Cultural Diffusion and Intimate Partner Violence in Malawi

by

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ABSTRACT

I examine the spread and influence of cultural models about intimate partner violence in Malawi. Intimate partner violence is of primary concern to transnational organizations working in Malawi, leading them to implement a variety of cultural messaging campaigns. I track their efforts and evaluate their influence on lay people. I rely on five national surveys carried out between 2000 and 2016, which I combine with a database of newspaper articles that research assistants and I collected, an administrative database of human rights projects, many organizations' official reports, and key informant interviews. Finally, I leverage the timing of a social movement to combat intimate partner violence that occurred during the middle of one of the surveys I use. I conduct three related, yet standalone empirical studies.

I begin by addressing the flow of cultural models about violence against women through media and the implications this has for people's attitudes. Analyzing media content, I identify the pathways through which transnational organizations circulate messages condemning violence against women while foreign media entertainment companies largely perpetuate gender stereotypes. The number of newspaper articles critical of violence against women published in the month prior to a respondent's personal survey interview date is positively associated with their stated rejection of physical partner violence. In contrast, men's personal use of television and movies—a key source of media content perpetuating gender stereotypes in Malawi—is negatively associated with rejection. This findings demonstrate how being specific about cultural content improves understandings of global cultural diffusion.

In the second study, I analyze the influence of human rights projects denouncing violence against women on people's stated attitudes. Transnational organizations channel funding to projects carried out in specific locales, which in turn exposes people there to the cultural messages promoted. Among projects focused on violence against women, I distinguish between bureaucrat-led projects, which reinforced (mostly male) community leaders' purview over marital/partnership conflicts, from projects that supported and expanded domestic activists' awareness campaigns around the country. District-level funding for activist-led projects successfully increased women's probability of expressing rejection of physical partner violence against women. Aid for bureaucrat-led projects, conversely, decreased men's rejection of such violence. Transnational organizations' projects influence lay people's attitudes, but in unique ways depending on how the projects are implemented.

The final study examines how the effects of transnational organizations' human rights messages on lay people hinges on meso-level actors. Human rights campaigns in Malawi translate "gender violence" as *nkhanza,* an existing cultural concept referring to the violation of expected relationship responsibilities. Physical partner violence is normatively defined as *nkhanza* but so is refusing sex with one's partner. I show that individuals interviewed after the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in Malawi in 2015, during which brokers denounced *nkhanza,* were more likely than individuals interviewed before the campaign to state they rejected physical partner violence. Women were also less likely to say they could refuse having sex with their partner. Additionally, women's willingness to report physical partner abuse that they experienced long ago also increased following the campaign. These results emphasize the importance of vernacularization and human rights awareness.

These studies clarify how human rights models are spread, interpreted, learned, and applied. Media, human rights projects, and social movements each serve as important diffusion mechanisms, shaping the cultural models people in Malawi know and use.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Background and Motivation

Cultural models provide descriptions of the world that people use to navigate and interpret their lives (Holland and Quinn 1987; Strauss and Quinn 1997). People learn cultural models over time through their personal life experiences and exposure to various ideas in the books they read, the social events they attend, and the people they talk to, among many other sources (Quinn 2018). In this way, people are continually adding to their cognitive reservoirs of declarative knowledge of cultural models and strengthening the models with which they are already familiar (Mohr et al. 2020).

People generally are especially exposed to cultural models that are pervasive in the geographic areas and social networks. For this reason, most have an intuitive feel about the norms, expectations, and social practices that govern their home communities. Nevertheless, many cultural models diffuse across social boundaries of all types, including national borders, thereby reaching people in new settings.

Of particular prominence cross-nationally are liberal cultural models about societal progress, human rights, and development (Thornton 2005). Indeed, a vast literature documents the flow and importance of such cultural models across national governments worldwide (Krücken and Drori 2009). Correspondingly, scholars have begun to outline the manifestations of cultural models of human rights and development at the individual level, such as in activists'

savvy appeals to international organizations, people's unrealistic life aspirations, or publics' ideological expressions about societal development (Frye 2012; Thornton et al. 2012; Tsutsui 2018). There is growing recognition that such cultural models are, "reshaping individuals' entire cultural universe" (Boyle et al. 2002:25). At the same time, these liberal cultural models do not have a monopoly on the flow of cultural content cross-nationally. Illiberal social networks, transnational businesses, and religious organizations, to name a few sources, disseminate other cultural models across the world (Boyle et al. 2015; Schofer et al. 2019).

In this dissertation, I advance claims about the spread and influence of cultural models about human rights among lay people by theorizing how the flow, organizational forms, and contextual translations of these models shapes the way they influence lay people. I simultaneously contribute to the literature on global cultural diffusion by expanding definitions of "global" cultural flows beyond human rights messages that transnational organizations promote to consider the flows of alternative messages celebrated by other powerful organizations. I further consider the importance of existing cultural models common to specific places or peoples, including how their interaction with foreign, globalizing cultural models. In line with these theoretical aims, I emphasize the importance of specifying and measuring cultural content (Mohr et al. 2020).

In this empirical case of my dissertation, I narrow my topical focus to cultural models about intimate partner violence, which are heavily emphasized in transnational organizations' promotion of universal human rights and gender equality (Merry 2016). Geographically, I concentrate on contemporary Malawi, which is the recipient of numerous international interventions to promote human rights, including messages condemning intimate partner violence (Swidler and Watkins 2017). Foreign-introduced cultural models such as these are

incorporated alongside existing cultural norms and institutions in Malawi, leading to many different outcomes. These processes speak to the nature of cultural globalization at the level of ordinary people in Malawi and more generally.

My general research questions throughout the dissertation are: How are lay people in Malawi exposed to cultural messages about intimate partner violence? What effects does this exposure have on them? In seeking to answer these questions, I assess the importance of media content, human rights projects, and a national social movement about gender violence as diffusion mechanisms for the flow of such messages in Malawi, and I analyze their influence on lay people. I do so through three main empirical chapters.

Aims

Pathways of Global Cultural Diffusion

I begin my empirical analyses in the second chapter with an examination of the relationship between media and attitudes about violence against women. The literature highlights the association between individuals' media use and their likelihood of espousing attitudes consistent with global cultural models about human rights. Linking media content to national surveys, I trace multiple transnational organizations' cultural influences through specific media pathways to lay people. Multiple types of cultural messages related to violence against women are disseminated through media. Transnational organizations work through Malawian journalists to ensure wide coverage of their projects and broad normative condemnation of gender violence. At the same time, media content produced by powerful foreign media entertainment companies is circulated to Malawi. It tends to feature ample violence and to portray men as central characters with aggressive attributes with women as passive, sexualized subjects. Exposure to

these unique types of media has opposing associations with Malawians' attitudinal rejection of violence against women. Multiple cultural scripts about a particular issue can simultaneously be disseminated on an international scale through the same general source of information, each reaching and potentially influencing lay people in divergent ways.

Organizational Forms

The flow and persuasion of cultural messages critical of intimate partner violence hinge in large measure on the organizational forms through which these messages are transmitted. I explore these dynamics in the third chapter, theorizing that bureaucrat-led human rights projects generally lack necessary contextual adaptations whereas activists can rely on their wealth of experience from local organizing to lead projects that are more influential among lay people. Drawing upon administrative data on foreign aid disbursements for human rights projects in Malawi, I classify projects about gender violence as either bureaucrat-led or activist-led. I then combine these data with national surveys. Activist-led projects increased stated rejection of gender violence among women whereas bureaucrat-led projects decreased rejection among men. The organizational forms of cultural messaging efforts can appeal to, or strike anxiety in, distinct sub-populations. Transnational organizations' projects facilitate global cultural diffusion, but their projects' organizational forms may lead to unique influences.

Vernacularizing World Culture

Building on these elaborations of global cultural diffusion, the fourth chapter examines the importance of vernacularization on individual-level outcomes. World cultural models are circulated in large measure through meso-level brokers embedded in Malawian society yet connected to foreign actors. The way Malawian brokers understand world cultural models and translate them shapes their subsequent effects on ordinary citizens. I focus on Malawian brokers'

translation of gender violence as *nkhanza*, a Chichewa word that carries a wider meaning of unjust behavior toward another person with whom they have a relationship. This reinforces contextual cultural norms that condemn physical violence but that also classify sexual refusal among committed partners as a form of gender violence. To test this, I take advantage of the intersecting timing of a national survey and a national social movement to combat gender violence. The social movement had a positive effect on Malawians' attitudinal rejection of physical partner violence, but a negative effect on women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner when they did not desire to have sex. Moreover, the movement increased women's willingness to disclose abuse they experienced long before the campaign. The results provide evidence that the vernacularized messages that brokers circulate are what reach and influence lay people. Moreover, people's exposure to human rights discourse paradoxically increases the reporting of human rights violations.

These three empirical analyses collectively contribute to literature on cultural diffusion, human rights, and intimate partner violence. The analyses outline the flow of cultural messages through media, human rights projects, and social movements to people in Malawi. Meso-level actors, be they journalists, activists, or project designers, have great influence on the content of the cultural models of human rights that are ultimately disseminated. This in turn informs the types of cultural exposure that people receive.

Structure

These three empirical chapters are linked by my core intention to understand how lay people become exposed to and affected by various cultural models, in particular models about human rights and development. However, the three empirical chapters are purposively written as

independent papers. Each features theoretical background sections, a description of the empirical case, research hypotheses, data, and analyses. They are tightly focused topically and geographically, yet the theoretical frameworks outlined in each paper are applicable much more broadly and are indicative of my larger research agenda. The three empirical chapters of this dissertation lay the groundwork for this agenda. My goal is that they articulate a cohesive understanding of how cultural models about human rights are disseminated among lay people, and how they then become a powerful factor in people's ideological expressions and their understanding of the world.

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CHAPTER II

Pathways of Global Cultural Diffusion:

Media and Attitudes About Violence Against Women

Abstract

The pathways through which globally circulated cultural scripts are disseminated and influence lay people remain abstract in institutional analyses of cultural globalization. To specify cultural flows, I link an analysis of media content about violence against women in Malawi—including a new dataset of newspaper articles—to four national surveys spanning 2000-2016. Transnational organizations worked with Malawian journalists to permeate media content, and the number of recent newspaper articles condemning violence against women was associated with significant increases in people's probability of declaring their rejection of such violence. Conversely, media entertainment companies disseminated content that reinforced gender stereotypes, and respondents' personal exposure to this content was negatively associated with rejecting violence against women. Broadly, these findings demonstrate how cultural scripts from transnational organizations reach and influence lay people, while other foreign cultural scripts are simultaneously circulated through media.

Introduction

Institutional theories of world society, developmental idealism, and global cultural diffusion emphasize the worldwide dissemination of public cultural scripts about what

constitutes a "developed" society, or what a "modern" lifestyle looks like (Meyer et al. 1997; Thornton 2005). Some of the ideas promoted include the benefits of democratic governance for economic growth, the value of human rights, the importance of gender equality for development, and the notion that small families are modern (Thornton et al. 2015). Many powerful transnational organizations—including inter-governmental, international non-governmental, transnational social movement, and foreign aid organizations—seek to universally promote these injunctive cultural scripts widely across national governments, shaping their policies and, in some cases, their practices (Boli and Thomas 1999; Swiss 2017).

Evidence suggests transnational organizations may spread cultural scripts about development and human rights at the level of individual people. First, substantial majorities of citizens in a diverse range of countries express attitudes compatible with moral positions that transnational organizations celebrate (for a review, see: Thornton et al. 2015). Second, such attitudes are positively associated with a person's level of education, media use, urban living, Christian religious membership, and working outside the home, as well as the number of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) present in their country—all of which are theorized as being key means through which transnational organizations disseminate their messages (Charles 2019; Givens and Jorgenson 2013; Pandian 2018; see also Roberts 2018; Wang and Schofer 2018).

The theorization and empirical measurement of lay people's exposure to public cultural scripts about development and human rights, however, remains indirect. Several scholars note that the informational contents of identified diffusion factors such as education and media generally are not directly assessed (e.g. Boyle et al. 2002:26; Hadler 2017:178; Pierotti 2013:261; Thornton et al. 2015:290-292). Moreover, recent work outlines the importance of

other transnational forces such as illiberalism in processes of global cultural diffusion, raising issues about the presence of alternative cultural scripts flowing through the same diffusion sources (Boyle et al. 2015; 2017a; Ferguson 2019; Schofer et al. 2019; see also Frank 1997). As scholars increasingly recognize, the pathways within a general source of information through which cultural scripts about human rights and development flow can be specifically identified, and their contents can be empirically measured (Engberg-Pedersen 2018; Hironaka 2014; Kentikelenis and Babb 2019; Kentikelenis and Seabrooke 2017; Lerch 2019; Meyer 1999:135-136; Tsutsui 2017).

I build upon and extend this literature by examining the diffusion pathways of cultural scripts about development and human rights that transnational organizations celebrate, as well as the diffusion pathways of other, alternative scripts. I focus specifically on the dissemination of multiple cultural scripts about violence against women through media, one of the main theorized sources through which powerful organizations disseminate cultural scripts to lay people (Ayoub and Garretson 2019; Boyle and Hoeschen 2001; Clark 2012).

Transnational organizations widely declare through media campaigns that violence against women denies women their human rights and limits the development of individuals and societies (Htun and Weldon 2012; Keck and Sikkink 1998, chapter 5; Merry 2006; Montoya 2013; Russell et al. 2018). Individual level analyses show that general media use is positively associated with attitudinal rejection of violence against women (e.g. Pierotti 2013). At the same time, media entertainment companies distribute content that perpetuates gender stereotypes, the consumption of which is associated with greater acceptance of such violence (Bleakley et al. 2012; Flynn et al. 2016; Ward 2016). Media content that is circulated globally is often bifurcated into these two styles. This calls into question the specific cultural content about violence against

women contained in media and the associations between people's exposure to different media sources and their attitudes.

I address these concerns through an analysis of media content about violence against women and its association with people's attitudes in Malawi between 2000 and 2016. Slightly more than a third of women in Malawi report ever experiencing physical or sexual violence, which is about on par or somewhat above global averages (ICF 2020; WHO 2013). Two factors make Malawi unique. First, the percentages of women and men that express attitudinal rejection of such violence—83.7 and 87.3 in 2015-16, respectively (ICF 2020)—are very high for the region. Second, transnational organizations and foreign media entertainment companies heavily influence the media industry in Malawi given its limited financial resources and history (Englund 2011; Gray 2011). These attributes make Malawi a useful case for identifying the specific diffusion pathways in media through which cultural scripts flow, as well as for understanding how people's media exposure is associated with their stated attitudes.

Using a mixed methods approach, I draw upon a variety of data sources, including: reports from the national government and other organizations; key informant interviews; four cross-sectional national surveys carried out between 2000 and 2016; and a new dataset research assistants and I constructed of daily domestic newspaper articles that discussed violence against women by combing through each page of the weekday editions of the two most common newspapers in Malawi between January 2000 and February 2016. I begin the analysis describing how transnational organizations provided content to newspaper journalists and facilitated the broadcast of targeted media programs to disseminate cultural scripts critical of violence against women. Exposure to such scripts via media was associated with higher probabilities of rejecting violence against women. At the same time, I show how media entertainment companies widely

shared cultural scripts that portrayed men as aggressive, women as submissive, and violence as commonplace. This type of content was especially common in the movies and television. Exposure to such media was associated with lower probabilities of rejecting violence against women among men.

These results show how cultural scripts about development and human rights flow from transnational organizations to lay people. Taking a direct approach to measuring cultural diffusion in this manner clarifies how transnational organizations work with a chain of intermediary brokers to reach ordinary people, including journalists, activists, and government bureaucrats. There is also a concurrent flow of alternative scripts that other important actors promote worldwide, and their diffusion pathways can be similarly identified. Exposure to these distinct types of cultural scripts about a single issue simultaneously may inform lay people's attitudes, sometimes in divergent ways.

Global Cultural Diffusion, Media, and Violence Against Women

Mapping the Pathways of Global Cultural Diffusion

Much of the sociological research on global cultural diffusion has analyzed national level trends and associations, emphasizing the role of international isomorphism in the ongoing emergence of a world society (Drori and Krücken 2009). Transnational organizations are theorized as central actors in this diffusion process (Boli and Thomas 1999). At the same time, it is recognized that these same institutional forces likely extend their influence to lay people, (Frank and Meyer 2002; Lerch et al. 2017; Meyer et al. 1975:228). Recent scholarly observations show that lay people across diverse societies generally express many similar attitudes and beliefs about a range of development and human rights topics, contributing to what scholars refer to as

"developmental idealism" (Dorius and Swindle 2019; Thornton et al. 2012a). While this documentation is impressive and noteworthy, scholars infer, but generally do not directly measure, that these individual level trends result in large part from people's broad exposure to public cultural scripts about development and human rights (Charles 2019:27; Givens and Jorgenson 2013:421; Hadler 2016:343-349; Hadler 2017:37-44; Pierotti 2013:241-242). Moreover, transnational organizations do not have a monopoly of global cultural diffusion; there are many other actors that disseminate cultural messages worldwide, sometimes in direct conflict with human rights messaging. My aim is to build on this work by specifying the content through which lay people are exposed to cultural scripts about development and human rights, as well as other alternative scripts, to improve understanding of global cultural diffusion processes.

Exposure to Public Cultural Scripts. The commonly used measures in the literature of individual level exposure to public cultural scripts about development and human rights are somewhat loose, such as total years of education, at least weekly media use, and currently living in an urban area (for a review, see Hadler 2017). With the measure for years of education, for example, the general idea is that: (1) transnational organization such as UNESCO provides some of the content for some educational textbooks; (2) these organizations are earnest promoters of development and human rights cultural scripts; (3) education therefore exposes people to such scripts. This flow of information diffusion is logical, but its empirical measurement is less clear: an independent variable for a person's years of education does not directly capture exposure to content that transnational organizations' promote, nor is it clear which particular cultural scripts are promoted in this content.

Scholars acknowledge that what is needed are "individual-level data on access to global cultural scripts" (Pierotti 2013:261) within each theorized source of global cultural diffusion

(Boyle et al. 2002:26; Hadler 2017:178; Thornton et al. 2015:290-292). It is also useful to focus on cultural scripts about a particular topic rather than generalizing to cultural scripts about development and human rights writ large because recent work suggests various cultural scripts about development are only moderately connected (Allendorf and Thornton 2015:258-261). Thus, a more precise understanding of global cultural diffusion requires tracing the flow of cultural scripts about a specific issue across the content diffused through particular sources of information.

With this level of specificity, there is also a need to examine people's simultaneous exposure to alternative cultural scripts promoted worldwide by other organizations beyond transnational organizations like the UN and World Bank, such as illiberal political or religious networks. Accounting for multiple types of cultural scripts about a single, particular issue is advantageous for two reasons. First, one can differentiate between cultural scripts and examine their unique influences. Second, distinct cultural scripts may flow through the same institution, such as schools, media, or urban environments. This can muddy proxy measures of exposure that assume only one type of cultural scripts predominates in one of these institutions.

Declarative Personal Culture. In addition to more precise measures of exposure to public cultural scripts, there is also a need for theoretical clarification about the meaning of attitudinal measures in literature on global cultural diffusion. I conceptualize attitudes as learned elements of public culture that a person can declare verbally or through written words for which they express some affinity and use for evaluation (Johnson-Hanks et al. 2011:69-73, 141-145; Lizardo et al. 2016:293). This matches the phenomenological foundations of institutionalism, which emphasizes actors' ability to learn public cultural scripts and then come to express them (Meyer 1986a; 1986b).

Recent work drawing upon dual-process models of culture from social psychology is helpful in clarifying the meaning of attitudes that I adopt here. The attitudes a person declares during fixed-response survey questions are often consistent with the *nondeclarative* and more unconscious elements of their personal culture that guide much of their behavior (Vaisey 2009). For this reason, self-reported attitudes on surveys are often positively associated with related behaviors (Glasman and Albarracín 2006). However, conceptualizing attitudes as *declarative* personal cultural elements that may not be necessarily consistent with the nondeclarative components of their personal culture is vital for explaining inconsistencies in attitudes and behavior (Frye 2017:949-951; Lizardo 2017:103-104). Depending on the attitude in question and the constraints a person faces, their expressed attitudes may at times be especially mixed with statements of personal identity (Frye 2012; Joas 2013:85-86). In such instances, declarative attitudes are important pieces of data precisely because they are divorced from personal action.

Some people may also express an attitude aligned with cultural scripts about development and human rights because they think the interviewer wants to hear this answer (Angotti and Kaler 2013; Weinreb 2006:1027-1028). Such responses may signal respondents' perceptions that the interviewer reveres development and human rights messages. They are a sign of the diffusion of cultural scripts even if they are less indicative of people's nondeclarative personal culture (Behrman and Frye 2019:29; Meyer 1986a:216; Pierotti 2013:261-262; Thornton et al. 2012b:337). Moreover, as one's original position becomes untenable given widespread opposition to it, one may slowly and gradually comes to express support for the new position and even act in accordance with it (Watkins and Hodgson 2019; see also Winchester and Green 2019), as has been demonstrated in social psychological research on the "saying-is-believing" effect (Echterhoff et al. 2018). However, such change is often very slow.

Cultural Scripts About Violence Against Women

Of the many issues for which transnational organizations and other powerful organizations circulate distinct cultural scripts, I focus on violence against women. For parsimony, I refer to cultural scripts that denounce violence against women (VAW) as *anti-VAW scripts*. The UN's 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of VAW codified anti-VAW scripts as cultural scripts of development, stating, "violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace" (UN 1993:1). This sentiment was further expanded in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, which declared, "violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UN 1995:92). Since then, many transnational organizations, national governments, academic and policy experts, and political activists have championed anti-VAW scripts. One hundred forty-four countries now have national legislation outlawing domestic violence (World Bank 2019) and 191 have ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (UN 2019).

Attitudes About Violence Against Women. At the individual level, people's declarative attitudes about VAW have shifted toward greater rejection during the twenty-first century in the vast majority of countries worldwide (Kurzman et al. 2019; Pierotti 2013). Several socioeconomic and demographic predictors of rejection are important. Consistent with standard resource theories (Jewkes 2002), household assets—as a proxy for wealth—are associated with greater rejection across African nations (Cools and Kotsadam 2017). Living in a marital and cohabiting union also tends to be positively associated with rejection, but monogamous and polygamous unions vary across societies in their relationship to attitudes (Hindin 2014; Rani et al. 2004). Age is positively associated with rejection of VAW across most African and Asian

societies (Pierotti 2013), unlike in the United States where it is the opposite (Copp et al. 2019). These socioeconomic and demographic factors, however, do not explain the majority of individual level variation in rejection of VAW, and their predictive value can vary by context.

