-30.
3. Ndoromo O, Österman K and Björkqvist K (2017) Sex differences in victimization from low intensity intimate partner aggression in South Sudan. *European Journal of Social Sciences, Education and Research*.
4. Nazar N, Österman K and Björkqvist K (2017) Religious tolerance, views on gender equality and bellicose attitudes: A study among Pakistani students from three types of schools. *European Journal of Social Sciences, Education and Research*.
5. Khademi J, Björkqvist K and Österman K (2017) A study of mental wellbeing of imprisoned women in Iran. *European Journal of Social Sciences, Education and Research*.

Biography

Kaj Björkqvist is Professor of Developmental Psychology at Åbo Akademi University, Vasa, Finland. He has published 13 books and more than 100 articles. He is former President of International Society of Research on Aggression. His research area is Human Aggression, including sex differences in aggression, school and workplace bullying, conflict resolution, media violence and cross-cultural comparisons. He is best known for his research on indirect aggression.

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