In terms of cultural diffusion factors, Pierotti (2013) found positive coefficient estimates for education, urban living, and personal media use—sources through which anti-VAW scripts likely flow—in a cross-national regression analysis of attitudinal rejection of VAW. Similarly, Cools and Kotsadam (2017) and Boyle et al. (2002) found that working outside the home is positively associated with rejection and other gender egalitarian attitudes; they explained that employment gives women more respect at home and men less insecurity about their identity, and that working outside the home also exposes people—especially women—to more information, including cultural scripts promoting gender equality (c.f. Charles 2019).

Unlike in the United States and Europe (Copp et al. 2019; Tran et al. 2016), attitudinal rejection of VAW is usually higher among men than women in African and Asian countries. The reasons for this are still unknown, but one possibility may be that men tend to be outside the home more often, and thus are exposed to various cultural scripts about development and human rights (Charles 2019; Uthman et al. 2010). Another explanation for this gender disparity in rejection of VAW is that men are more likely to present themselves as being informed of world cultural scripts.

With respect to mass media as a source of cultural diffusion, Pierotti's result from a cross-national analysis that at least weekly use of either newspapers, radios, or television was associated with rejection of VAW differed somewhat from other analyses. Several additional country- or region-specific studies that relied on the same cross-nationally comparable data found varied associations between different types of media use and attitudinal rejection of VAW

(Krause et al. 2017; Wang 2018). Radio use was often positively associated with rejection (Oyediran and Isiugo-Abanihe 2005; Uthman et al. 2009). The association between newspaper use and rejection was often null whereas the association between television use and rejection varied (Jensen and Oster 2009; Jesmin and Amin 2017; Lawoko 2006). The relationship between internet use and attitudes about VAW are largely unknown: questions about internet use were only recently added to some of the newest national surveys carried out as part of the cross-national surveys that scholars in this literature use. This variation in the associations of broad types of mass media and people's rejection of VAW indicates that anti-VAW and other alternative scripts related to VAW may be simultaneously present in various types of media, highlighting the need for media content assessments. Other types of media, such advertising media on billboards and posters, are also influential sources of exposure to cultural scripts about gender and social relations more broadly (e.g. McDonnell 2010; 2016), but here I focus on news and entertainment mass media.

Media Denouncing Violence Against Women. Seeking to better understand the causal relationships between mass media exposure and rejection of VAW, many recent studies in the health communication literature used experimental designs. They generally observed treatments effects on rejection of VAW from targeted "educational entertainment" or "edutainment" (Singhal et al. 2004) media programming campaigns to spread anti-VAW scripts in specific areas of Mexico (Arias 2019), Nigeria (Banerjee et al. 2019), and Uganda (Abramsky et al. 2014).[1] Two other experiments on edutainment media programs aimed at decreasing the stigma of talking about interpersonal violence—rather than focused explicitly on disseminating anti-VAW scripts—found null attitudinal effects but a decrease in rates of violence in Rwanda and Uganda

[1] The observed treatment group from the Mexico study (Arias 2019) was limited to respondents who listened to the radio in groups rather than alone, and the Nigerian study (Banerjee et al. 2019) was focused on people ages 18-25 only.

(Green et al. 2020; Paluck and Green 2009). Combined, these experimental studies indicate that edutainment media that is directly focused on disseminating anti-VAW messaging is likely to increase rejection of VAW (Chang et al. 2020:44-45).

This importance of tailored messaging is consistent across reviews of health communication scholarship (Noar et al. 2009; Pope et al. 2018). Conversely, the opposite is true: health campaigns that do not tailor their messaging to a specific ideal or behavior are less influential. This is also the case for campaigns that do not mold their message to a particular societal context (Englund 2011; McDonnell 2010). How people use cultural scripts and their accompanying objects promoted in health communication campaigns can never be fully anticipated, but a lack of contextual tailoring makes campaigns especially susceptible to reinterpretation and "cultural entropy" (McDonnell 2016).

Entertainment Media Bolstering Gender Stereotypes. Part of the discrepancy in associations between individuals' mass media use and attitudes about VAW may stem from the uniqueness of entertainment media compared to more news-based media. As indicated by many quantitative content analyses of popular visual, print, and audio content produced by powerful media entertainment companies based in China, India, the United States, and various European nations, media entertainment companies produce much content that reproduces stereotypes about masculinity and femininity (Ward 2016). For example, in top-grossing American movies since 1950, male characters appeared twice as often and were depicted as especially aggressive and violent (Bleakley et al. 2012). Movies overwhelmingly favored male lead characters. Female movie characters, on the other hand, were comparatively portrayed as more passive (Ghaznavi et al. 2017; Liebler et al. 2015). Beyond this, studies observed that nearly two-thirds of the scenes in popular music videos on Belgium television and 45 percent of hit songs in the United States

portrayed women as sexual objects (Flynn et al. 2016; Vandenbosch et al. 2013; see also Stock 2015).

Consumption of such gendered media was consistently positively associated with aggression-related attitudes and negatively associated with attitudinal rejection of VAW (Phillips 2017). Meta-analyses of observational studies and survey experiments found that exposure to music videos, movies, and television shows laden with negative gender stereotypes was associated with justifying VAW (Malamuth and Check 1981; Rhodes et al. 2018; Seabrook et al. 2018; Ward 2016). Studies of the relationship between such media content and behavior, however, were complex and some show reciprocal causal effects (Phillips 2017).[2] Strictly speaking, research is consistent regarding the negative association between exposure to gender-stereotyping media and personal declarations of rejecting VAW but this relationship likely runs both ways.

Importantly, powerful media entertainment companies widely export the material they produce. Smaller producers of entertainment media in many societies struggle to compete, though they do shape some of the selection in the distribution and design of such content (Flew 2018). Powerful media entertainment companies, therefore, are able to globally circulate cultural scripts that perpetuate negative gender stereotypes. The cultural scripts and practices demonstrated in such media carry significant weight in the eyes of many viewers: many people grant it legitimacy and some adopt aspects of the dress, practices, and beliefs of the characters shown, especially since this content tends to feature the rich and powerful from the world's most prestigious countries.

[2] Some studies show small reductions in violence likely due to "incapacitation effects," in which "consuming violent media reduces violent behavior because it implies less time doing other activities that are more likely to lead to violence" (Lindo et al. 2020:3).

To summarize, transnational organizations often conduct targeted media campaigns in an attempt to ensure media explicitly includes cultural scripts about development and human rights, including anti-VAW scripts. Entertainment media is also widely disseminated worldwide, in which alternative scripts that support negative gender stereotypes are common. Lay people's media exposure to these different types of cultural scripts are likely to be divergently associated with their declarative attitudes about VAW.

Gender Relations and Transnational Media in Malawi

I examine the potential diffusion of media content related to VAW in the context of contemporary Malawi and its association with people's declarative attitudes about VAW. Here, I outline several factors that make Malawi an apt place to examine how cultural scripts move through media and reach lay people. I start with a description of gender relations and attitudes about VAW in Malawi. Next, I summarize the media industry in Malawi, outlining how transnational organizations and entertainment media separately shape available media content. These factors inform my analytical aims and research hypotheses.

Gender Relations

Most of the societies across the territory that eventually became Malawi were historically matrilineal, but women lost much of their economic and political power during the colonial and post-Independence periods, in large part due to European and Christian emphasis on a nuclear, patriarchal familial structure (Ibik 1970; Kudo 2017; Peters 1997; Phiri 1983). This continued when Malawi's first President, Hastings Kamuzu Banda, led the country from its Independence in 1963-65 until 1994. He eschewed foreign intervention and envisioned women as the embodiment of a national Chewa culture in opposition to outsider influence (Thornton et al.

2014). This included a dress code requiring that women wear long skirts to their ankles (Frye and Gheihman 2018).

Toward the end of Banda's period of power, the national government began to sign off on international treaties related to women's rights due in large part to pressure from foreign donors and national activists (Semu 2002). The government ratified the Convention on Discrimination Against Women in 1987 (UN 1991),[3] and adopted their first legislation to specifically protect women from discrimination and violence in 1997 (Barkvoll 2009). This paved the way for the passing in 2006 of the more expansive Protection Against Domestic Violence Act, which provided substantive legal remedies and social services to victims (Kanyongolo and White 2017). Today, the national government presents itself as firmly committed to changing "strong attitudes about women being subservient to men," stating that VAW is "institutionalized" and must be challenged (Malawi MoGCDSW 2014:36).

There are two cultural norms in Malawi that lay people regularly invoke in discussions about disagreements between intimate partners, as noted by Malawian social scientists and foreign ethnographers. The first is *nkhanza*, which means unjustified abuse or cruelty, broadly conceived (Chirwa 1999; Saur et al. 2000; see also Johnson 2018:18-19). People use this word to describe a variety of things, including a physically violent husband but also a parent that neglects to pay their children's school fees, for example (*The Nation,* December 10, 2012). The second is *kulangiza*, which means advising, counseling, and disciplining, and is seen by many as an essential duty (Chepuka et al. 2014; Nthala 2013:65). The perceived boundary lines between unjustified abuse and requisite discipline vary, but the underlying principle of *nkhanza,* plus the

[3] In their first report to the convention Malawi stated that it did not "consider itself bound by such provisions … [which] require immediate eradication of such traditional customs and practices" (UN 1991, see note 40).

matrilineal lineage system, offer important cultural foundations for declarative condemnation of VAW.

Figure 1 shows that Malawians' stated rejection of VAW on surveys is higher than in the vast majority of other countries, including all countries across Africa except Mozambique and South Africa (ICF 2020). Like in the vast majority of countries, rejection rates initially increased in Malawi, going from 64.7 percent for women and 74.8 percent for men in 2000 to 87.4 percent for both in 2010. The flattening in Malawi's rejection rate since then appears similar to other nations with higher percentages of its citizens rejecting VAW. Given its comparatively high rejection percentage Malawi is an opportune setting to examine *how* anti-VAW scripts move and what the pathways of their dissemination are, rather than *whether* they move. I focus on their movement through media.

[Figure 1]

Media History and Usage

Media content and consumption in contemporary Malawi stems from its history. During Banda's rule, media production was mostly limited to the government-owned Malawi Broadcasting Corporation radio station, which largely aired only informational content and government propaganda as well as music and sports (Harris 2017:28-31; Lwanda and Kanjo 2013:32; for exceptions, see: Kamwendo 2008:276; Mitchell 2002:6). Broadcasting was done in both of the national languages, English and Chichewa, the latter of which is the language of the largest ethnic group in Malawi but has since became widely albeit not universally spoken.

After Banda, the country transitioned to multi-party democracy and succumbed to international pressure to switch the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation from an official branch of the federal government to a formally independent, but tax-funded, public service media outlet

(Harris 2017). Two prominent daily newspapers were created, *The Daily Times* and *The Nation*, and many more radio and television outlets gradually emerged. By 2014 there were 34 Malawian radio stations, ten Malawian television channels, and three pan-African satellite television subscription services (NSO 2015b:56-60, 70-73).

Though this represents a significant expansion in the number of media outlets, it is important to note that media sources and diversity in Malawi are extremely limited compared to other settings, including neighboring countries. This is reflected in cross-national statistics of media use during the twenty-first century shown in Figure 2.

[Figure 2]

Compared to other countries, at least weekly newspaper use is moderately low in Malawi, lingering between only 8.3-12.9 percent for women and 15-26.5 percent for men. One major limiting factor is literacy, especially English literacy since newspapers are almost exclusively in English.[4] Data from Malawi's 2008 Population and Housing Census show that 35 percent of men and 26 percent of women between ages 15-49 stated that they could both read and write in English (Minnesota Population Center 2019). Malawians have historically listened to the radio more than people in many other countries, reaching highs of 66.5 percent weekly radio use among women and 85.3 percent among men in 2004. Like in many other countries, radio use in Malawi substantially declined when television use increased, falling in 2015-16 to 30 percent for women and 49.3 percent for men. Still, radio use is more common in Malawi than newspaper and television use because it is affordable, consistent with oral history practices, and generally broadcast in Chichewa and other common regional languages (Kamwendo 2008). The Malawi

[4] *The Nation* does publish short supplements translated into Chichewa and Chitumbuka biweekly, but circulation is limited (Angotti et al. 2014).

Broadcasting Corporation's *Radio One* and *Radio Two* stations are among the most consumed; their only major competitors were Zodiak Radio and Capital FM (NSO 2015b:40-45).

Weekly television use in Malawi is also very low from a comparative perspective, given the cost and limited electricity across Malawi's vastly rural population. However, it jumped over 300 percent between 2000 and 2010, peaking at 15.9 and 34.3 percent among women and men, respectively, before decreasing somewhat in 2015-16. Malawian television stations feature content in Chichewa and English, as well as some other native languages. Importantly, Malawians' definition of "television" extends to any visual content displayed on a television device, including movies. Satellite television and movies are usually in English but also Mandarin, Hindi, and other foreign languages.

Transnational Media in Malawi

As outlined by Englund (2011:25-31, 40), the basic theme in Malawian media over the years has been "developmentalism," which is the coverage of a range of topics posited to contribute to national development, such as education, human rights, HIV/AIDS prevention, and gender equality (see also Harris 2017:133-137). A recent cross-national study found that Malawian journalists saw "supporting national development" as one of their primary goals, whereas journalists from nineteen Western European and North American countries saw their job as keeping the government in check (Kalyango et al. 2017).[5]

In Malawi, transnational organizations provide journalists with regular content by telling them about their projects and initiatives, or by contracting them to fictional dramas that can spread specific cultural messages about human rights. Transnational organizations and domestic NGOs provide journalists with "brown bag" payments of $10-15 USD for reporting on their

[5] When reporting about events in foreign countries, journalists in Western European and North American countries are also increasingly collaborating with transnational organizations, especially international NGOs like Amnesty International (Powers 2018).

projects (African Media Barometer 2012:58; Chiuta 2019; see also Lodamo and Skjerdal 2009). In the words of one journalist interviewed by Harris (2017:136): "The NGO gives money so the reporter will write. So they indirectly co-determine what is published and what is aired." Transnational organizations' influence over Malawian media content is enhanced because journalists are paid very little (Manda and Kufaine 2013). Transnational organizations, on the other hand, are the wealthiest organizations in Malawi and are known to offer the most desirable economic opportunities (Morfit 2011; Watkins et al. 2012).

Englund (2011) describes how one of the most popular radio programs is more multivalent in its messaging, however. Listeners call into the show and discuss human rights issues, often challenging foreign power. Since the show is not in English, foreign donors do not directly monitor it like they do newspapers, which are in English. Moreover, some media does not revolve around human rights and focuses instead more on music, sports, and celebrity gossip. This foreign-sourced entertainment media, which is disconnected from the efforts of transnational organizations, is especially popular and it comes to Malawi through several sources.

Satellite television in Malawi flows almost entirely from the South African company Multichoice (NSO 2015b:72). It features many popular pan-African and other international channels with foreign content, including celebrity gossip and sports, reality television shows, movies, and an abundance of music videos (Geston 2006:41-47, 76-83; Gray 2014:987). There is no domestic content.[6] Though the service is prohibitively expensive, people can access many channels using free-to-air decoders imported from China (*Tech Dot Africa,* July 2, 2010). Pirated DVDs of foreign movies are also available for purchase and people view foreign movies on small television sets in makeshift public video parlors in market centers (Gray 2011). An entire infrastructure of informal video parlors has developed nation-wide, as there is not a domestic

[6] The first Malawian show on Multichoice appeared in 2017 (*Nyasa Times*, July 28, 2017).

movie industry nor any operating movie theaters in Malawi (Chimbuto 2016:80-81; Magalasi 2015).

An additional, influential entertainment-focused media outlet is *The Weekend Times,* the first and only regular tabloid in Malawi. Known as the "weekly scandal sheet" (Mchakulu 2018), *The Weekend Times* focuses on rumors and crime, including tales of government corruption, cheating and divorce among celebrities, sexual abuse, and witchcraft. Besides the tabloid, no other domestically produced media outlet focuses solely on this type of information. Moreover, there is no magazine industry in Malawi.

People are exposed to these varied types of media content not only through personal use, but from discussions with others. As in other contexts, people talk with others about the media they have consumed and this includes ample discussion of transnational organizations' projects, interventions, and cultural messaging campaigns. Malawian ethnographers embedded in their communities regularly recount incidents of people discussing media they consumed with others (Kaler et al. 2015; Swidler and Watkins 2009). People rely on others' accounts of their media consumption in particular when it comes to what is being discussed in the newspaper because they are written in English. During discussions stemming from something someone heard about through media, the details of the content are mediated through the individual that personally consumed the media in question, yet the broader topics and main cultural scripts are generally clear.

Analytical Aims

Since media options in Malawi are relatively limited compared to its neighbors or other countries with more substantial domestic media production, transnational organizations and foreign media entertainment companies enjoy substantial influence over accessible media

content in Malawi. I therefore analyze how transnational organizations and media entertainment companies influence the production and availability of different types of media content in Malawi, with the aim of mapping their diffusion pathways to lay people and recognizing likely gender differences. Having done so, I evaluate the relationship between people's media exposure and their attitudes about VAW. I hypothesize that media exposure to anti-VAW scripts is positively associated with people's rejection of VAW, while media exposure to cultural scripts that bolster gender stereotypes and normalize violence is negatively associated with the rejection of VAW.

Data and Methods

My mixed methods analysis begins with content analysis to examine the flow of anti-VAW and alternative scripts through media in Malawi. I then employ logistic regression to test the associations between media exposure and people's attitudes.

Data for Content Analysis

The first sources of data for my content analysis are official reports about media content and use published by transnational organizations and several branches of the Malawi government. Besides outlining the general sources of available media, many of these reports also discussed the portrayal of women and media coverage of VAW.

Next, I interviewed seventeen Malawian key informants. Sixteen were government, social movement, and transnational organization leaders that were personally involved in national programs to combat VAW. I identified these programs from a novel national database of foreign aid-funded projects, the Malawi Aid Management Platform (Malawi MoFEPD; see also

Peratsakis et al. 2012). My final key informant was Limbani Moya, the original editor of *The Weekend Times*.

I also gathered data to quantify the presence of anti-VAW scripts in daily newspapers. With the help of a team of research assistants, I created a new dataset of all newspaper articles that discussed interpersonal violence that were published in the Monday through Friday editions of the most common Malawian newspapers *The Daily Times* and *The Nation* between January 1, 2000 and February 14, 2016 (the interview date of the final respondent in the last survey I use). Since the vast majority of the historical archives of the two newspapers are not digitized, two Malawian research assistants and I located hard copies in Malawi at several locations across the country.[7] To identify relevant articles, we carefully examined all pages of these newspapers during the time period and read the article titles on each page. We read the full text of all articles that had titles related to interpersonal violence, gender discrimination, or gender equality. We identified 2,760 articles that contained explicit discussion about interpersonal violence, defined as any physical or sexual action committed against another person with the intention to harm, as well as verbal threats to take such actions.

After storing digital pictures of these articles in an online database, a team of undergraduate college students and I re-read and coded all articles for a variety of characteristics. Our coding focused on identifying articles that share anti-VAW scripts, either implicitly or explicitly, and that do not share alternative scripts supportive of VAW or that are related to other types of interpersonal violence. In particular, coding identified what I refer to as VAW *cases* and *campaigns*.

[7] We visited the newspapers' official archives in Blantyre, two libraries in Lilongwe located at the Malawi Government's Human Rights Commission and the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre, and one library in Zomba at the Center for Social Research at the University of Malawi. This was necessary to ensure full coverage of the two newspapers, as each archive or library was missing records due to water damage or staff transition.

I define *cases* as articles that describe at least one specific event of VAW committed by a male perpetrator; such articles implicitly condemn VAW. The publication of these articles is an implicit statement that such behavior is not "normal" and therefore worth reporting. Additionally, many of these articles note whether the perpetrator is located and arrested, and what their sentence or expected incarceration time is. To minimize inconsistent messaging, I do not classify articles as cases that document any specific occurrences of violence against men or violence between women, even if such articles also document incidences of VAW by men. *Campaigns* are articles that outline efforts to combat VAW by the national government, foreign aid agencies, NGOs, or activists. They may also be opinion articles condemning VAW. Any articles that offer support or give voice to any argumentation favoring VAW do not meet this criterion. Neither do articles that discuss other social problems based on interpersonal violence, such as the abuse of minorities or elderly people. Using this classification scheme, I consider any article that fits these descriptions of VAW *cases* or *campaigns* as a "VAW newspaper article."

In the Appendix, I list the specific official reports and newspaper articles that I cite in my analysis, and I provide a list of the key informants interviewed.

Individual Level Data

I use four cross-sectional surveys conducted in Malawi: the 2000, 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) (Boyle et al. 2017a). The four surveys each featured a two-stage cluster design in which households were selected from enumeration areas that were selected from districts. All women from selected households between the ages of 15-49 were invited to participate. In one third of the selected households (one fourth in the case of the 2000 DHS), all men ages 15-54 in the DHS were asked to be interviewed. Pooled together, the four surveys sampled 72,500 women and 21,006 men. Following the recommendations of the DHS

program administrators and to examine gender differences, I use two separate datasets of women and men respondents.

Rejection of VAW. My dependent variable, rejection of VAW, measures individuals' rejection of the notion that a husband is justified in beating his wife. Here I draw from the following survey question: *"Sometimes a husband is annoyed or angered by things that his wife does. In your opinion, is a husband justified in hitting or beating his wife in the following situations: (1) If she goes out without telling him? (2) If she neglects the children? (3) If she argues with him? (4) If she refuses to have sex with him? (5) If the food is not properly cooked?"*[8] Eighty-four percent of men and 78 percent of women say that a husband is not justified in beating his wife in any of the five proposed situations. The coefficient alpha from these five questions is 0.85 for women and 0.78 for men and loadings from a single factor principal-component analysis range between 0.76-0.82 for women and 0.71-0.75 for men, indicating that the five questions tap into a single latent construct. Following others (e.g. Pierotti 2013), I use a binary variable identifying respondents that reject all five scenarios.

Newspaper Articles. I exploit the temporal variation across the publication dates of VAW newspaper articles and respondents' survey interview dates, as each survey was conducted over a period of five to six months. I construct an individual level measure of the number of VAW newspaper articles that were published within one month (30 days) prior to a respondent's personal interview.[9] For example, if a person were interviewed on April 20, 2014, then their assigned value would be the total number of VAW newspaper articles published between March

[8] Respondents are not asked whether *their* husband was justified in beating them or whether *they* were justified in beating their wife. The questions instead refer to *a husband* and *a wife*.
[9] Vreese et al. (2017) and Brosius et al. (2019) propose and execute a similar strategy of linking survey data with media content by matching individuals' interview dates with the publication dates of newspaper articles about select topics.

20 and April 19, 2014. Respondents interviewed on the same day share the same values, but those interviewed on the next day could differ.

Radio Programs. To more directly assess respondents' exposure to anti-VAW scripts when listening to the radio, I leverage survey questions asked in the 2000, 2004, and 2010 surveys stating, *"In the last few months, have you listened to any of the following program series about family planning or health on the radio? Uchembere Wabwino (Safe Motherhood), Phukusi Lamoyo (Bag of Life), Umoyo M'Malawi (Health in Malawi), Dokotala Wapawailesi (Radio Doctor), or Chitukuko M'Malawi (Development in Malawi)?* Respondents were then asked to report each of these five radio programs they listened to. Though the survey question refers to these radio programs as being about family planning and health, all regularly discuss VAW and share anti-VAW scripts except the last program, which focuses on economic matters. I create a count measure of the number of the first four radio programs about VAW that respondents said they heard in the last few months. Given that the survey questions I use to create this count variable are not included in the 2015-16 survey, analyses using this variable are limited to the 2000-2010 time period.

Newspaper, Radio, and Television Use. I use three binary variables capturing respondents' at least weekly newspaper, radio, and television use, respectively. Respondents were also asked about their internet use in the 2015-16 survey, but I do not examine this because only three percent of the population used the internet at least weekly (NSO and ICF 2017:42-43).

Control Variables. I employ several commonly used measures of individuals' exposure to cultural scripts about development and human rights identified in the literature: a continuous measure of individuals' years of schooling completed and binary measures for urban living, Christian religious identity, and working outside the home in a non-agricultural job (e.g. Boyle et

al. 2002; Charles 2019; Pierotti 2013). Education is especially important to control given that it is generally positively associated with both VAW rejection and personal media use. Tests of equality confirm this is the case for these data.[10] I further use the household wealth index factor score measures provided by the DHS. Next, I include a categorical measure of marital history: never married, formerly but not currently married, currently in a monogamous marriage, and currently in a polygamous marriage. This is helpful given that in most African countries marriage has a strong, positive association with rejection of VAW (Hindin 2014), but in some contexts polygamy is associated with lower odds of rejection than monogamy (Rani et al. 2004). I also construct a binary variable for matrilineal lineage by collapsing Malawians' ethnicities into patrilineal or matrilineal categories based on ethnographic research (Ibik 1970). Though the relationship between matrilineal lineage and rejection of VAW has not been assessed, I explore their association because it is consistent within household bargaining theory that their relationship would be positive. Finally, I use a continuous measure of age. Controlling for these variables allows me to evaluate the relationship between rejection of VAW and media exposure net of these factors.

Table 1 lists the descriptive statistics from the women's and men's samples for all quantitative variables. Correlation matrices are reported in the Appendix. Given the complex design of the surveys, I cluster standard errors by the primary sampling unit and assign individual probability weights to all respondents.

[Table 1]

Analytical Approach

In the content analysis, I examine the specific pathways in media by which anti-VAW and cultural scripts about powerful, aggressive men and submissive, sexualized women are

[10] I report these tests of equality in the Appendix.

disseminated to women and men in Malawi. In doing so, I report descriptive statistics for VAW newspaper articles versus articles about other forms of interpersonal violence, and I show temporal trends in the publication of VAW newspaper articles. I further discuss how media entertainment companies share content across Malawi that propagates negative gender stereotypes.

Building on these findings, I estimate several logistic regression models measuring the associations between media exposure to anti-VAW and alternative scripts and Malawians' rejection of VAW. I cluster the standard errors of coefficient estimates by primary sampling unit and I use the individual probability weights provided with the surveys. Control variables are included in all models, and continuous control variables—education, wealth, and age—are mean centered within each survey. Comparing logistic regression coefficients within and across models is a well-established problem (Allison 1999; Ai and Norton 2003; Mood 2010). I follow Long and Mustillo (2018) and convert all coefficient estimates to average marginal effects holding all other independent variables at their actual value for each observation (see also Breen et al. 2018).

Consistent with the literature (e.g. Cools and Kotsadam 2017), I use fixed effects (dummy variables) for surveys given legal reforms and a temporal shift toward greater rejection of VAW among lay people. I also employ fixed effects for Malawi's 28 geographic districts (e.g. Broussard and Weitzman 2020). A district fixed effects approach is preferable to random effects since I do not have explicit interest in quantifying the unexplained variance among districts. Besides being less efficient and more conservative, district fixed effects help account for constant, unobserved differences across districts. In the Malawian context, this is useful because contemporary district boundaries in Malawi reflect some of the original settlement areas of the

many societies present in this region prior to European colonization, like the Chewa, Tonga, Tumbuka, and Yao, as well as geographic variation in longstanding foreign influences from Christian missionaries, Islamic networks, and labor migration (Kudo 2017; Pike 1965; Sicard 2000; Van Kol 2008). District fixed effects are especially expedient given my interests in media predictors because they help control for geographic differences in unobserved factors such as electricity blackouts and the number of informal video parlors (African Media Barometer 2012:27, 45; see also Grimm et al. 2015:1783).

My research design, which begins with mapping the pathways of diffusion from organizations to lay people in the content analysis, identifies mechanisms through which cultural scripts transmitted through media shape the declarative attitudes of lay people. Given the cross-sectional nature of the surveys I use, though, I interpret all estimated AMEs from logistic regression models as associations rather than direct, causal effects on people's rejection of VAW. Reverse causation is possible, and estimated AMEs estimates for personal use of newspaper, radio, and television media likely reflect selection processes as well as the influence of media use on attitudes. The association between VAW newspaper articles published one month *prior* to each respondent's personal interview date and their rejection of VAW is unlikely to stem from reverse causation because of the temporal sequence of the observations.

Results

Transnational Organizations and the Flow of Media Critical of Violence Against Women

Figure 3 summarizes several major media diffusion pathways linking transnational organizations' promotion of anti-VAW scripts to Malawian media companies and journalists, who then produced specific newspaper articles, radio programs, and television programs for lay

people. The boxes in Figure 2 feature the steps in this process and the lines and arrows connecting these boxes illustrate the pathways and direction of the dissemination of anti-VAW scripts.

[Figure 3]

Transnational organizations conveyed anti-VAW scripts to Malawian media companies through "training" meetings for media journalists, editors, and producers. Representatives from Malawi's offices of UN Women, UNFPA, and several foreign aid agencies led these trainings in partnership with some pan-African and Malawian NGOs (Interview with Emma Kaliya, October 28, 2015; Interview with Limbani Phiri, November 5, 2015). They coached personnel from Malawian media companies about the importance of covering VAW, avoiding victim-blaming, and strategically denouncing VAW in their journalism (*The Daily Times,* November 29, 2004; *The Nation,* November 27, 2016; see also Gender Links and Malawi Institute of Journalism 2001; Gender Links 2011; Morna 2010; Public Media Alliance 2012). This led to substantial media coverage of VAW.

Newspaper journalists wrote numerous articles covering VAW for the general public. The predominance of the topic of VAW in Malawi newspapers is demonstrated in Figure 4, which gives counts of newspaper articles about different types of interpersonal violence that two research assistants and I identified in *The Daily Times* and *The Nation* daily newspapers between January 1, 2000 and February 14, 2016. The first two bars show that there were 1,241 articles about cases of VAW by men compared to 580 articles documenting cases of interpersonal violence against men or committed by women. The next two bars indicate that among articles that discussed campaigns about interpersonal violence as a social phenomenon, 890 explicitly condemned VAW while only 117 contained some other discussion about violence. In many of

these VAW campaign articles, journalists glowingly described interventions to combat VAW that transnational organizations funded (e.g. *The Daily Times*, March 27, 2008). Another common article style was a summary of public speeches about VAW by the President or another government leader, as well as leaders of transnational organizations (e.g. *The Daily Times*, November 18, 2014; *The Daily Times,* December 11, 2014). Other articles of this type included opinion editorials (e.g. *The Nation*, December 10, 2012).

[Figure 4]

Overall, we identified 1,979 VAW newspaper articles, meaning they covered VAW cases or campaigns.[11] This is substantial considering that there were 4,206 weekdays during the time period examined. The regularity of articles documenting and denouncing VAW, and the comparative scarcity of other types of articles about interpersonal violence, speaks to the power of transnational organizations in shaping newspaper content.

The influence of transnational organizations over media content is further apparent in the monthly frequency over time at which VAW newspaper articles appeared in *The Daily Times* and *The Nation*, as depicted in Figure 5. The enactment of Malawi's first National Gender Policy in March 2000 was likely one primary reason for the substantial increase in the number of articles during 2000 (Semu 2002:89). The rapid increase during late 2005 and through the first several months of 2006 was due primarily to domestic activists' and transnational organizations' combined efforts to provide journalists with material for articles about VAW, which they hoped would sway public opinion and parliamentary approval in anticipation of the upcoming vote on the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (Interview with Lugede Chiphwafu Chiumya, October 30, 2015; Interview with Seodi White, November 22, 2017; Kanyongolo and White 2017:193-194). The effort was successful and the law was enacted on April 26, 2006. The

[11] 158 newspaper articles qualified as articles about both VAW cases and campaigns.

smaller number of articles in 2004, 2007, and 2014 likely resulted from lapses in foreign aid funding for domestic NGOs' efforts to advocate against VAW (Interview with Emma Kaliya, October 28, 2015; *The Daily Times*, December 8, 2004; MHRRC 2007; 2013).

[Figure 5]

Further evidence of transnational organizations' influence on newspaper content comes from the publication of newspaper articles about VAW campaigns surrounding the annual UN-sponsored *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign, which occurred each year between November 25 and December 10. The earliest documentation of the campaign in Malawi is from 2000 (*Arise!: A Newsletter of the Network Against Gender Violence*, November-December 2000). Various international donors funded efforts by the Malawi government and domestic NGOs to spread awareness of VAW during this annual campaign through protest marches, official gatherings, and rural outreach (FEMNET 2003; 2009; Malawi MoGCDSW 2014; MEGEN 2011; 2012; 2013; MHRRC 2007; 2013; UN Women 2015). During the campaign, government leaders, Malawian activists and NGO leaders, and members of the police rented three large touring buses and traveled around the country giving presentations about VAW (*The Daily Times*, December 6, 2000; *The Nation,* December 10, 2012). Campaign organizers made sure that several radio, television, and print journalists from the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation, Zodiak, and other media companies accompanied their caravan and they provided journalists with their own large van (Interview with Emma Kaliya, October 28, 2015; Interview with Limbani Phiri, November 5, 2015). In most years, journalists covered campaign activities in depth. Figure 6 is one such article (*The Nation*, December 1, 2010).

[Figure 6]

Figure 7 features sixteen graphs documenting the weekly number of newspapers articles about VAW campaigns between October and January annually between 2000 and 2015-16. The vertical grey section in each graph represents the *16 Days* campaign period from November 25 through December 10. The graphs show that the highest or tied for highest weekly number of articles with anti-VAW scripts often occurred during the campaign or the following week. Besides 2011, this was the case annually since 2006 when the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act passed and the campaign received more donor funding (MHRRC 2007).

[Figure 7]

Transnational organizations efforts to shape media content were not limited to newspapers. Their efforts extended in similar ways to radio and television media, though I do not have quantitative data on radio or television content similar to what I collected for newspapers. Radio and television journalists also attended the media "training" workshops and they also developed working relationships with transnational organizations to cover their programs in return for small payments. Moreover, transnational organizations had longstanding efforts to provide funding to develop specific radio and television programs about family planning, contraception, and HIV/AIDS (Lwanda 2010:393-395, 402-403; Manyozo 2008:34; Mhagama 2015). As they extended their vision to VAW, they ensured that these same programs covered VAW too (Interview with Panji Harawa, December 6, 2016; Interview with Jean Mwandira, October 30, 2015; *The Nation*, June 4, 2012; see also National AIDS Commission 2010:66). Examples of such programs included the popular informational radio program *Uchembere Wabwino (Safe Motherhood),* the radio drama *Tichitenji (What Do We Do),* and the television drama *Tikuferanji (Why Are We Dying)*.

Gender Stereotypes in Entertainment Media

Alternative cultural scripts that portray women as passive objects and men as powerful aggressors also are present in Malawi media, imported from or inspired by content from foreign media entertainment companies. Figure 8 summarizes several major pathways through which these alternative scripts encouraging gender stereotypes and making violence seem commonplace are circulated to lay people.

[Figure 8]

One important source of alternative scripts about VAW was *The Weekend Times* tabloid newspaper. Limbani Moya, the founding editor of *The Weekend Times,* modeled it after foreign tabloids he observed in England, Germany, and the United States while participating in visiting programs for African journalists (Interview with Limbani Moya, February 14, 2019). After its founding in 2009, *The Weekend Times* was an immediate success and rapidly blossomed to a circulation on par with its parent newspaper, *The Daily Times,* as well as *The Nation* (Englund 2011:31; Mchakulu 2018). The tabloid's strong themes of violence and gender stereotypes are apparent in their headlines and photographs alone, such as two examples of moderate cover pages from April 19-21, 2013 and December 21-23, 2012 shown in Figure 9.

[Figure 9]

A popular feature of each edition of the tabloid were the photographs of a new "Action Girl" model on page eight, posed in a sexually suggestive position. This was largely unprecedented for media content in Malawi given stringent censorship laws and conservative social norms that women were expected to wear an ankle-length *chitenge* skirt (*The Nation,* January 20, 2012; *The Nation,* December 18, 2013). Moya said that he designed the weekly "Action Girl" feature after foreign tabloids, and, not surprisingly, many people would rush to buy the tabloid as soon it went on sale just to see the page eight photograph. In contrast, many

other lay people and government leaders expressed concern about how the tabloid reduced respect for women (Mchakulu 2018), including the former Minister of Information and Civic Education, Patricia Kaliati (*Nyasa Times*, February 24, 2012; see also *Nyasa Times*, February 21, 2012). In line with the conservative cultural narratives of dangerous women—the *femme fatale*—persistent in Malawi (Frye and Chae 2017; Frye and Gheihman 2018), the government and several individuals brought lawsuits against *The Weekend Times* multiple times in attempts to shut it down (*Panapress*, November 4, 2010). Though these cases were usually dropped, the tabloid succumbed to pressure and closed on January 31, 2014 (*Nyasa Times*, January 31, 2014).

Besides the tabloid, gender stereotypes were also spread through satellite television. This programming featured reality television shows, such as *Big Brother Africa*, which captivated the attention of so many when it started in 2003 that the Parliament of Malawi temporarily tried to ban the show because it included nudity and sex scenes perceived by national elites as immoral (*BBC News,* August 15, 2003). The popular *actionX* satellite television channel also featured graphic violence alongside very gendered content, marketing especially to men. It advertised its content as: "High impact action movies and series. Explosions, bombs, and bullets, flying fists and feet, dangerous men and *far more dangerous women*!" (Geston 2006:77, italics added). Other television stations primarily showed popular music videos by American, Malawian, and other African artists, many of which featured similar content as well as violent conflict between couples (Gray 2014).

Foreign media entertainment companies produced nearly all movies available in Malawi, which Malawians also considered a form of "television." As Gray (2011; 2014) uncovered in ethnographic research, the movies available via satellite channels, for DVD purchase, or public viewing in video parlors generally celebrated violence and reduced women to passive characters

whose primary portrayal was that of male characters' sexual partners. The most prevalent types of movies were violent Chinese martial arts and American action movies, such as the *James Bond* and *Die Hard* series (see also Magalasi 2015). In interviews with viewers, Gray (2014:990) found that people's relative lack of media exposure and knowledge about foreign societies led them to conclude that America and China must be very violent, and many bought into the conservative narrative of the *femme fatale* and worried this type of behavior would rub off on Malawians (*The Nation,* August 19, 2015). Despite strong censorship laws, there were reports of video parlors regularly showing pornographic films, usually in secret late at night but other times more openly (*The Nation,* August 30, 2013). Additional movies that were available for viewing or purchase, especially in the later years of my analysis, were dramas from India and Nigeria. Despite being less violent, the movies still depicted women as submissive to men (Chimbuto 2016:92-98; see also Gray 2014:989).

Some popular songs by Malawian artists and domestic commercials on the radio were not modeled after foreign content but nonetheless justified VAW (Gender Links 2003; see also Englund 2011:117-118; Lwanda 2010:385-386). For example, the song *Choncho Ndi Amunanga (All the Same, He Is My Husband)* states: "even though he beats me, I don't mind," and "beating is medicine for marriage" (Nthala 2013:187; see also Mlenga 2011). The vast majority of available entertainment media in Malawi, though, came directly from foreign media entertainment companies, or was partly inspired by them in the case of *The Weekend Times*. Cultural scripts portraying violence as commonplace and sustaining gender stereotypes were common.

Media Exposure and Attitudes About Violence Against Women

Having established the pathways through which different cultural scripts about VAW are disseminated in media in Malawi, I examine the relationship between people's media exposure and rejection of VAW. Table 2 contains results from four logistic regression models predicting Malawians' rejection of VAW, each replicated separately for women and men. Given my research aims, I primarily discuss the average marginal effects (AMEs) for media predictors for Models 1-4, followed by an overview of the findings for control variables. I focus my discussion on AMEs' magnitude and direction, and I note statistically significant differences in AME estimates between women and men.

[Table 2]

Model 1 reports AMEs of 0.005 for women and 0.003 for men for each additional VAW newspaper article published one month (thirty days) prior to when a respondent was interviewed. In other words, each VAW article is associated with a 0.5 percentage point increase in the probability of rejecting VAW for women and a 0.3 percentage point increase for men. This is a substantial effect given that many newspaper articles were published in the month prior to most respondent's personal interview dates. This is better appreciated in Figure 10, which displays the predicted probabilities of rejection by the number of VAW newspaper articles. Women's probability of rejecting VAW if only one such article had been published in the past month is 71 percent. It gradually increases with each additional article, reaching 79.4 percent when 15 VAW articles were published and 86 percent when 29 VAW articles appeared (the highest value observed). Men's probability of rejecting VAW progressively rises from 79.5 percent when one VAW article had been published in the past month to 88.8 percent when 29 such articles were.

[Figure 10]

It is useful to compare these results to the strong and robust AMEs of 0.009 for women and 0.007 for men for each additional year of schooling, since education is considered a preeminent source of exposure to cultural scripts about development and human rights (e.g. Meyer 1977), including anti-VAW scripts (e.g. Pierotti 2013). The probabilities of rejection for women steadily increase from 78.1 percent for those with no education to 87.3 percent for those with some tertiary or more education, whereas for men their probability increases 6.9 percentage points over this same educational trajectory. These increases in people's probability of rejecting VAW across the range of education are smaller than those observed across the range of VAW newspaper articles.

In Model 1, I also find a small, positive AME of 0.015 for individuals' weekly newspaper use on women's rejection of VAW. The direction of this association is consistent with the interpretation that women who read the newspaper weekly would be especially likely to read articles about VAW cases and campaigns that in turn affect their attitudes. However, there is no clear association between these variables for men. This is consistent with Mchakulu's (2018) observations that men are especially likely to read *The Weekend Times* tabloid, thus conflating the types of cultural scripts about VAW they would be exposed to when reading newspapers.

I further replicate Model 1 and add an interaction effect between VAW newspaper articles and weekly newspaper use (see the Appendix). This tests whether the association between rejection and VAW newspaper articles is heightened for regular newspapers readers, who would be more directly exposed to such articles. I find that VAW newspaper articles positive association with rejection of VAW is nearly equivalent among weekly newspaper readers and those that do not read the newspaper that frequently or at all.

Besides the fact that personal newspaper use can measure people's consumption of both mainstream daily newspapers and *The Weekend Times* tabloid, there are at least two complimentary explanations for this lack of an interaction effect. First, the influence of anti-VAW articles may extend beyond people who may read these articles themselves—weekly newspaper users—to those that do not read the newspaper weekly. In this account, newspaper consumers, who would have to be literate in English, likely communicate the information they read, including anti-VAW scripts, to others, who in turn are affected by what their friends have shared with them. This interpretation fits ethnographic research documenting that many people in Malawi are very proactive in seeking out information from others regarding the cultural scripts about development and human rights that transnational organizations disseminate (e.g. Morfit 2011; Swidler and Watkins 2009). It also matches Arias' (2019) observations of spillover effects from a quasi-experimental study of a VAW radio program in Mexico (see also Smith et al. 2018; Thornton 2005:227).

A second possibility for the lack of an interaction effect is that the count measure of recent VAW newspaper articles picks up on temporal variation in the prominence of VAW as a social issue in Malawi. In other words, the article count measure may track the visibility of VAW not only in media but the public sphere more generally, be in through NGO projects, activists campaigns, etcetera. In this interpretation, the lack of an interaction effect does not necessarily imply that weekly newspaper readers must be discussing articles about VAW with others, and instead acknowledges that the measure may capture the ebbs and flows of anti-VAW scripts within media as well as in Malawian society more generally.

In additional analyses reported in the Appendix, I also examine whether there is any difference in the association between rejection of VAW and VAW newspaper articles if I only

include articles about VAW campaigns or articles about specific cases of VAW. For women, both types of articles are important. For men, I discover that the positive association between rejection and VAW newspaper articles observed in Model 1 is primarily attributable to articles about VAW cases rather than campaigns. Riley and Dodson (2016) find that when campaigns in Malawi take on the language of "gender," some men become defensive. Stories of specific cases of VAW, on the other hand, may be more persuasive among men because they place blame on an individual male perpetrator for a particular abusive event (Polletta et al. 2013). The gender differences in these interaction analyses reflects the "underdog principle" (Davis and Robinson 1991; Robinson and Bell 1978), which posits that groups that directly experience discrimination such as women in this case, are more likely to attribute their lower status to structural explanations than groups that do not personally experience the specific type of discrimination in question. Since VAW is, by definition, only experienced by women, this principle expects the comparative lack of an influence of newspaper articles about VAW campaigns on men's attitudes that I observe.

I next examine the association between having heard VAW radio programs and rejection of VAW in Model 2. I rely only on the 2000, 2004, and 2010 surveys for this model, as the relevant questions were not asked in the 2015-16 survey. For women, there is no noticeable association. There is for men, for whom listening to a VAW radio programs has an AME of 0.009, which translates to a 3.6 percentage point increase in rejection of VAW for those that listen to all four programs. Further research on radio content and differences between women's and men's radio consumption is necessary, but one important factor is that media journalists are much more likely to be men (Gender Links 2003; 2010). Producing radio programs about VAW and other human rights topics would be an especially coveted job—and thus more likely to be

dominated by men—because the funding would be more stable since it comes from transnational organizations (African Media Barometer 2012:55). Interestingly, weekly radio use is associated with a 2.1 percentage point increase in rejection for women, and a lower and noisy 0.8 percentage point increase for men (with a negative lower bound in the estimate's confidence interval). These percentage point increases are smaller than those observed for VAW newspaper articles. This is likely because of the multivalent nature of radio media, in particular some radio programs and a few examples of popular music that directly justify VAW (Englund 2011; Nthala 2013).

I further examine whether hearing VAW radio programs is associated with a higher increase in the probability of rejection among those who listen to the radio regularly than those who do not. I replicate Model 2 and include an interaction effect between VAW radio programs heard and weekly radio use. To facilitate interpretation, I present results from interactions visually and in terms of predicted probabilities in Figure 11 (Long and Mustillo 2018; Mize 2019). For women and men that do not use the radio weekly, there is little difference in the probability of rejecting VAW between those that do not listen to any of the four radio programs with anti-VAW scripts and those that listen to all four. Among weekly radio users, though, those that listen to VAW programs have higher probabilities of rejection than those who do not listen to these programs. For women, however, the difference is subtle (77.1 versus 75.4). For men, this difference equates to 5.4 percentage points (84.5 versus 79.1). This result is consistent with findings by Smith et al. (2007) in which they find that edutainment radio programs were more likely to influence people's reported intentions to practice behaviors that limited HIV transmission when they listened regularly to the programs because this led them to identify with the main characters more.

[Figure 11]

I next examine the association between individuals' rejection of VAW and their "television" use, which refers to content aired on domestic and satellite television stations as well as movies. Before presenting these results, it is important to recall that men's television consumption disproportionately favors content sustaining gender stereotypes—such as available movies—while women's television consumption is likely more mixed, relatively speaking (Gray 2011). As shown in Model 3, there is a negligible association between television use and rejection for women, while there is a 2.5 percentage point decrease in stated rejection of VAW for men, a statistically significant difference. These results are consistent with expectations given the content analysis. The association is likely comprised of reciprocal causal effects: men's television consumption may decrease their rejection of VAW, yet men that are more accepting of VAW may be especially likely seek out opportunities to view television given that much television content contains gender stereotypes consistent with their attitudes.

Model 4 builds on the prior models and includes data from all four surveys. Each of the key media predictor variables is included except the number of VAW radio programs heard because these questions were not asked in the final survey. For both women and men, the AMEs for VAW newspaper articles and television use in Model 4 are nearly identical to Models 1 and 3. The associations for radio use change somewhat between Models 2 and 4, with the percentage point increase in rejection among women that use the radio weekly being halved while this association for men greatly increases in the absence of a measure of having heard VAW radio programs. In terms of comparative magnitude, the most important results from Models 1-4 are the substantial increase in the probability of rejection across the range of VAW newspaper

articles shown in Figure 10, and negative association between rejection and television use for men.

The results for other predictor variables are quite consistent across Models 1-4. Education and urban living are associated with substantial increases in the probability of rejection of VAW. Christian identification is positively associated with rejection, but the relationship is not especially robust. Unexpectedly, working in a non-agricultural job is negatively rather than positively associated with rejection among women. This result demands further inquiry. It is possible that people are exposed to patriarchal rather than liberating norms in workplaces, as reports from Malawian civil society organization emphasize the prevalence gender discrimination at work (MHRRC 2003; see also Rani and Bonu 2009). Household wealth is positively associated with rejection, consistent with the literature (Cools and Kotsadam 2017). So is matrilineal lineage, but the association is much weaker. The association between marital status and rejection is especially strong. For women, having been or currently being married—whether a monogamous or polygamous relationship—is consistently associated with a 4.4-7.0 percentage point increase in rejection compared to never being married. For men, being currently in a monogamous marriage, as opposed to never being married, is associated with a 5.7-5.8 percentage point increase in rejection. Being formerly married or currently in a polygamous relationship is positively associated with rejection, but the AMEs are comparatively small and less robust. The results for the final predictor of age confirm prior literature that older age is strongly associated with greater VAW rejection in Malawi.

I conduct several robustness checks reported in the Appendix in which I alter the measurement of specific predictors included in Models 1-4. This includes lengthening the temporal duration of VAW newspaper articles included in my measure from one to two or three

months, using distinct measures for each VAW radio program, and employing categorical variables for newspaper, radio, and television use. The results do not alter the substantive findings presented.

Conclusion

This paper provides an account of how cultural scripts about VAW reach lay people in Malawi. Using content analysis and logistic regression, I trace some of the specific media pathways through which this process of diffusion takes place. Doing so lays bare the links between transnational organizations, intermediary institutions, and ordinary people.

Previous research on the emergence of world society and global institutionalism has primarily focused empirically on cross-national diffusion in policies and laws. Other research on developmental idealism has mostly used survey data to show widespread attitudinal conformity to many cultural scripts about development and human rights. This paper builds on these literatures and empirically shows the flow of cultural influence from transnational organizations to lay people. Such inferences about these macro-micro links are present in both world society and developmental idealism theoretical accounts of global cultural change, but this paper highlights the pathways of diffusion from transnational organizations all the way to individuals.

Tracking particular diffusion pathways and examining specific media content also broadens theoretical and empirical considerations of what types of cultural scripts are transmitted on a global scale. Within work on cultural globalization, emphasis is primarily on the dissemination of cultural scripts about development and human rights. Conflict is often depicted as resulting between "global" forces and "local" norms. As is being increasingly recognized (e.g. Lounsbury and Wang 2020), this is an incomplete picture. In my analysis, I show that alternative

scripts that encourage violence and negatively portray women are emanating globally from foreign, powerful, international media entertainment companies. This implies that transnational organizations are not the only players in circulating specific cultural scripts on a global scale, and that institutional explanations of global cultural diffusion require broadening of the types of content that are internationally promoted.

In the case of Malawi, transnational organizations promoted the dissemination of anti-VAW scripts in mainstream media in Malawi through training meetings for journalists and paying them for writing specific articles. Their efforts led to the production of specific radio and television programs by Malawian media companies, as well as a litany of newspaper articles explicitly condemning VAW or reporting on individual cases of VAW. The connection between transnational organizations' collaboration with journalists and the presence of anti-VAW scripts in media content was further apparent from the content analysis. There were numerous newspaper articles covering VAW incidences and openly denouncing VAW, including many articles of the latter type usually surrounding the annual *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign. Notably, there was no responsive increase in media content challenging such scripts in Malawian media as Chaudoin (2019) and Koo and Choi (2019) observe in the Philippines and South Korea, respectively. This is likely due to journalists' tremendous reliance on financial support from transnational organizations and their unique understanding of their purpose as journalists to "enlighten" the public about human rights and developmentalism.

I show that the number of VAW newspaper articles published one month prior to when people were personally interviewed was associated with substantial increases in rejection of VAW, even net of personal newspaper, radio, and television use, as well as other proxy measures of exposure to cultural scripts about development and human rights, and many demographic and

socioeconomic predictors. This positive association was attributable to newspaper articles about both VAW campaigns and specific cases for women, but mostly to articles about specific cases of VAW for men. Rejection of VAW was also positively associated with listening to the radio weekly for women and having heard VAW radio programs for men.

At the same time, I observe that foreign or foreign-inspired media entertainment companies distributed alternative scripts that encouraged violence and portrayed negative gender stereotypes across several media sources in Malawi, namely *The Weekend Times* tabloid, satellite television, and movies. These entertainment media sources were very popular, especially among men. Largely in agreement with these qualitative observations, I find that men's at least weekly consumption of "television"—including movies—was negative associated with their rejection of VAW.

Accordingly, my findings show that transnational organizations *and* foreign media entertainment companies are positing specific cultural scripts about VAW across the world that reach lay people. Moreover, the divergent associations I observe between different types of media exposure and rejection of VAW suggest that anti-VAW scripts encourage rejection whereas alternative scripts may reinforce the justification of VAW. These associations stem from cross-sectional observations and require further analyses from causal methodological frameworks, but are suggestive of important media influences on Malawians' declarative attitudes. This matters for theories of global cultural diffusion because it shows that foreign influences are linked not only to national structures but also to individual citizens. Beyond this, these results contribute to a rapidly expanding research literature on the competition, overlap, and collaboration between different types of globalizing organizations, as well as their distinctive influences on nation-states and lay people (Almeida and Chase-Dunn 2018).

Other scholars of global cultural diffusion observe new international networks opposing other cultural institutions promoted by transnational organizations, such as democratic governance, education, homosexuality, and reproductive health. Populist social movements and many national governments now present a formidable global network of antagonism toward democracy and higher education (Carothers and O'Donohue 2019; Schofer et al. 2019). Many Christian churches, especially but not limited to Evangelical denominations, lead international movements protesting protections for and rights of LGBTQ people and access to abortion (Boyle et al. 2015; Ferguson 2019). In developing the global dissemination of their alternative cultural scripts, these movements and networks present a fundamental challenge to assumptions of continuing global isomorphism. However, it would be a mistake to assume that alternative transnational forces *must* be in direct opposition to the cultural scripts about development and human rights that transnational organizations celebrate, as Pope and Meyer (2016:295) point out. In the empirical case of this paper, foreign media entertainment organizations do not explicitly oppose anti-VAW scripts, they instead circulate alternative scripts perpetuating gender stereotypes and normalizing violence.

The results of this study further point to several immediate directions for future research regarding global cultural diffusion across lay people. First, how would media exposure to anti-VAW scripts and alternative scripts influence attitudinal declarations about VAW in other, more patriarchal contexts than Malawi? Given its high rate of rejection of VAW and the general zealousness with which many people in Malawi seek to learn public cultural scripts about development and human rights, Malawi is especially useful for examining the pathways of cultural diffusion; other contexts may be helpful for examining when such media exposure does and does not influence lay people. Second, additional research on the causal effects of anti-VAW

and alternative scripts, as circulated through various forms of media, is needed. One opportunity for such studies is to exploit the timing of external shocks to available media during the middle of data collection of a national survey. Third, studies on the pathways of global cultural diffusion should be extended to other theorized sources, such as education, religious networks, and foreign aid projects. Also needed is research regarding the interests and actions of the individual brokers within specific diffusion pathways that act as local translators of such scripts (Jijon 2019).

My findings also highlight the importance of theorizing and analyzing the gendered dissemination and influence of cultural scripts about development and human rights, as well as alternative scripts promoted internationally. As shown in my findings, men may be less persuaded by broad messaging calling for gender equality—which some see as "anti-men" (Riley and Dodson 2016)—compared to hearing about personal stories of abuse. Women in Malawi, on the other hand, appear to respond to both. These gender differences may be more pronounced in contexts that are especially patriarchal in their control of women's liberties and movement.

The gender differences I observe raise further questions about the gendered dimensions of media persuasion, and how these might interact with other stigmatized identities of sexuality, class, race, or citizenship. The "underdog principle" (Robinson and Bell 1978) might be applicable across many different areas, in which the influence of being exposed to certain cultural scripts promoting human rights is shaped by one's personal experience of discrimination and likelihood of social interacting with people with similar experiences (see Rawlings and Childress 2019). Following the logic implicated from my findings, it would be less likely that privileged people would be persuaded by campaigns that challenged their status than they would from meeting and learning from a person that faced specific abuses. In other words, the pull of personal narratives might be especially important for persuading the privileged (Murrar and

Brauer 2019). However, this dynamic is likely limited to settings or social groups among which existing norms are favorable. In Malawi, the widely acknowledged notion of *nkhanza,* or unjustified abuse, likely primes men to express disapproval when notified of specific instances of VAW. Alternatively in the United States, for example, longstanding norms of whites being atop the racial hierarchy, paired with negative stereotypes of African Americans, may limit the potential influence of stories of racial violence by police among whites that ascribe to such norms, while such stories may shift attitudes among whites that acknowledge racial inequality (see Holt and Carnahan 2019; Holt and Sweitzer 2020; Wasow 2020).

Most pressing in this literature, though, is more research about how exposure to cultural scripts about development and human rights, as well as alternative scripts, shape behavior (Allendorf and Thornton 2015; Cloward 2016; Hadler 2016; 2017). This is particularly the case for VAW, but is also relevant for other individual behavior related to gender dynamics, such as age at first marriage, fertility, contraception, and childcare.

When it comes to the connection between declarative attitudes and reported experiences of VAW, multiple possibilities are at play. In Malawi, attitudinal rejection of VAW increased between 2000 and 2010 and then remained at about the same values in 2015-16. Women's reports of ever being physically abused by their male intimate partner increased from 21 percent in 2004 to 26 percent in 2015-16 (ICF 2020). Further research is needed to understand this paradox. As articulated in this paper, some people may become convinced that VAW is harmful through exposure to anti-VAW scripts; this would help explain the increase in declarative rejection over time in Malawi. Such exposure may also lead some men to stop engaging in violent behavior, but measuring whether this is taking place is difficult because such exposure may also lead some women to feel safe enough—or to reassess their life experiences—such that

they self-report their partner's behaviors as abusive when they previously would not have. Or, exposure to anti-VAW scripts may lead men to express rejection of VAW without changing their behavior, especially in contexts in which some people may perceive that portraying such an attitude might be beneficial to them (Swidler and Watkins 2017:145-146; see also Angotti and Kaler 2013). Researchers will have to compare across multiple types of data over time and turn to experimental conditions when possible to decipher between these different possibilities.

Notably, these issues are about the relationship between exposure to certain public cultural scripts, declared attitudes, and self-reported experiences of violence, rather than violent behavior itself. In other words, statements about the violence one has experienced are—from an empirical standpoint—elements of personal culture (see Lizardo et al. 2016:303). The direct measurement of the link between public cultural exposure and actual violence likely demands entirely new data from that which is available in the DHS or most other surveys. Defining reports of violence as personal culture alongside declarative attitudes, however, offers a useful way forward for re-theorizing existing survey measures. People's personal attitudes about VAW and their reports of experiencing violence are crucially important indicators of a primary step—defining and speaking openly about the issue—that likely anticipates societal-level reductions in violence and discrimination.

In summary, this paper provides an explanation for how multiple cultural scripts about VAW are disseminated through media to lay people in Malawi. Transnational organizations use media to communicate particular public cultural scripts to ordinary people around the world; their efforts can shape individual's declarative personal culture. In other words, global cultural diffusion can reach across the entire macro-to-micro spectrum. There are also other, concurrent sources of global diffusion that spread public cultural scripts to individuals. This makes a

dynamic social environment that may shape people's declarative attitudes about VAW in either direction, depending on the media content they personally consume or hear about from others. This level of complexity, in which multiple cultural scripts about a single issue are promoted on a global scale through some of the same sources of information, including media, provides a fuller portrait of the processes of global cultural diffusion.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Descriptive statistics from women's and men's samples for all variables.

	Women					Men				
	%	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*	*%*	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*
Dependent Variable										
Rejection of Violence Against Women (VAW)	78.00			0	1	84.01			0	1
Media Predictor Variables										
VAW Newspaper Articles		13.42	6.54	1	29		13.83	6.50	1	29
Newspaper Weekly	10.42			0	1	21.11			0	1
VAW Radio Programs[a]		2.07	1.72	0	4		2.89	1.43	0	4
Radio Weekly	48.66			0	1	67.17			0	1
Television Weekly	11.05			0	1	21.98			0	1
Control Variables										
Education		5.21	3.74	0	13		6.52	3.69	0	13
Urban	17.90			0	1	19.58			0	1
Christian	86.25			0	1	84.63			0	1
Working	25.51			0	1	42.79			0	1
Household Wealth		2.08	1.44	0	5		2.19	1.41	0	5
Matrilineal	77.20			0	1	77.86			0	1
Marital History										
Never	19.20			0	1	36.73			0	1
Formerly Married	12.63			0	1	3.53			0	1
Currently Married: Monogamy	57.89			0	1	54.63			0	1
Currently Married: Polygamy	9.93			0	1	5.07			0	1
Age		27.96	9.26	15	49		29.01	10.58	15	54

Note: Statistics are drawn from the 2000, 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Demographic and Health Surveys conducted in Malawi, except for VAW newspaper articles which are derived by linking my database of newspaper articles with survey respondents' interview dates.
[a] = Includes only data from 2000, 2004, and 2010 Demographic and Health Surveys.

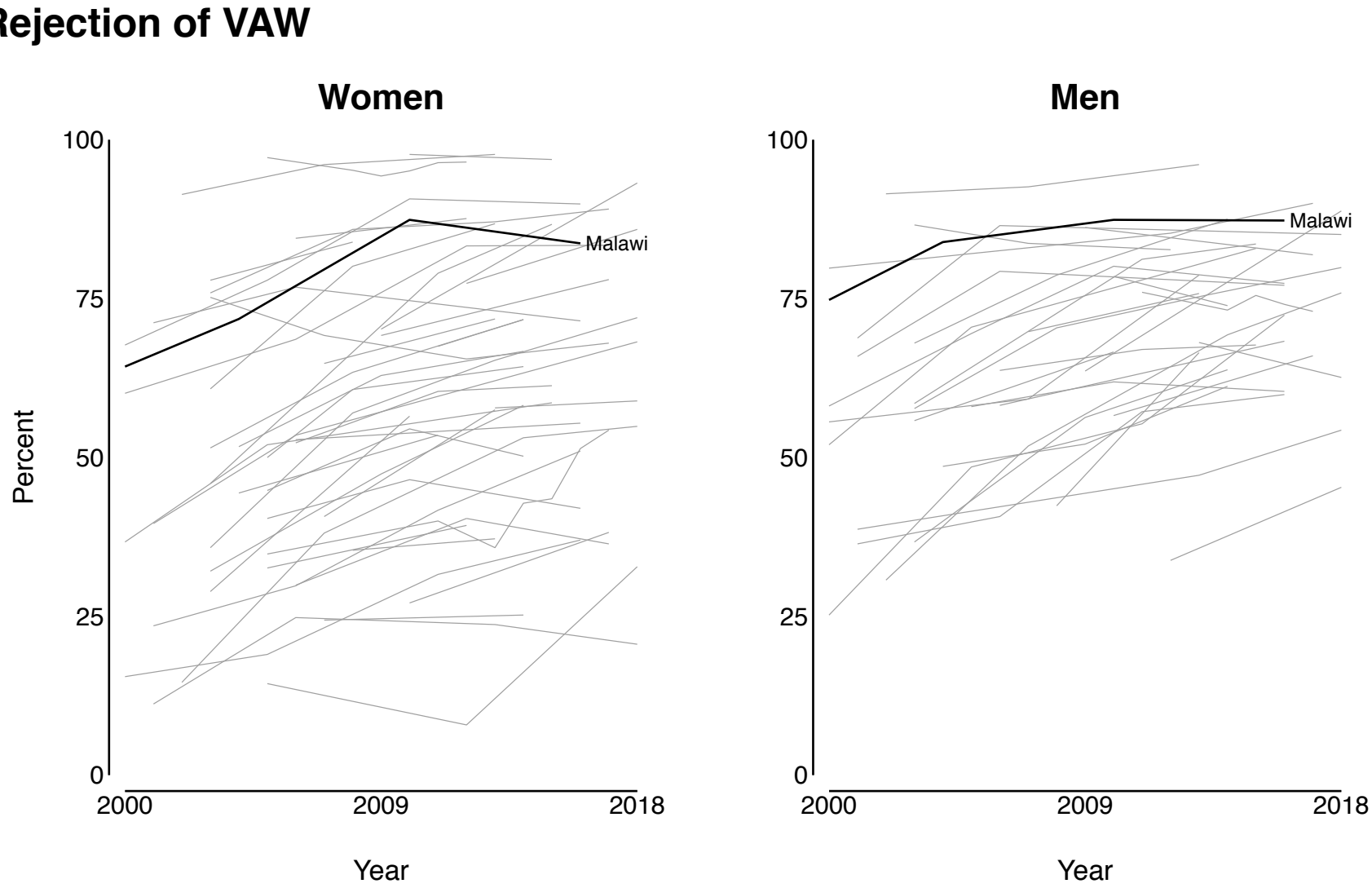
Table 2. Average marginal effects with 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting rejection of VAW.

	Model 1 2000-2016		Model 2 2000-2010		Model 3 2000-2016		Model 4 2000-2016	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
VAW Newspaper	0.005***	0.003***					0.005***	0.003***
Articles	[0.004,0.007]	[0.002,0.005]					[0.004,0.007]	[0.002,0.005]
Newspaper Weekly	0.015*	-0.005					0.013	-0.003
	[0.002,0.028]	[-0.022,0.012]					[-0.000,0.027]	[-0.020,0.014]
VAW Radio Programs			0.000	0.009**				
			[-0.003,0.004]	[0.003,0.015]				
Radio Weekly			0.021***	0.008			0.009*	0.015*
			[0.010,0.031]	[-0.012,0.028]			[0.001,0.018]	[0.001,0.030]
Television Weekly					0.003	-0.025*	0.000	-0.025*
					[-0.012,0.017]	[-0.045,-0.006]	[-0.015,0.015]	[-0.044,-0.005]
Education	0.009***	0.007***	0.008***	0.005***	0.009***	0.007***	0.008***	0.007***
	[0.007,0.010]	[0.005,0.009]	[0.006,0.010]	[0.003,0.008]	[0.008,0.010]	[0.005,0.009]	[0.007,0.010]	[0.005,0.009]
Urban	0.041***	0.032**	0.042***	0.033*	0.050***	0.040***	0.042***	0.036**
	[0.025,0.058]	[0.008,0.056]	[0.022,0.062]	[0.001,0.065]	[0.033,0.067]	[0.017,0.064]	[0.025,0.058]	[0.012,0.059]
Christian	0.009	0.017	0.002	0.017	0.008	0.017	0.008	0.016
	[-0.005,0.023]	[-0.004,0.038]	[-0.015,0.019]	[-0.008,0.042]	[-0.006,0.022]	[-0.004,0.038]	[-0.006,0.023]	[-0.005,0.037]
Working	-0.011*	-0.002	-0.018**	-0.001	-0.012*	-0.004	-0.012*	-0.002
	[-0.022,-0.001]	[-0.015,0.012]	[-0.031,-0.005]	[-0.019,0.016]	[-0.022,-0.002]	[-0.017,0.010]	[-0.022,-0.001]	[-0.016,0.011]
Wealth	0.007***	0.006*	0.004	0.004	0.007***	0.007*	0.006***	0.006*
	[0.004,0.011]	[0.001,0.011]	[-0.000,0.008]	[-0.002,0.011]	[0.004,0.011]	[0.002,0.012]	[0.003,0.010]	[0.001,0.012]
Matrilineal	0.009	0.012	0.001	0.016	0.010	0.012	0.009	0.011
	[-0.004,0.022]	[-0.009,0.033]	[-0.014,0.017]	[-0.011,0.043]	[-0.003,0.023]	[-0.009,0.033]	[-0.004,0.022]	[-0.010,0.032]
Marital History								
Never (Ref.)								
Formerly Married	0.059***	0.015	0.070***	0.018	0.057***	0.015	0.060***	0.016
	[0.044,0.074]	[-0.022,0.052]	[0.051,0.089]	[-0.031,0.067]	[0.042,0.072]	[-0.022,0.053]	[0.045,0.075]	[-0.022,0.054]
Currently Married:	0.057***	0.058***	0.060***	0.057***	0.055***	0.058***	0.056***	0.057***
Monogamy	[0.045,0.068]	[0.039,0.077]	[0.046,0.075]	[0.033,0.081]	[0.043,0.066]	[0.039,0.077]	[0.044,0.068]	[0.038,0.077]
Currently Married:	0.046***	0.006	0.055***	-0.003	0.044***	0.005	0.045***	0.004
Polygamy	[0.030,0.062]	[-0.032,0.043]	[0.036,0.074]	[-0.049,0.043]	[0.028,0.060]	[-0.032,0.043]	[0.030,0.061]	[-0.033,0.042]

Age	0.003***	0.004***	0.003***	0.004***	0.003***	0.004***	0.003***	0.004***
	[0.003,0.004]	[0.003,0.005]	[0.003,0.004]	[0.002,0.005]	[0.003,0.004]	[0.003,0.005]	[0.003,0.004]	[0.003,0.005]
Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Respondents (N)	72324	20870	47702	13368	72367	20876	72221	20832

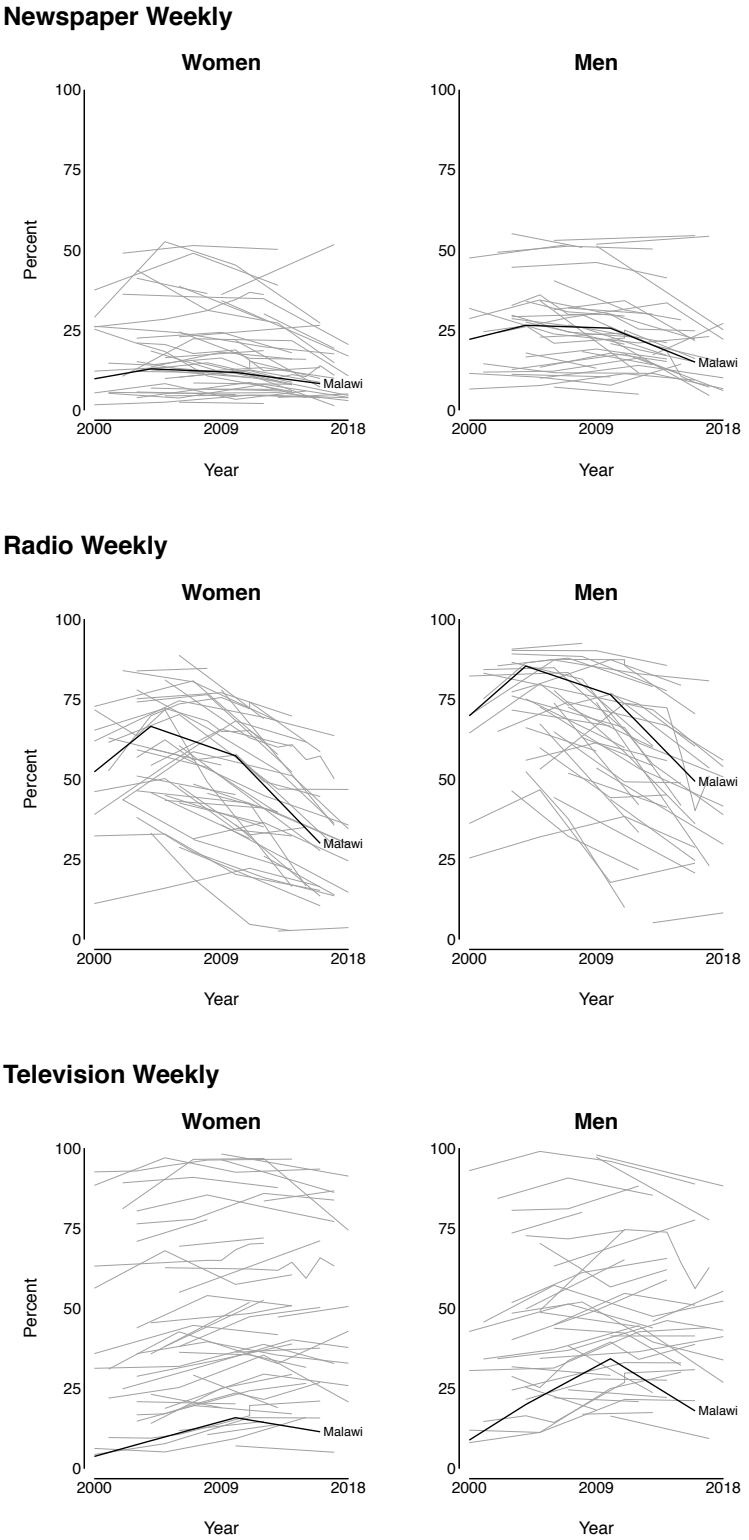
Note: Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Figure 1. Cross-national trends in rejection of VAW.



Note: Data are from *Statcompiler,* which aggregates estimates from the cross-national Demographic and Health Surveys (ICF 2020). Individual lines represent countries, including Malawi and 44 other countries across Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and Eastern Europe (see the Appendix for further details).

Figure 2. Cross-national trends in at least weekly newspaper, radio, and television use.



Note: Data are from *Statcompiler,* which aggregates estimates from the cross-national Demographic and Health Surveys (ICF 2020). Individual lines represent countries, including Malawi and 44 other countries across Africa, Asia, Central and South America, and Eastern Europe (see the Appendix for further details).

Figure 3. Media diffusion pathways of anti-VAW scripts in Malawi.

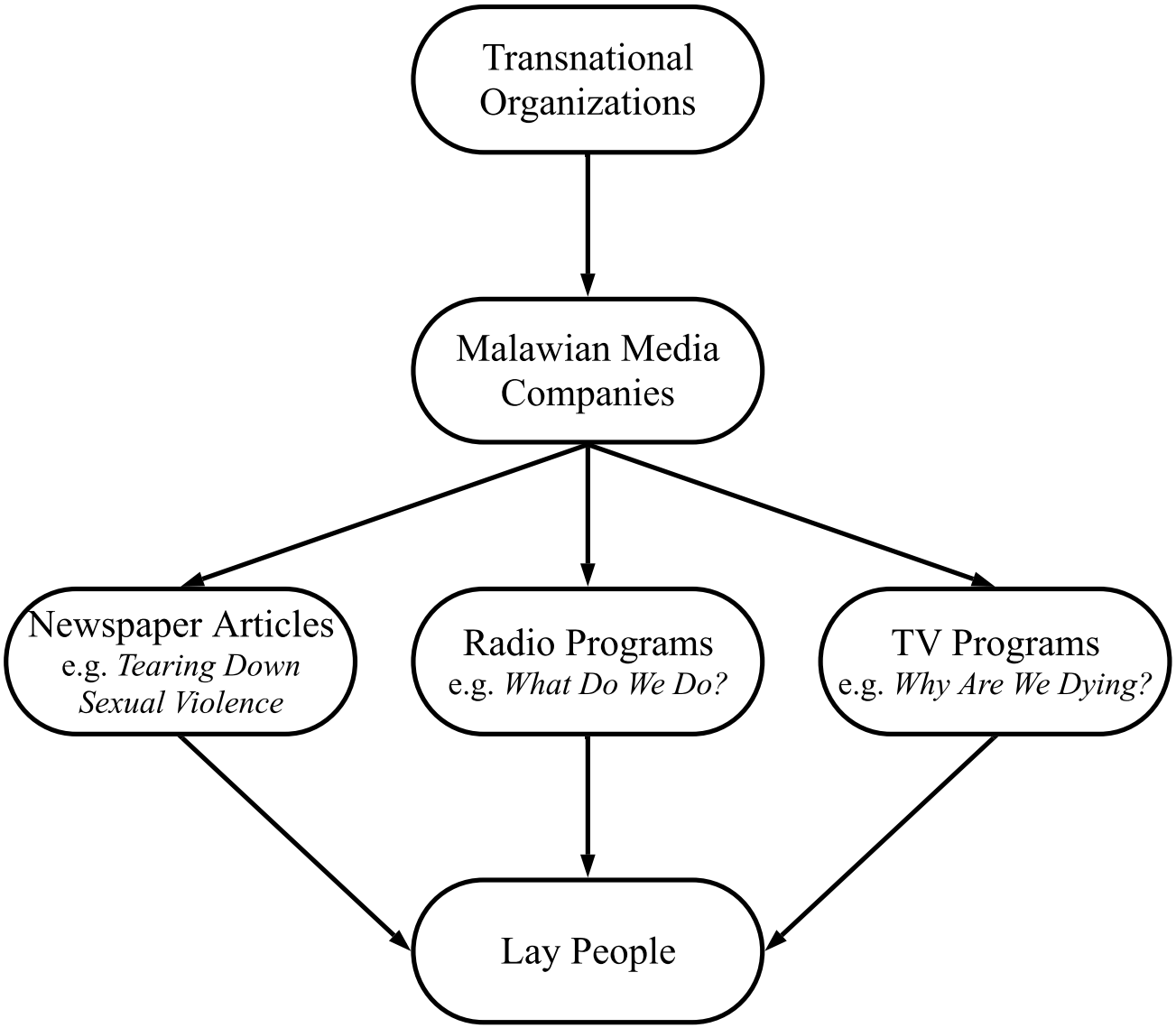


Figure 4. Total number of newspaper articles published in *The Nation* and *The Daily Times* between January 1, 2000 and February 14, 2016, categorized by types of interpersonal violence cases and campaigns discussed.

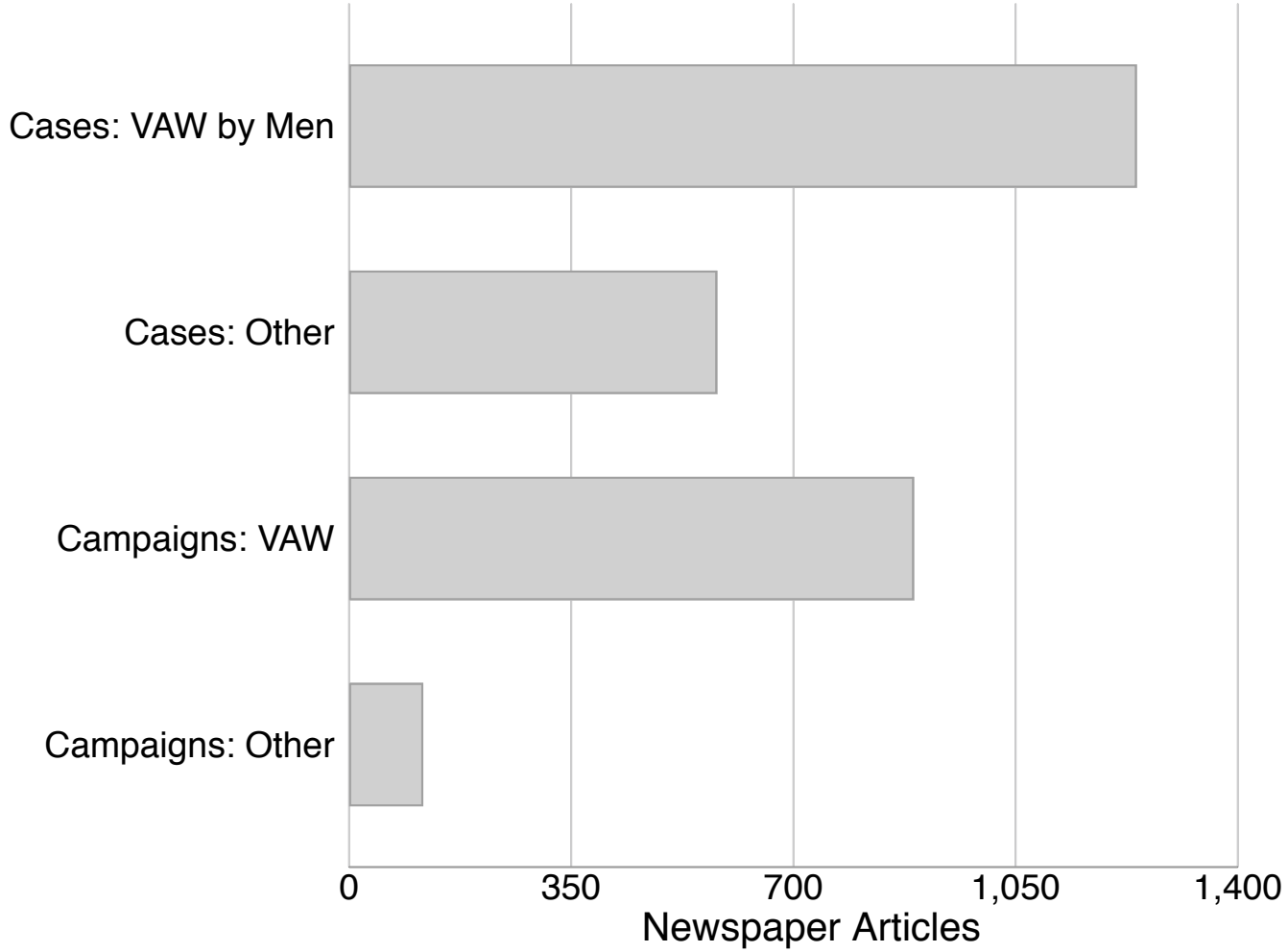
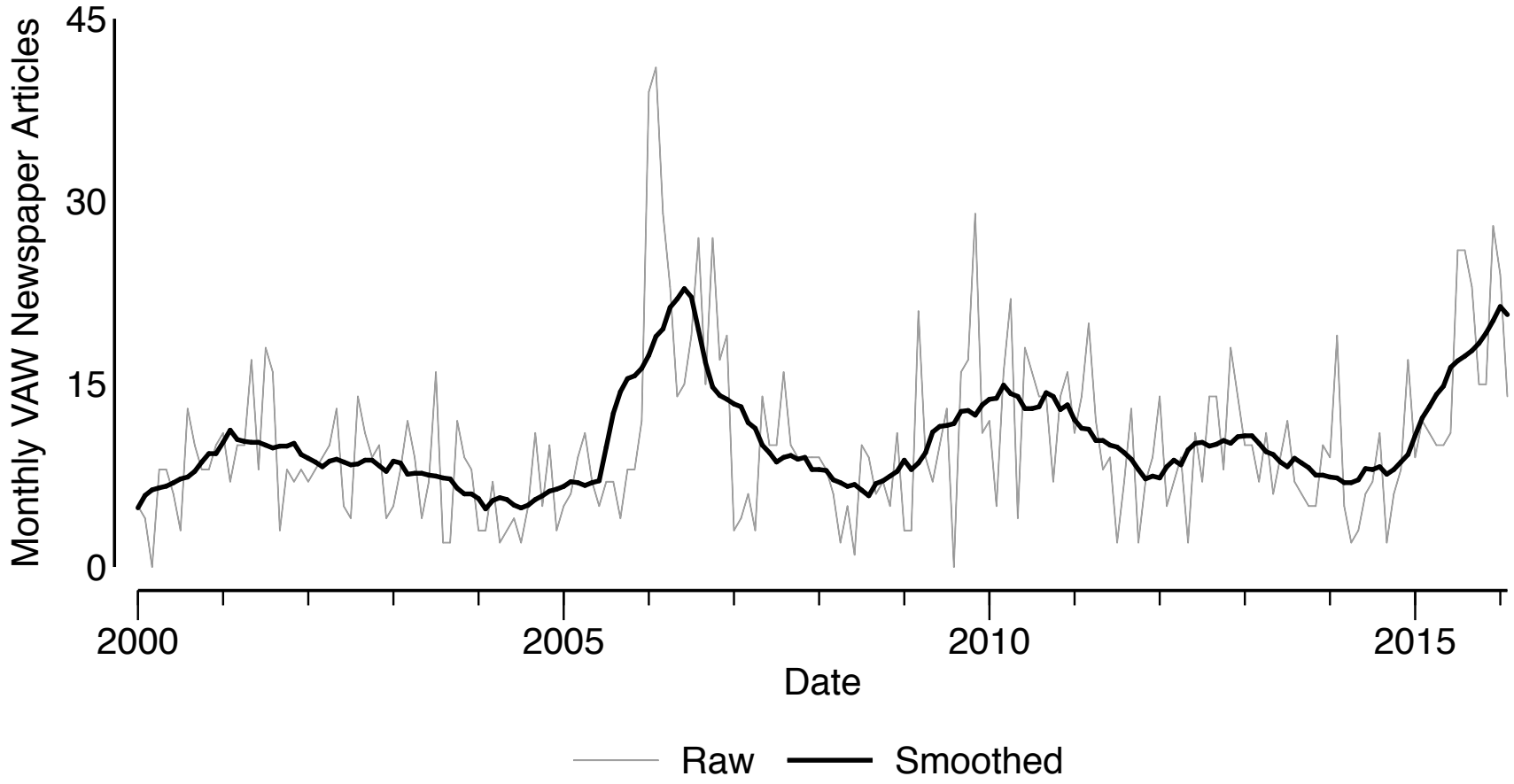


Figure 5. Monthly number of VAW newspaper articles published in *The Nation* and *The Daily Times*.



Note: Smoothed totals are averaged across a 13 month period, 6 months before and after a given month.

Figure 6. Newspaper article from December 1, 2010 reporting on activities during the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign.

THE NATION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1 2010

GENDER 23

Concern Universal: Curbing gender-based violence

MWERETI KANJO
STAFF REPORTER

In January 1984, Elsina Sinosi married a man she thought she was going to share her life with. But contrary to her expectations, her marriage was full of hatred and abuse.

She recalls that every night, the couple would quarrel and fight because of the man's drunkenness.

When she stood up to give testimony of her ordeal last week Thursday during the launch of the 16 days of activism by Concern Universal at Makwangwala headquarters in Ntcheu, the crowd that gathered got annoyed because she could not project her voice.

Little did they know that her low voice was a result of physical abuse which damaged her mouth, making it difficult for her to talk. A friend of hers, Harry Foster, spoke on her behalf and this is what he explained:

"Elsina married her husband in January 1984. In October of the same year, he came home drunk and refused to eat food that Elsina had prepared for him. Elsina went outside for some fresh air only to have her husband sneak up from behind with a hammer with which he brutally hit her in the face several times and broke her jaws.

"Then he went back in the house, took a knife and stabbed her several times until she lost consciousness due to loss of blood.

"She was quickly rushed

PHOTOGRAPH: MWERETI KANJO

Activists march against gender violence

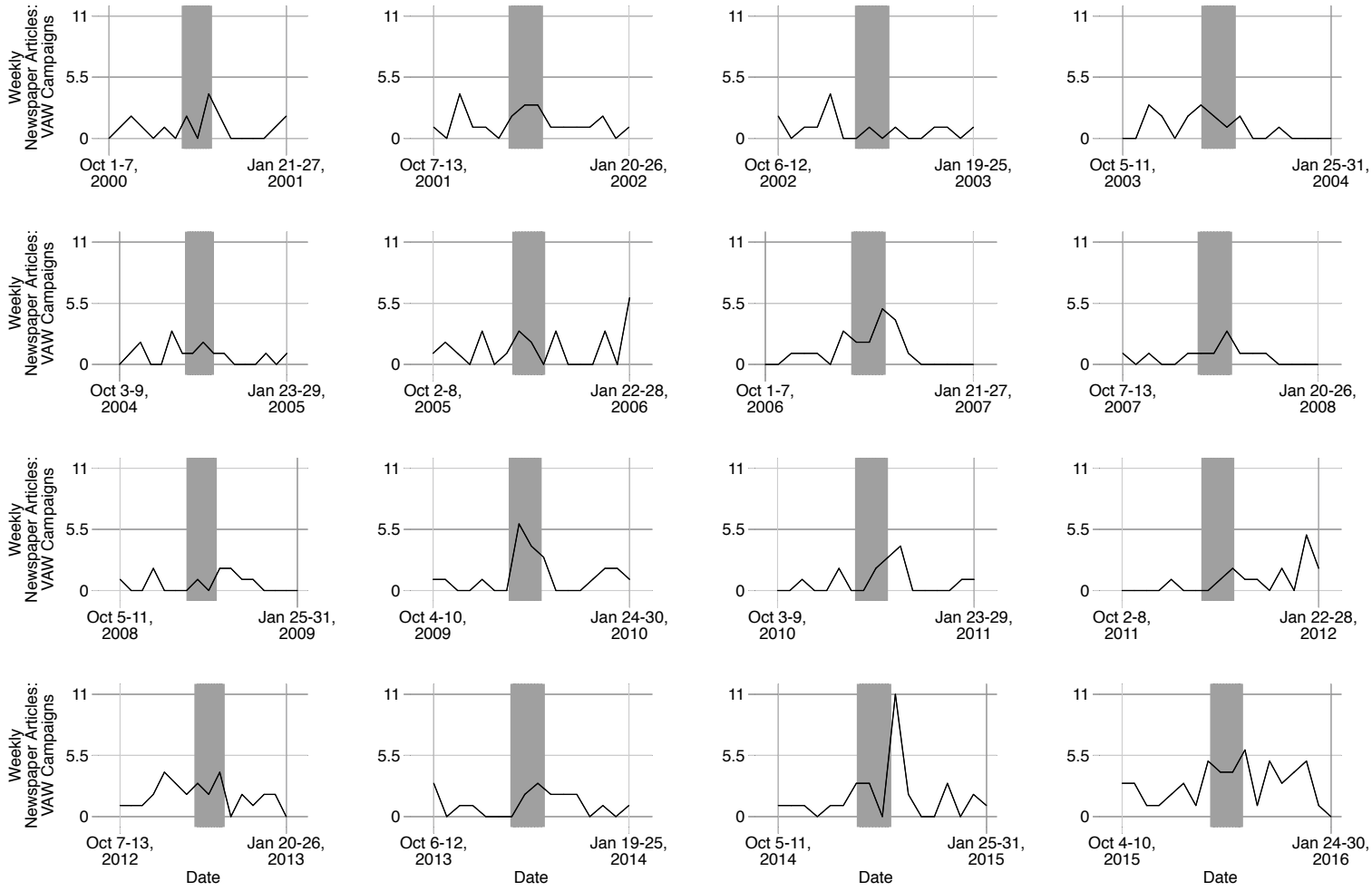
groups it was a lot difficult for people to tell what constituted gender-based violence.

"The stories of abuse that we hear on *Nkhani Zam'maboma* are real. The problem is that most people do not know what abuse is and what is not. Acts of abuse are mostly

we will not progress. Gender-based violence is a big problem, not only in Malawi but worldwide. We are working in Ntcheu and Dedza. It is a 6-year project and this is just the beginning.

"Among our achievements, we have established these

Figure 7. Weekly number of newspaper articles about VAW campaigns that were published in *The Nation* and *The Daily Times* during October through January of each year.



Note: The varying start and end dates for each graph reflect the first full calendar week in October and the last full calendar week in January. The grey area in each sub-figure marks November 25 through December 10, the annual period in which the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign occurred.

Figure 8. Media diffusion pathways of cultural scripts that normalize violence and perpetuate gender stereotypes in Malawi.

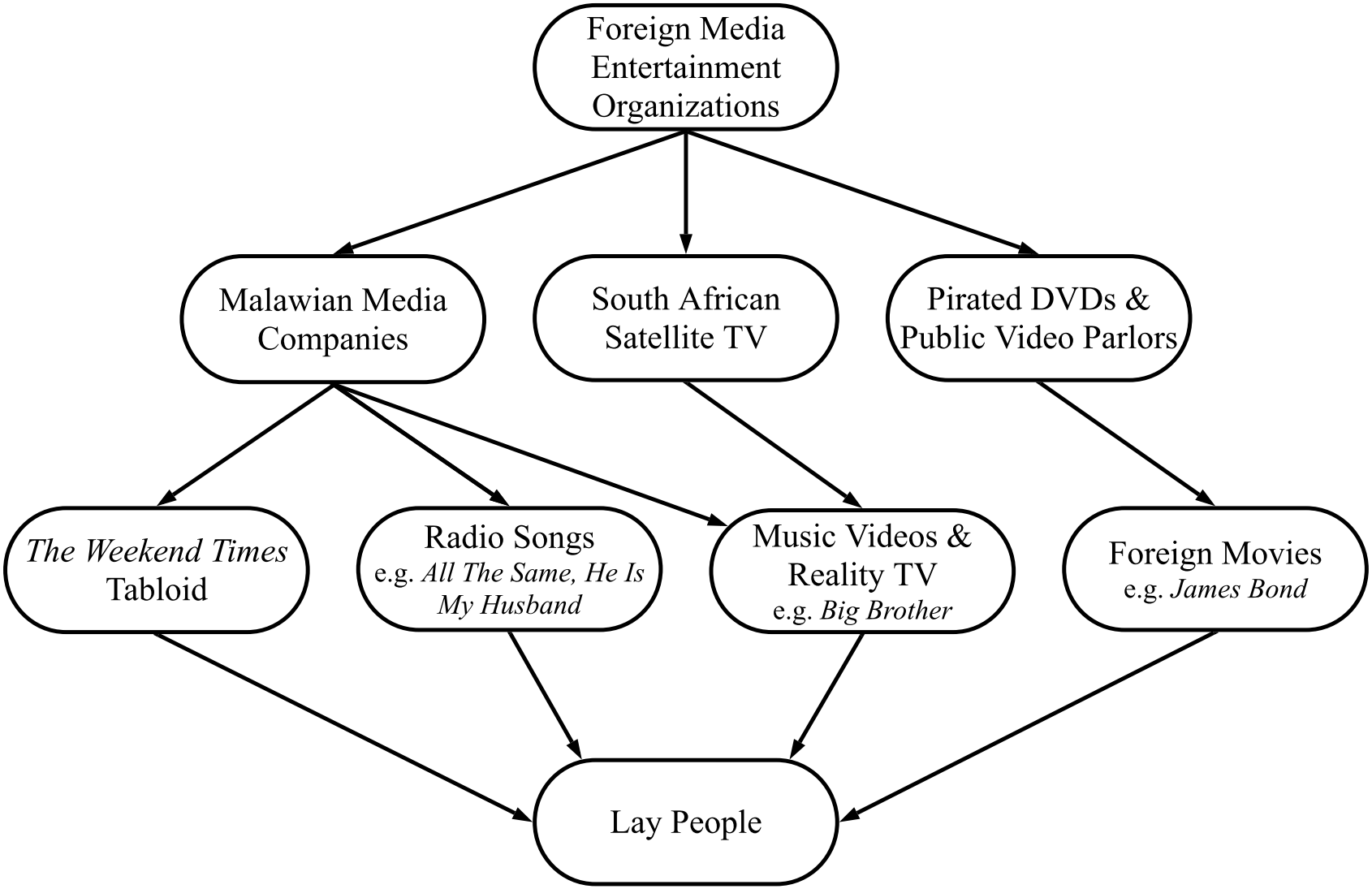
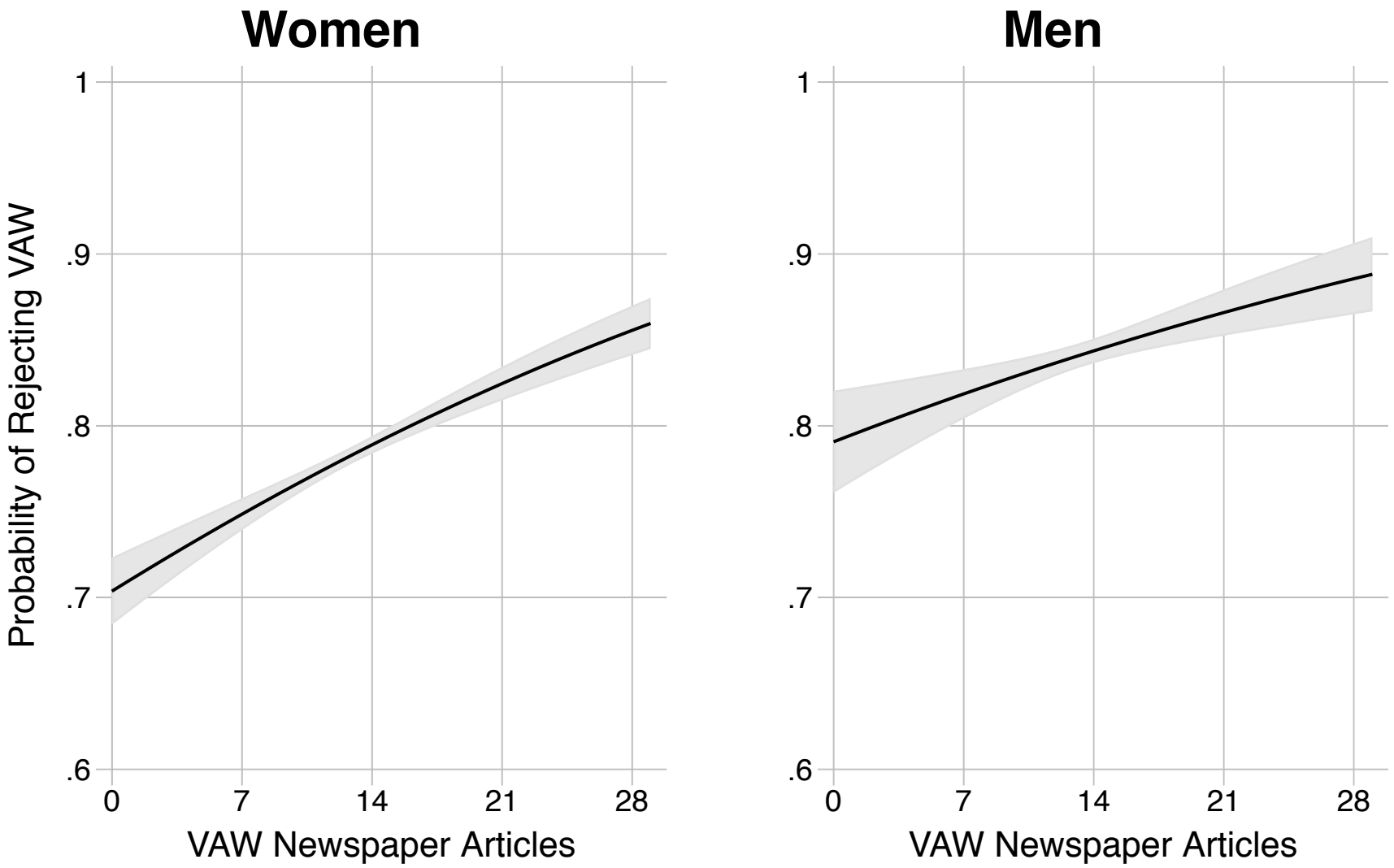


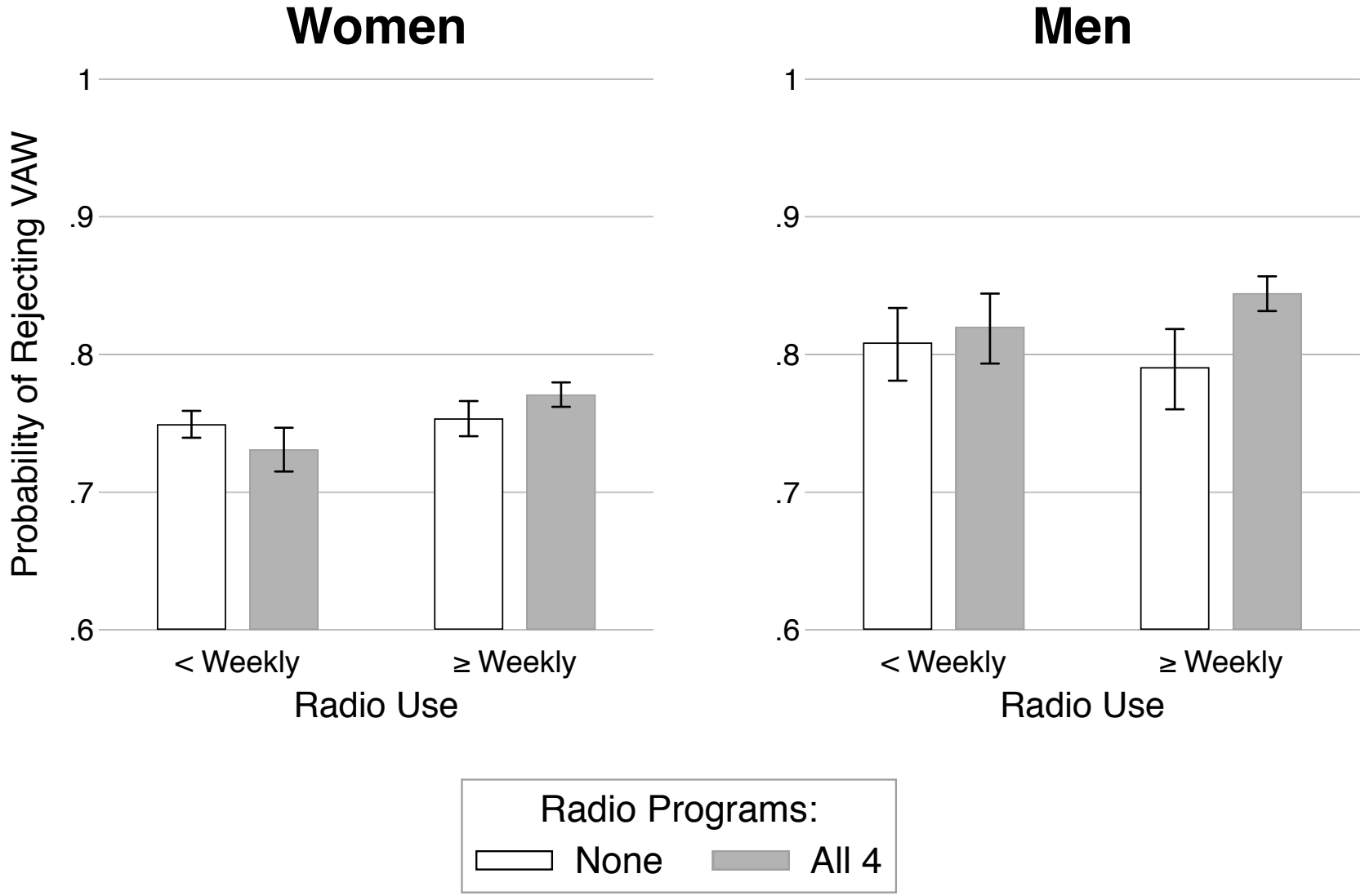
Figure 9. Two example cover pages of *The Weekend Times* tabloid.

Figure 10. Probability of rejecting VAW by the number of VAW newspaper articles published one month prior to a respondent's survey interview date.



Note: Results obtained from Table 2, Model 1. Shading indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

Figure 11. Probability of rejecting VAW for weekly radio users and others by the number of VAW radio programs they have heard.



Note: Results obtained from a replication of Table 2, Model 2 with an additional interaction between the number of VAW radio programs heard and at least weekly radio use. Error bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals.

Appendix

This Appendix for "Pathways of Global Cultural Diffusion: Media and Attitudes about Violence Against Women" contains supplementary information and analyses. The Appendix is divided into eight sections.

(A) Cross-national descriptive findings from the Demographic and Health Surveys

(B) Data sources for the content analysis

(C) Additional descriptive statistics

(D) Replications of Model 1 using an interaction effect or alternative measures

(E) Replications of Model 2 using separate measures

(F) Replications of Models 1-4 using categorical media use variables

(G) Additional analyses using random effects for districts

(A) Cross-National Descriptive Findings From the Demographic and Health Surveys

Figures 1 and 2 from the main text use data from the *Statcompiler* website that provides national-level estimates of various key indicators from the cross-national Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and their similar AIDS Indicator Surveys (AIS) and Malaria Indicator Surveys (MIS) (ICF 2020). Table A1 lists all the surveys I use in these two Figures. When surveys span two years (e.g. 2010-11), I present them as coming from the latter year.

In Figure 1, I use data on the national percentage of women that reject violence against women (VAW) from 45 countries and 133 separate surveys. Data from most but not all of these surveys were also collected for men, for which I use statistics from 33 countries and 93 surveys. I do not use rejection of VAW statistics from nine surveys for one of the following reasons: (A) they do not include the same five survey questions (Bangladesh 2004, 2007); (B) they contain additional questions about further scenarios (Benin 2012, Jordan 2002, 2007, Rwanda 2010, Timor-Leste 2016); (C) they feature an extra, preliminary question before asking respondents about their attitudes toward VAW (Nepal 2011); or (D) they otherwise contain values likely indicative of a different survey design (Madagascar 2004). I also do not use 26 surveys that come from countries that have only one survey because my aim is to show trends over time.

The data displayed in Figure 2 represent at least weekly newspaper, radio, and television use. These statistics are more readily available because these questions were included in all DHS worldwide. I do not use one men's survey in my calculations of newspaper use, Namibia 2013, because there was a problem with the data entry for this variable as noted in the DHS final report. In total, I employ media use data for women from 155 surveys in 49 countries and for men from 125 surveys in 42 countries.

Table A1. Demographic and Health Surveys used in Figures 1 and 2 from the main text.

Country	Survey	Figure 1: Rejection of VAW		Figure 2: Newspaper, Radio, and Television Weekly	
		Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
Albania	2008-09 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Albania	2017-18 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Armenia	2000 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Armenia	2005 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Armenia	2010 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Armenia	2015-16 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bangladesh	2004 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Bangladesh	2007 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Bangladesh	2011 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Bangladesh	2014 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Benin	2001 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benin	2006 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Benin	2011-12 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Benin	2017-18 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bolivia	2003 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Bolivia	2008 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Burkina Faso	2003 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burkina Faso	2010 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burundi	2010 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Burundi	2016-17 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cambodia	2000 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Cambodia	2005 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Cambodia	2010 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cambodia	2014 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cameroon	2004 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Cameroon	2011 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Chad	2004 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Chad	2014-15 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Congo	2005 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Congo	2011-12 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Congo	2007 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Democratic Republic Congo	2013-14 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Democratic Republic Cote d'Ivoire	2005 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Cote d'Ivoire	2011-12 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Dominican Republic	2002 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Dominican	2007 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Republic Dominican Republic	2013 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Egypt	2000 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Egypt	2003 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Egypt	2005 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Egypt	2008 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Egypt	2014 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Ethiopia	2000 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ethiopia	2005 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ethiopia	2011 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ethiopia	2016 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ghana	2003 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ghana	2008 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ghana	2014 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guinea	2005 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Guinea	2012 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guinea	2018 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Guyana	2005 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Guyana	2009 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Haiti	2000 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Haiti	2005-06 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Haiti	2012 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Haiti	2016-17 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Honduras	2005-06 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Honduras	2011-12 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
India	2005-06 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
India	2015-16 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indonesia	2002-03 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indonesia	2007 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indonesia	2012 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Indonesia	2017 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Jordan	2002 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Jordan	2007 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Jordan	2012 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Jordan	2017-18 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Kenya	2003 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kenya	2008-09 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kenya	2014 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lesotho	2004 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lesotho	2009 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lesotho	2014 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liberia	2007 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liberia	2013 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Madagascar	2003-04 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Madagascar	2008-09 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes

Malawi	2000 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malawi	2004 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malawi	2010 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Malawi	2015-16 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maldives	2009 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Maldives	2016-17 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mali	2001 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mali	2006 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mali	2012-13 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mali	2018 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mozambique	2003 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mozambique	2011 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mozambique	2015 AIS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Namibia	2000 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Namibia	2006-07 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Namibia	2013 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes[a]
Nepal	2001 DHS	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nepal	2006 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nepal	2011 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Nepal	2016 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Niger	2006 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Niger	2012 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	2003 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	2008 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	2013 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nigeria	2018 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pakistan	2012-13 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pakistan	2017-18 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Peru	2000 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peru	2004-06 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peru	2007-08 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peru	2009 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peru	2010 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peru	2011 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Peru	2012 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Philippines	2003 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Philippines	2008 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Philippines	2013 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Philippines	2017 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Rwanda	2000 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rwanda	2005 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rwanda	2010 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Rwanda	2014-15 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal	2005 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Senegal	2010-11 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal	2012-13 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Senegal	2014 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal	2015 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal	2016 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Senegal	2017 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sierra Leone	2008 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sierra Leone	2013 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tajikistan	2012 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Tajikistan	2017 DHS	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	2003-04 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	2004-05 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	2007-08 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	2010 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	2011-12 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Tanzania	2015-16 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Timor-Leste	2009-10 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Timor-Leste	2016 DHS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2000-01 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2004-05 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2006 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2009 MIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2011 AIS	No	No	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2011 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Uganda	2016 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zambia	2001-02 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zambia	2007 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zambia	2013-14 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zambia	2018 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zimbabwe	2005-06 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zimbabwe	2010-11 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Zimbabwe	2015 DHS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

[a] Data for men's newspaper use in Namibia 2013 is not used because of a survey coding error in data collection.

(B) Data Sources for the Content Analysis

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Key Informant Interviews

Respondent	*Organization*	*Job Title*	*Date*
Symon Sauzade	Council for Non Governmental Organisations in Malawi	Program Assistant	October 23, 2015
Victor Sindani	Malawi Human Rights Commission	Human Rights Officer	October 23, 2015
Emma Kaliya	Malawi Human Rights Resource Center	Executive Director	October 28, 2015
Joel Kumwenda	Malawi Council of Churches	Programs Officer	October 30, 2015
Lugede Chiphwafu Chiumya	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	Gender Program Officer	October 30, 2015
Jean Mwandira	United Nations Population Fund Malawi	Youth Program Officer	October 30, 2015
Limbani Phiri	Malawi Human Rights Resource Center	Men for Gender Equality Now Program Director	November 5, 2015
Mercy Makhambera	Malawi Human Rights Resource Center	Capacity Development Officer	November 5, 2015
Alfred Seza Munika	Child Rights Advocacy and Paralegal Aid Centre	Executive Director	November 5, 2015
Malango Mwasinga	Malawi Police Force	Victim Support Units Coordinator	November 6, 2015
Limbani Gondwe	Church of Central Africa Presbyterian	Church and Society Program Officer	November 16, 2015
John Mhango	United Nations Population Fund Malawi	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Program Assistant	November 16, 2015
Almas Araru	UN Women Malawi	Violence Against Women and Girls Program Assistant	November 30, 2016

Alice Mkandawire	Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability, and Social Welfare	Chief Gender and Development Officer	November 30, 2016
Grace Kalowa	Malawi Human Rights Commission	Gender Officer	November 30, 2016
Grames Chirwa	Malawi Institute of Education	Curriculum Specialist	December 5, 2016
Panji Harawa	Youth Net and Counseling	Information and Communication Technologies Officer	December 6, 2016
Seodi White	Women and Law in Southern Africa, Malawi	Former National Coordinator	November 22, 2017
Limbani Moya	*The Weekend Times*	Founding Editor	February 14, 2019

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(C) Additional Descriptive Statistics

Tables A2 and A3 provide the correlation matrices for women and men of all quantitative variables included in Models 1-4. Table A4 provides descriptive statistics for alternative measures of media predictor variables, which I use in logistic regression models presented in the later sections of this Appendix.

Table A2. Correlation matrix of variables from Models 1-4 in the main text (women).

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
(1) Rejection	1																
(2) VAW Newspaper Articles	.18	1															
(3) Newspaper Weekly	.02	-.02	1														
(4) VAW Radio Programs[a]	.05	.03	.15	1													
(5) Radio Weekly	.02	-.14	.19	.44	1												
(6) Television Weekly	.06	.10	.28	.13	.21	1											
(7) Education	.04	.04	.35	.23	.20	.31	1										
(8) Urban	.06	.11	.20	.12	.12	.33	.33	1									
(9) Christian	-.02	.04	.06	.05	.04	.05	.16	.02	1								
(10) Working	.05	.07	.10	.11	.07	.16	.17	.22	.03	1							
(11) Wealth	.06	.05	.22	.31	.32	.36	.45	.47	.06	.19	1						
(12) Matrilineal	.06	-.01	-.05	-.01	-.02	-.06	-.13	-.03	-.20	-.03	-.11	1					
(13) Never Married	-.05	.05	.15	-.06	.02	.13	.27	.10	.05	-.09	.13	-.00	1				
(14) Formerly Married	.03	.01	-.04	-.07	-.12	-.04	-.07	-.02	-.01	.11	-.11	.01	-.19	1			
(15) Monogamy	.04	-.03	-.06	.11	.08	-.04	-.09	-.01	.01	.00	.01	.02	-.57	-.44	1		
(16) Polygamy	-.02	-.04	-.06	-.02	-.02	-.07	-.12	-.08	-.08	-.01	-.06	-.05	-.17	-.13	-.39	1	
(17) Age	.07	-.00	-.09	.05	-.02	-.04	-.30	-.04	-.01	.13	-.03	-.01	-.53	.20	.18	.18	1

Note: Statistics are drawn from the 2000, 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Demographic and Health Surveys conducted in Malawi, except for VAW newspaper articles which are derived from my database of newspaper articles.
[a] = Includes data from 2000, 2004, and 2010 Demographic and Health Surveys.

Table A3. Correlation matrix of variables from Models 1-4 in the main text (men).

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
(1) Rejection	1																
(2) VAW Newspaper Articles	.18	1															
(3) Newspaper Weekly	.02	-.02	1														
(4) VAW Radio Programs[a]	.05	.03	.15	1													
(5) Radio Weekly	.02	-.14	.19	.44	1												
(6) Television Weekly	.06	.10	.28	.13	.21	1											
(7) Education	.04	.04	.35	.23	.20	.31	1										
(8) Urban	.06	.11	.20	.12	.12	.33	.33	1									
(9) Christian	-.02	.04	.06	.05	.04	.05	.16	.02	1								
(10) Working	.05	.07	.10	.11	.07	.16	.17	.22	.03	1							
(11) Wealth	.06	.05	.22	.31	.32	.36	.45	.47	.06	.19	1						
(12) Matrilineal	.06	-.01	-.05	-.01	-.02	-.06	-.13	-.03	-.20	-.03	-.11	1					
(13) Never Married	-.05	.05	.15	-.06	.02	.13	.27	.10	.05	-.09	.13	-.00	1				
(14) Formerly Married	.03	.01	-.04	-.07	-.12	-.04	-.07	-.02	-.01	.11	-.11	.01	-.19	1			
(15) Monogamy	.04	-.03	-.06	.11	.08	-.04	-.09	-.01	.01	.00	.01	.02	-.57	-.44	1		
(16) Polygamy	-.02	-.04	-.06	-.02	-.02	-.07	-.12	-.08	-.08	-.01	-.06	-.05	-.17	-.13	-.39	1	
(17) Age	.07	-.00	-.09	.05	-.02	-.04	-.30	-.04	-.01	.13	-.03	-.01	-.53	.20	.18	.18	1

Note: Statistics are drawn from the 2000, 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Demographic and Health Surveys conducted in Malawi, except for VAW newspaper articles which are derived from my database of newspaper articles.
[a] = Includes data from 2000, 2004, and 2010 Demographic and Health Surveys.

Table A4. Descriptive statistics from women's and men's samples for additional media predictor variables.

	Women					Men				
	%	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*	*%*	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*
Additional Media Predictor Variables										
VAW Newspaper Articles										
in the Past Month										
VAW Case Articles		6.64	3.56	0	15		6.88	3.56	0	15
VAW Campaign Articles		6.78	4.67	0	19		6.95	4.69	0	19
in the Past 2 Months		27.35	11.57	4	55		28.13	11.42	4	55
in the Past 3 Months		41.38	16.83	14	74		42.66	16.43	14	74
VAW Radio Programs[a]										
Uchembere Wabwino (Safe Motherhood)	57.64			0	1	74.64			0	1
Phukusi Lamoyo (Bag of Life)	53.45			0	1	75.17			0	1
Umoyo M'Malawi (Health in Malawi)	48.94			0	1	69.64			0	1
Dokotala Wapawailesi (Radio Doctor)	46.63			0	1	69.64			0	1
Newspaper Use[a]										
Not at All	69.28			0	1	49.10			0	1
Less than Weekly	19.20			0	1	26.28			0	1
At Least Weekly	7.88			0	1	16.49			0	1
Almost Every Day	3.64			0	1	8.15			0	1
Radio Use[a]										
Not at All	23.55			0	1	8.17			0	1
Less than Weekly	18.21			0	1	14.61			0	1
At Least Weekly	13.46			0	1	16.01			0	1
Almost Every Day	44.78			0	1	61.21			0	1
Television Use[a]										
Not at All	79.35			0	1	52.82			0	1
Less than Weekly	9.82			0	1	22.84			0	1

At Least Weekly	3.73	0	1	13.55	0	1
Almost Every Day	7.10	0	1	10.78	0	1

Note: Statistics are drawn from the 2000, 2004, and 2010 Demographic and Health Surveys conducted in Malawi, except for VAW newspaper articles which are derived by linking my database of newspaper articles with survey respondents' interview dates.

(D) Replications of Model 1 in Table 2 Using an Interaction Effect or Alternative Measures

Figure A1 stems from a replication of Model 1 in Table 2 in the main text in which I add an interaction effect between the number of VAW newspaper articles and at least weekly newspaper use. I find no evidence of an interaction effect. For women, the probability of rejection of VAW is higher for weekly newspaper readers than for others regardless of the number of VAW newspaper articles. For men, the probability of rejection for weekly newspaper readers is slightly lower than for others until reaching the mean number of VAW newspaper articles, at which point weekly newspaper readers have very slightly higher probabilities of rejection than others. However, these differences among men are subtle and the confidence intervals for these estimates substantially overlap at all values (for this reason, I do not show the confidence intervals in Figure A1).

Table A5 presents three additional replications of Model 1 from the main text that examine whether the observed association between rejection of VAW and VAW newspaper articles in Model 1 is primarily explained by either VAW *campaign* articles or VAW *case* articles. For parsimony, I only list the AMEs for key media predictor variables. The definitions I use to categorize VAW newspaper articles as either *campaigns* and *cases* are described in the Data and Methods section in the main text, and the descriptive statistics for both measures are given in Table A4. The correlation between the number of VAW campaign and case articles is 0.27 for women and 0.24 for men.

Some newspaper articles cover VAW campaigns and discuss specific cases of VAW. In such instances, I categorize the article as a VAW campaign article because it explicitly condemns VAW. This means that all articles that openly share anti-VAW scripts are categorized

as VAW campaign articles, whereas VAW case articles document incidences of VAW and do *not* include any direct condemnations of VAW as a larger social problem.

One reason for dividing up the VAW newspaper articles variable into two categories is the possibility that VAW case articles, especially when they are published in mass, could reinforce the idea that it is common for men to abuse women. Conversely, they may be persuasive because they focus on specific stories of injustice. Given some men's defensive interpretations of gender equality messaging, VAW campaign articles may also be less persuasive among men.

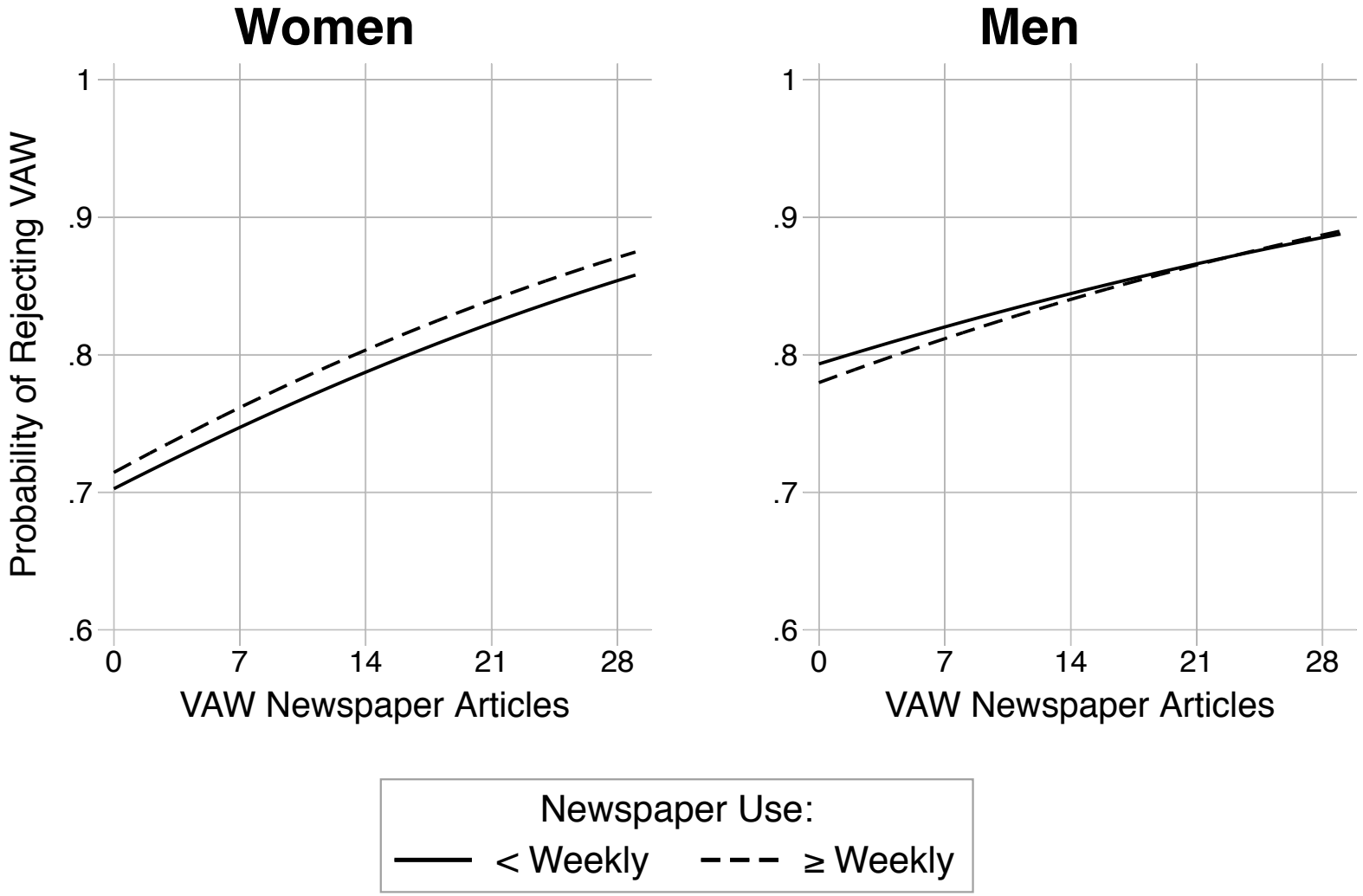
In Table A5, Model 1.1 indicates that each additional VAW campaign article is associated with 0.7 and 0.3 percentage point increases in the probability of rejecting VAW for women and men, respectively. In Model 1.2, the publication of an additional VAW case article is associated with 0.9 percentage point increase in the probability of rejection for women and a similar 0.8 percentage point increase for men. I include both measures in Model 1.3. For women, both types of articles are associated with substantial increases in the probability of rejection. For men, the AMEs for VAW campaign articles is reduced to 0 while VAW case articles are associated with a 0.8 percentage point increase. This result indicates that VAW case articles explain the bulk of the association between VAW newspaper articles and rejection among men as observed in Model 1, whereas for women both VAW case and campaign articles are important factors. Still, VAW campaign articles, when examined on their own, are associated with an increase in the probability of rejection as shown in Model 1.1, so their null result in Model 1.3 should not be interpreted to say that they do not matter for men at all.

I further replicate Model 1.3 and add an interaction effect between VAW campaign and case articles. Figure A3 presents the results. Women's probability of rejecting VAW increases as

more VAW case articles were published in the month prior to their interview date. The slope of this increase is greater among women interviewed when one standard deviation above the mean number of VAW campaign articles was published compared to women interviewed when one standard deviation below the mean number of VAW campaign articles was published. There appears to be no difference among men. The magnitude of the positive slope in men's probability of rejecting VAW associated with VAW case articles does not shift depending on the number of VAW campaign articles. These results imply that discussions about specific cases of VAW are especially important for men's rejection of VAW, whereas women appear to be persuaded both by individual cases and structural explanations about gender inequality that directly denounces VAW as a social problem.

In Table A6, I replicate Model 1 from the main text twice more using alternative measures of VAW newspaper articles. Where I differ in these replications is that I lengthen the temporal window of the publication of VAW newspaper articles from the past month to the past two months and past three months. Descriptive statistics for these additional variables are given in Table A4. When implementing this strategy in Models 1.4 and 1.5, the substantive magnitude and direction of the association between rejection of VAW and VAW newspaper articles remains similar as in Model 1 in the main text.

Figure A1. Probability of rejecting VAW for weekly newspaper users and others by the number of VAW newspaper articles published one month prior to a respondent's survey interview date.



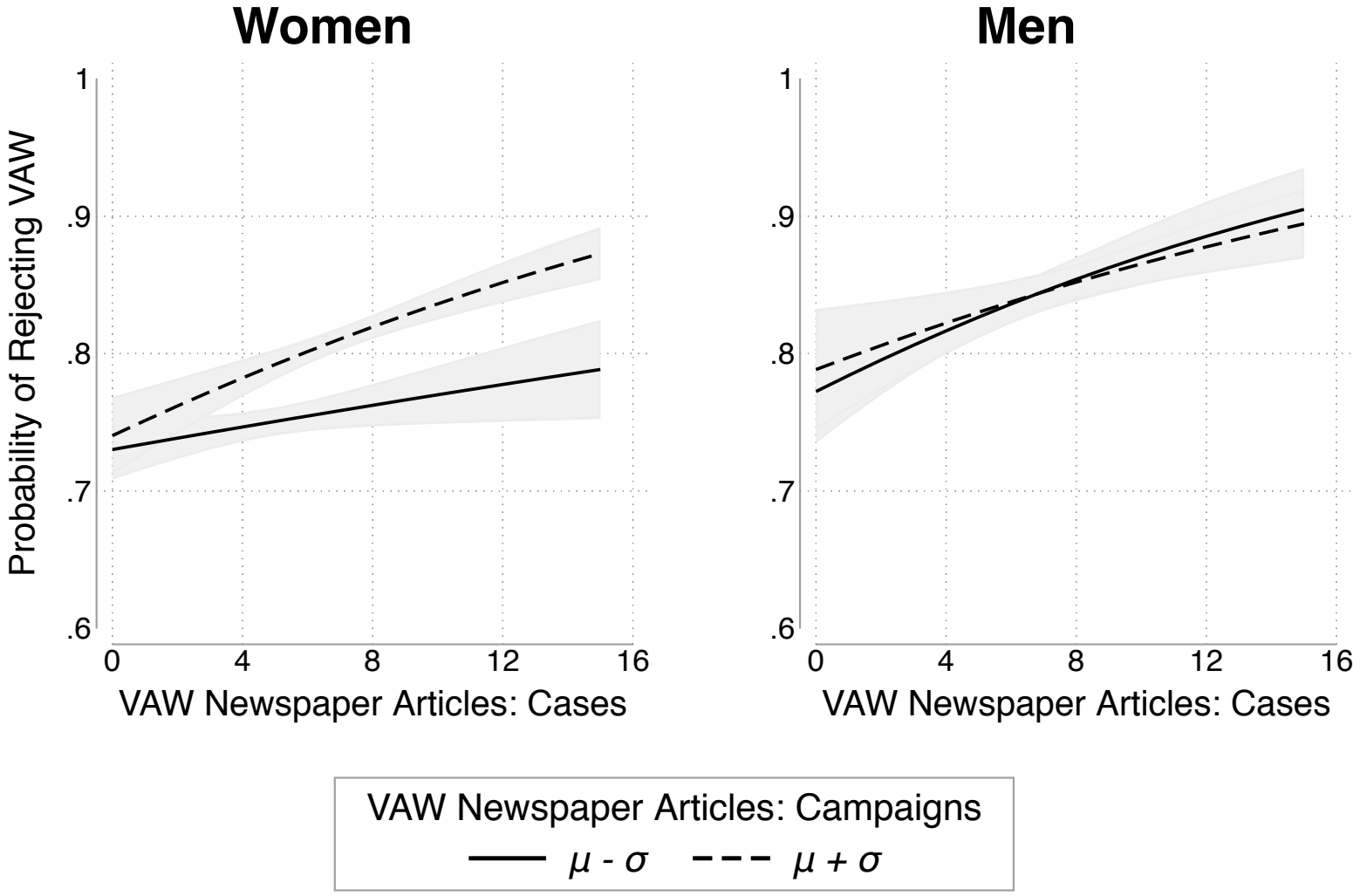
Note: Results obtained from replication of Table 2, Model 1 with an additional interaction between the number of VAW newspaper articles and at least weekly newspaper use. 95 percent confidence intervals are not shown because of substantial overlap between the results for less than weekly and at least weekly newspaper readers.

Table A5. Average marginal effects with 95 percent confidence intervals of VAW newspaper articles and weekly newspaper use from logistic regression models predicting rejection of VAW.

	Model 1.1 2000-2016		Model 1.2 2000-2016		Model 1.3 2000-2016	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
VAW Newspaper Articles in the Past Month						
Campaigns	0.007***	0.003*			0.005***	0.000
	[0.005,0.008]	[0.000,0.005]			[0.003,0.006]	[-0.002,0.003]
Cases Only			0.009***	0.008***	0.007***	0.008***
			[0.007,0.012]	[0.005,0.012]	[0.004,0.010]	[0.004,0.012]
Newspaper Weekly	0.015*	-0.006	0.014*	-0.005	0.015*	-0.005
	[0.001,0.028]	[-0.022,0.011]	[0.001,0.027]	[-0.022,0.012]	[0.002,0.028]	[-0.022,0.012]
Control Variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Respondents (N)	72324	20870	72324	20870	72324	20870

Note: Control variables include education, urban, Christian, working, wealth, matrilineal, marital history (never married, formerly married, currently in a monogamous marriage, or currently in a polygamous marriage), and age.
Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Figure A2. Probability of rejecting VAW by the number of VAW newspaper articles about cases published one month prior to a respondent's survey interview date for those interviewed when one standard deviation below and above the mean number of VAW newspaper articles about campaigns were published.



Note: Results obtained from replication of Table 2, Model 1 with an additional interaction between the number of VAW newspaper articles about cases and campaigns. Shading indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

Table A6. Average marginal effects with 95 percent confidence intervals of VAW newspaper articles and weekly newspaper use from logistic regression models predicting rejection of VAW.

	Model 1.4 2000-2016		Model 1.5 2000-2016	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
VAW Newspaper Articles				
in the Past 2 Months	0.004***	0.003***		
	[0.003,0.004]	[0.002,0.004]		
in the Past 3 Months			0.003***	0.005***
			[0.002,0.004]	[0.003,0.006]
Newspaper Weekly	0.015*	-0.005	0.014*	-0.005
	[0.001,0.028]	[-0.022,0.012]	[0.000,0.027]	[-0.021,0.012]
Control Variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Respondents (N)	72324	20870	72324	20870

Note: Control variables include education, urban, Christian, working, wealth, matrilineal, marital history (never married, formerly married, currently in a monogamous marriage, or currently in a polygamous marriage), and age.
Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

(E) Replications of Model 2 Using Separate Measures

I examine the effects of each of the four VAW radio programs separately, rather than using a single continuous variable of the number of such programs heard, as I do in Model 2 in the main text. Appendix Table A4 contains the descriptive statistics for each of these four measures; listenership ranges from 47 to 58 percent for women and 70 to 75 percent for men. Results in Table A7 show null associations for women and positive associations for men between rejection and having heard these four programs. This is consistent with the results from Model 2. For men, there is not a particular VAW radio program that is especially important, but each has a similar level of association with rejection of VAW.

Table A7. Average marginal effects with 95 percent confidence intervals of VAW radio programs and weekly radio use from logistic regression models predicting rejection of VAW.

	Model 2.1 2000-2010		Model 2.2 2000-2010		Model 2.3 2000-2010		Model 2.4 2000-2010	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
VAW Radio Programs								
Uchembere Wabwino	0.002	0.028**						
(Safe Motherhood)	[-0.009,0.013]	[0.008,0.048]						
Phukusi Lamoyo			0.005	0.026**				
(Bag of Life)			[-0.006,0.016]	[0.007,0.046]				
Umoyo M'Malawi					-0.002	0.020*		
(Health in Malawi)					[-0.012,0.008]	[0.001,0.039]		
Dokotala Wapawailesi							0.000	0.019*
(Radio Doctor)							[-0.010,0.011]	[0.000,0.039]
Radio Weekly	0.021***	0.010	0.020***	0.011	0.022***	0.013	0.021***	0.013
	[0.010,0.031]	[-0.010,0.030]	[0.009,0.030]	[-0.009,0.031]	[0.011,0.032]	[-0.007,0.033]	[0.011,0.032]	[-0.007,0.033]
Control Variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Respondents (N)	47752	13378	47752	13375	47714	13374	47745	13375

Note: Control variables include education, urban, Christian, working, wealth, matrilineal, marital history (never married, formerly married, currently in a monogamous marriage, or currently in a polygamous marriage), and age.
Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

(F) Replications of Models 1-4 Using Categorical Media Use Variables

In the main text, I use binary measures of at least weekly use of newspaper, radio, and television media, as this is standard in much of the literature testing the effects of media use on attitudes toward VAW (e.g. Pierotti 2013). However, it is possible to examine further differences in people's frequency of media use. On the 2000, 2004, and 2010 surveys, respondents were asked: *"Do you listen to the radio almost every day, at least once a week, less often than that, or not at all?"* They were also asked two equivalent questions about whether they watch *"television"* and read a *"newspaper or magazine."* The *"almost every day"* option was not included for these questions in the 2015-16 survey, though.

I therefore draw upon the three surveys between 2000 and 2010 and construct categorical measures of newspaper, radio, and television use with the following options: not at all (reference), less than weekly, at least weekly, and almost every day. Table A4 contains descriptive statistics for these variables. I replicate Models 1-4 in the main text but I substitute in categorical measures of newspaper, radio, and television use and I exclude data from the 2015-16 survey. Table A8 provides the results for these models, which are labeled Models 1A-4A.

In general, the results are quite similar to those presented in the main text, in particular the AMEs for VAW newspaper articles. The percentage points changes in the probability of rejection associated with the various categories of newspaper, radio, or television use are not always linear, in particular for women's television use where at least weekly viewing is associated with a 3 percentage point decrease and almost daily is associated with a 2 percentage point increase in Models 3A and 4A. There are a relatively smaller number of respondents in each of these categories, however. Overall, the results in Table A8 do not shift the substantive conclusions drawn from Table 2, Models 1-4 in the main text.

Table A8. Average marginal effects with 95 percent confidence intervals of media predictor variables from logistic regression models predicting rejection of VAW.

	Model 1A 2000-2010		Model 2A 2000-2010		Model 3A 2000-2010		Model 4A 2000-2010	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
VAW Newspaper	0.003***	0.004**					0.003***	0.004**
Articles	[0.001,0.005]	[0.001,0.007]					[0.001,0.005]	[0.001,0.006]
Newspaper Use								
Not at All (Ref)								
Less than Weekly	-0.013	-0.013					-0.013	-0.017
	[-0.027,0.000]	[-0.034,0.007]					[-0.027,0.001]	[-0.038,0.004]
At Least Weekly	0.010	-0.009					0.007	-0.008
	[-0.010,0.029]	[-0.036,0.018]					[-0.013,0.027]	[-0.035,0.018]
Almost Every Day	0.035**	-0.020					0.028*	-0.016
	[0.010,0.060]	[-0.054,0.015]					[0.003,0.054]	[-0.051,0.019]
VAW Radio Programs			0.001	0.008**				
			[-0.003,0.004]	[0.002,0.015]				
Radio Use								
Not at All (Ref)								
Less than Weekly			-0.024**	0.022			-0.024**	0.026
			[-0.039,-0.010]	[-0.012,0.055]			[-0.039,-0.009]	[-0.008,0.060]
At Least Weekly			-0.010	0.017			-0.009	0.027
			[-0.027,0.007]	[-0.017,0.052]			[-0.025,0.007]	[-0.007,0.061]
Almost Every Day			0.016*	0.025			0.016*	0.039*
			[0.001,0.030]	[-0.009,0.059]			[0.003,0.029]	[0.007,0.070]
Television Use								
Not at All (Ref)								
Less than Weekly					-0.001	0.013	0.001	0.013
					[-0.018,0.015]	[-0.007,0.034]	[-0.016,0.018]	[-0.008,0.033]
At Least Weekly					-0.029*	-0.023	-0.035*	-0.023
					[-0.057,-0.000]	[-0.053,0.007]	[-0.064,-0.006]	[-0.052,0.007]
Almost Every Day					0.024	-0.032	0.016	-0.030
					[-0.000,0.048]	[-0.068,0.004]	[-0.008,0.041]	[-0.067,0.006]
Control Variables	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Respondents (N)	47762	13392	47702	13368	47805	13398	47659	13354

Note: Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

(G) Additional Analyses Using Random Effects for Districts

As an additional analysis, I replicate Models 1-4 in the main text using random effects for district rather than fixed effects. One advantage of the random effects approach is that it provides additional interesting information regarding the percent of the total variation in rejection of VAW that can be explained a respondent's geographic area (West et al. 2015). A downside to this approach for these particular survey data is that the DHS does not report district level selection probabilities due to privacy agreements.[12] West et al. (2015) demonstrate that using individual level weights without also having district level weights inflates standard errors, so in these random effects models I cannot take into account the DHS' complex survey design (primary sampling unit, strata, and individual level probability weights).

As reported in Models 1B-4B in Table A9, the variances of district intercepts in these random effects models show a district effect, with log odds of 0.256-0.262 for women and 0.107-0.120 for men. I also calculate the intra-district correlation coefficients to show that between 7.2-7.4 percent for women and 3.2-3.5 percent for men of the total variation in rejection of VAW is due to an individual's district.

The estimated AMEs from these random effects models are mostly consistent with those from the district fixed effects models reported in the main text, but there are some important differences. VAW newspaper articles maintain their large positive association with rejection of VAW, with the AMEs in Model 1B increasing in size compared to Model 1. The results for VAW radio programs and weekly radio use in Models 2B and 4B are nearly identical to those presented in the main text. The largest differences are for weekly newspaper use and television use. The directions of these relationships are the same as those obtained from the district fixed

[12] See the response to a question about higher-order survey weights in the Demographic and Health Survey User Forum by administrator Dr. Thomas Pullum: https://userforum.dhsprogram.com/index.php?t=msg&goto=15354&S=Google.

effects models, but the AMEs for both covariates decrease in magnitude and are less robust. This is consistent with the view that there are important unobserved district-level factors related to media availability that are not controlled in the random effects approach. Such unobserved factors appear to influence the relationship between rejection and television use in particular and the association between rejection and newspaper use to some extent, while they have little influence on the relationship between rejection and radio use. One possible unobserved district level factor that may play a role, among many others, is the geographic distribution of electricity blackouts. Blackouts are widespread in Malawi, with surveyed business reporting 6.9 blackout incidences per month in 2014 (World Bank 2019; see also NSO 2014; Taulo et al. 2015). Radio use can also be influenced by blackouts, but to a lesser extent because people often use battery-powered radios (e.g. Englund 2011:177).

Table A9. Average marginal effects with 95 percent confidence intervals of media predictor variables from logistic regression models predicting rejection of VAW that include a random effect for districts.

	Model 1B 2000-2016		Model 2B 2000-2010		Model 3B 2000-2016		Model 4B 2000-2016	
	Women	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
VAW Newspaper Articles	0.006*** [0.005,0.006]	0.007*** [0.005,0.009]					0.006*** [0.005,0.006]	0.003*** [0.002,0.004]
Newspaper Weekly	0.010 [-0.000,0.020]	0.000 [-0.013,0.014]					0.008 [-0.002,0.019]	-0.001 [-0.014,0.013]
VAW Radio Programs			0.001 [-0.001,0.004]	0.011*** [0.007,0.016]				
Radio Weekly			0.015*** [0.006,0.024]	0.014 [-0.002,0.029]			0.009** [0.002,0.015]	0.023*** [0.012,0.035]
Television Weekly					0.003 [-0.008,0.014]	-0.010 [-0.024,0.003]	0.000 [-0.011,0.012]	-0.012 [-0.026,0.001]
District Variance (Log Odds)	0.262*** [0.119,0.404]	0.110** [0.044,0.176]	0.255*** [0.115,0.394]	0.120** [0.044,0.197]	0.256*** [0.117,0.395]	0.108** [0.043,0.173]	0.261*** [0.119,0.403]	0.107** [0.043,0.172]
Intra-District Correlation	0.074 [0.044,0.121]	0.032 [0.018,0.057]	0.072 [0.043,0.118]	0.035 [0.0189,0.065]	0.072 [0.043,0.118]	0.032 [0.018,0.056]	0.073 [0.044,0.120]	0.032 [0.018,0.056]
Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District Random Effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
AIC	69104.5	16945.3	47704.6	11443.4	69433.1	16994.2	68991.0	16906.4
BIC	69242.3	17064.5	47827.4	11548.4	69561.7	17105.5	69147.2	17041.4
Districts (N)	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
Respondents (N)	72324	20870	47702	13368	72367	20876	72221	20832

Note: Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

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CHAPTER III

Human Rights Projects, Organizational Forms, and Attitudes About Violence Against Women

Abstract

Transnational organizations spread messages about human rights through the projects they enact. Projects' influence on lay people's declarative attitudes may vary by sub-population and be contingent on projects' organizational forms. I link four national surveys from Malawi with new administrative data on transnational organizations' funding for human rights projects about violence against women. Multilevel logistic regression models indicate that aid disbursed for activist-led projects substantially increased women's probability of stating that they reject violence against women. Aid for bureaucrat-led projects did not have this effect on women and decreased stated rejection among men. These results indicate that transnational organizations do reach and affect lay people's declarative attitudes through the projects they implement, but that the manner in which projects are carried out can lead to unique influences across sub-populations.

Introduction

Human rights messaging is abundant in public culture and circulates across every region of the world. Human rights feature prominently in international law and national constitutions worldwide (Beck et al. 2012). School textbooks and curricula cover the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights and many human rights treaties (Meyer et al. 2010). Media outlets regularly frame stories around the notion of human rights' violations (Powers 2018). Social movement activists make appeals to intergovernmental organizations in the language of human rights, which in turn pressure national governments (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tsutsui 2017). In many ways, human rights are a major touchstone across the various, interconnected cultural models of today's world society (Meyer 2010). Yet, recent years have seen direct challenges to human rights discourse through authoritarianism and growing claims of national sovereignty. Waves of political populism and illiberal movements have rapidly spread across various regions of the world, leading to conflicting trends of the contraction of human rights-informed national policies and laws (Bonikowski 2017; Ferguson 2019; Schofer et al. 2019).

Research regarding the direction and influence of human rights messaging has focused primarily on human rights' legitimacy and practice among national governments (Carothers and O'Donohue 2019; Krücken and Drori 2009). Another key component, however, is understanding the flow of human rights messages among public citizenries (Roberts 2018). Given the widespread prevalence of human rights discourse in various elements of public culture, it is not surprising that surveys find that majorities of lay people in many nations worldwide are, at a minimum, aware and generally supportive of many human rights concepts (for a review, see Ron et al. 2016). This suggests that human rights messages are reaching many lay people worldwide. Following this logic, scholars show positive associations between people's stated attitudinal conformity with various human rights messages and their likely exposure to such messages through several theorized sources of diffusion, including education, urban environments, mass media, and the national presence of international nongovernmental organizations (e.g. Ayoub and Garretson 2017; Boyle et al. 2002; Hadler 2017; Hadler et al. 2012; 2020; Zhou 2013).

Conversely, others demonstrate that people's likely exposure to alternative messaging campaigns opposing certain human rights issues, most notably homosexuality, are negatively associated with their expressed attitudinal conformity to human rights (e.g. Hadler and Symons 2018).

I extend this research on the flow of human rights messages among lay people in two ways. First, I theorize that people's variation in their exposure to particular human rights messages through donor-funded, targeted projects may positively predict their attitudinal conformity to such messages (see Beer 2016; Thornton et al. 2015). Second, I contend that human rights projects' organizational forms shape their ability to reach lay people, and this may vary by sub-population. Career international development bureaucrats staffing transnational organizations' in-country offices generally work in an hierarchical environment that leads project designers to have comparatively less experience communicating with lay people and community leaders than domestic social movements activists (Freeman and Schuller 2020). Activist-led projects are more likely to be designed and carried out in ways that resonate with lay people than bureaucrat-led projects, even though both types of projects may play parts in other social change processes at the national-level (Htun and Weldon 2012; Wilks 2018; see also Reger and Staggenborg 2006). In addition, discriminated groups of people may be more receptive of human rights projects that specifically make statements about structural discrimination because of their personal life course experiences (see Robinson and Bell 1978).

I apply this general framework to human rights projects focused on violence against women (VAW) that were implemented in contemporary Malawi. Lay people in Malawi, like in the vast majority of countries, have increasingly rejected VAW in recent decades (Pierotti 2013). Since the shift toward greater rejection was especially large and swift in Malawi, it is a helpful case to examine whether targeted projects focusing on VAW contributed to this shift in public

attitudes and whether people's variation in exposure to such projects predicts their attitudes. The Malawian case is less generalizable to countries where transnational organizations do not allocate substantial funding to implement human rights projects.

Importantly, foreign-funded efforts to combat VAW in Malawi fit into the classifications of bureaucrat-led and activist-led projects. Bureaucrat-led projects emphasized training community leaders about human rights surrounding VAW, and then relied on these leaders to distil messages to the publics in their communities. Activist-led projects were longstanding awareness campaigns designed by domestic activists that transnational organizations financially supported. The unique administrative data on human rights projects and four national surveys spanning 2004-2016 available for Malawi permits a detailed analysis of the independent influences of bureaucrat-led and activist-led projects on people's attitudes about VAW.

In my analyses, I observe that districts in Malawi that ultimately received more aid for activist-led human rights projects initially had lower percentages of residents that rejected VAW than districts that received the standard amount. This assures that there is not a selection effect. I then find a substantial positive effect of the cumulative amount of aid disbursed for activist-led human rights projects to one's district on people's probability of expressing that they reject VAW, net of known socioeconomic and demographic factors, though the effect is much larger and only robust among women. Conversely, aid for bureaucrat-led human rights projects in a person's district has a negative effect on men's stated rejection of VAW.

These results show that human rights projects are an important medium through which transnational organizations spread human rights messages among lay people, but that projects' influence at the individual-level is not uniform. Human rights projects led by activists are more influential on people's declarative attitudes than projects implemented by international

development bureaucrats. Projects' influence may also vary across different sub-populations, such as gender. Thus, human rights projects' organizational forms and the resonance of their messages among different social groups shapes their influence among publics. Given divergent global trends of human rights expansion among some social groups and rising opposition among others, these findings inform the literature about how human rights projects disseminate cultural messages at the individual-level.

Theoretical Framework: Disseminating Human Rights From Public to Personal Culture

Scholars originally developed institutional theories of cultural diffusion to explain cultural convergence and divergence across all levels of society, including the individual person (e.g. Meyer 1986a; 1986b; see also Jepperson 2002:246-251). However, they often empirically studied transnational cultural diffusion at the country level. Studies on human rights, for example, assessed the worldwide diffusion and relationships between nation-states' ratification of international human rights' treaties, countries' establishment of domestic human rights institutions, and nation-states' respect for human rights in practice (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005; Hafner-Burton et al. 2008; Koo and Ramirez 2009; Wotipka and Tsutsui 2008).

More recently, scholars' attention expanded to include empirical studies of global cultural diffusion at the level of individual people (e.g. Wang and Schofer 2018). This coincided with the emergence of work on "developmental idealism" by Thornton (2005). Thornton et al. (2015) theorize that an ideology about what constitutes development and human rights has been disseminated across not only national governments, corporations, and other organizations, but also populations worldwide. Results from cross-national surveys and internet search data provide empirical support for these assertions (Abbasi-Shavazi et al. 2012; Dorius 2016; Dorius and

Swindle 2019; Kavas and Thornton 2020; Kiss 2017; Melegh et al. 2016; Swindle et al. 2020; Thornton and Yang 2016; Thornton et al. 2014; 2017). Linking data on country characteristics with surveys, scholars conducting multilevel analyses provide extensive evidence that the number of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) or intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) present in a country is positively associated with individuals' support for human rights, environmental conservation, homosexuality, and gender egalitarianism, all of which are aligned with cultural messaging about human rights (for a review, see Hadler 2017).

Beer (2016) notes that count measures of the number of such organizations with members in a country, while a helpful proxy for exposure to various cultural scripts about development and human rights, obscures transnational organizations' specific activities, which can be very diverse. Following this line of thought, I focus on the role of human rights projects as dissemination sources of public cultural discourses positing human rights messages.

The dissemination of cultural messages about development and human rights via transnational organizations often occurs in a top-down manner: officials at transnational organizations' headquarters in Vienna, New York, London, or other global cities often decide which issues they want to focus on and then design global programs for this purpose (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). They communicate with bureaucrats staffing transnational organizations' in-country offices around the world, which in turn work with INGOs and different branches of a country's government to contract domestic NGOs and community-based organizations to conduct specific projects in particular locales (Watkins et al. 2012). Projects are efforts to promote human rights and other cultural messages about development, such as "education is a human right" or "gender discrimination stifles development." People's exposure to these

messages contributes to their formation of declarative knowledge about human rights and development, which in turn contribute to their ideological sentiments along many other factors.

Yet, the flow of information in global cultural diffusion is more complex than a top-down process alone; domestic organizations often raise awareness about specific human rights violations by protesting directly to national governments or by communicating with officials at transnational organizations who in turn pressure national governments (Gallo-Cruz 2017; Tsutsui and Shin 2008; Tsutsui and Smith 2018). These alternative routes are especially common when it comes to human rights messaging: activists in specific locales play an integral role informing leaders at transnational organizations of the types of abuses people confront (Tsutsui 2018).

This theorized flow of information from public cultural sources—human rights projects—to personal cultural manifestations—stated attitudes—is consistent with models of social learning (Bandura 1977). Following current theoretical models of cognitive processing, I theorize attitudes expressed in response to fixed-response surveys as indications of the declarative elements of an individuals' personal culture that are distinct from people's nondeclarative, more automatic elements of their personal culture that govern much of their habitual behaviors (Frye 2017; Lizardo 2017; Mohr et al. 2020; Patterson 2014). However, the declarative aspects of people's personal culture are not direct reproductions of the messages they hear, and their declarative attitudes are often predictive of their subsequent behavior (Glasman and Albarracín 2006). And when personal attitudes do not predict corresponding actions, they nonetheless demonstrate an aspiration to uphold human rights or perceptions that doing so is socially desirable, both of which are evidence of their knowledge of human rights messages (Behrman and Frye 2019:29; Pierotti 2013:261-262; Thornton et al. 2012b:337).

Distinguishing Organizational Forms in Human Rights Projects

Building on these insights, I theorize that the organizational forms human rights projects take as either *bureaucrat-led* or *activist-led* shapes their ability to reach lay people. My emphasis here is on variation in how human rights projects as institutions are "inhabited" (Hallet and Ventresca 2006)—that is, the social interactions and organizational structure of people involved in project implementation (Watkins and Swidler 2013). This includes how human rights messages are adopted for a given context and interpreted by different sub-populations (Jijon 2019; Levitt and Merry 2009). Table 1 summarizes key differences between these two organizational forms of human rights projects, in particular their information sources and comparative strengths.

[Table 1]

Bureaucrat-led human rights projects generally keep project design and implementation "in house." Staff at transnational organizations' in-country offices stays informed of broader global aims through conference calls, emails, and research reports coming from headquarters (Cormier 2018; Kentikelenis and Babb 2019; Kentikelenis and Seabrooke 2017; Zapp 2020). The projects they implement follow standardized, global formats (Beigbeder 1997:52-69; Honig 2018:114).

The background and career aspirations of bureaucrats staffing transnational organizations' country offices also play a role in the way projects are carried out. Many are educated, liberal foreigners from the regions of the world where transnational organizations' headquarters are located. They are overwhelmingly idealistic altruists steeped in developmental idealism, and many seek to report statistics to headquarters that demonstrates their impact (Kallman 2020; Krause 2014; Merry 2016). In-country employees that are domestic in origin are

also highly educated—often abroad—and are generally of a high social status (Hensell 2016). Though national citizens, they sometimes have little experience interacting with the poor and instead harbor discriminatory stereotypes about them and their "harmful cultural practices" (Johnson 2018; Pot 2019b). Staff based outside the office tends to be comparatively less educated and employed on a project-by-project basis (see Terzi and Fall 2014). As "implementarians" (Peters 2020), many seek out these jobs with transnational organizations in large part because they are exceptionally remunerative compared to other possible employment or piecework (Roth 2015). As a result of this hierarchical organizational structure, project aims and ownership in bureaucrat-led human rights projects remains highly centered at the top (Peters 2016). The lack of incentives for implementarians to focus on meaningful social changes, and in-country office staff's drive to provide numerical measures of progress, often leads to worse project implementation or repeated mistakes (Honig 2018; Watkins et al. 2012).

Despite these limitations, bureaucrat-led projects can still be exceptionally powerful. The amount of financial resources disbursed for projects is substantial, and in some cases project staff adapt their projects to match intended project recipients' recommendations and engage in long-term follow up activities (e.g. Salem et al. 2018). Furthermore, many lay people are apt to learn the human rights messages that transnational organizations and their partners promote, which they associate with knowledge, status, wealth, and the good life (Swidler and Watkins 2015).

Another style of human rights projects provides funding directly to existing, active, domestic social movements organizations. While much less common than bureaucrat-led projects, this activist-led strategy is sometimes taken by foreign donors interested in encouraging widespread political change and rights' consciousness (Htun and Weldon 2012). There are many benefits to this strategy.

First, domestic activists are often a part of transnational advocacy networks, where they build solidary and learn a series of common activist strategies of collective organization. This helps them learn the power of sharing personalized stories of abuse with relatable characters and a clear injunctive message, and the importance of building connections with local media (Alvarez 2000; Ball Cooper et al. 2014; c.f. Smith 2002). Second, domestic activists generally have ample experience helping victims of human rights abuses in their country. This gives them knowledge of local government, the police, and cultural practices that in turn help them to effectively vernacularize human rights messages (Merry 2006). Activists' experience also gives them insights into which target communities or social groups they should target, and how to do so persuasively. Relatedly, many activists leading human rights projects astutely work with national and community leaders. Persuading different types of leaders to support their cause is important because it broadly "seeds" (Banerjee et al. 2019) target messages across different sub-populations within communities, including across important religious, educational, and gendered social networks (Cislaghi et al. 2019). This increases the relative legitimacy of the human rights messages and greatly increases their subsequent sharing among lay people. Finally, activists often have personal stories of abuse and discrimination that sustain their desire to help others. Their personal story is also a powerful campaigning tool (Broockman and Falla 2016; Chun et al. 2013; Polletta et al. 2013).

The most difficult challenge to activist-led human rights efforts is inconsistent funding. Activists' lack of training in scientific research methods compared to office bureaucrats, especially in monitoring and evaluation, can lead donors to sour on their projects (Arensman and van Wessel 2018). Activist-led projects can also be ineffective at reaching lay people when project leaders are disconnected from lay people's concerns and human rights abuses. This can

occur over time, as activists become increasingly professionalized or when donors take control over domestic social movements and sanitize them (Tsutsui et al. 2012:383-384). Despite these limitations, I expect that activist-led human rights projects reach lay people and influence their attitudes about human rights issues.

Human Rights Projects Addressing Violence Against Women in Malawi

In empirically testing the role of different forms of human rights projects in shaping people's declarative attitudes, I focus on the human rights issue of violence against women (VAW) in the context of contemporary Malawi. In the past several decades, a transnational social movement emerged calling for the end of VAW (Montoya 2013; Rademacher 2020; Russell et al. 2018). Member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018) donated 131 million dollars in 2016 alone to projects addressing VAW. Activists and organizations leading the movement aim to ensure VAW is outlawed in international treaties and national laws and attempt to build support among lay people that VAW denies victims of their human rights and is harmful for well being and development. Data from the Global Database on Violence against Women lists 981 pieces of national legislation regarding VAW across the world, 722 of which were enacted since 2000 (UN Women 2020). This includes legislation in Malawi, most notably the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act in 2006 that outlawed domestic violence (Kanyongolo and White 2017).

With few exceptions, global attitudes have increasingly shifted toward rejection of VAW (Kurzman et al. 2019). In Malawi, 64 percent of women and 74 percent of men rejected VAW in 2000, and by 2013-14, these rates reached 87 percent of women and 92 percent of men. Rejection slightly decreased in 2015-16 to 84 percent for women and 87 percent for men. These

rejection percentages are markedly higher than neighboring countries despite similar histories. In fact, they are higher than any African nation besides South Africa and, more recently, Mozambique (ICF 2020).

Transnational organizations are very powerful in Malawi; foreign aid accounted for more than a fifth of Malawi's Gross National Income annually in 2016 (World Bank 2018). Jobs with transnational organizations are highly coveted because they offer a lifestyle far different than most Malawians experience (Morfit 2011), as over four-fifths of the population live in rural settings and are engaged in household agriculture (NSO and ICF 2017). Such jobs include consistent salaries and access to an automobile, where salaried work is exceptionally rare and only roughly three percent of households own a car or truck (NSO and ICF 2017).

Because of transnational organizations' immense power in Malawi, it is possible that people's exposure to any projects these organizations implement could influence their declarative attitudes about VAW. However, the topics their projects address and the activities undertaken are exceptionally diverse and thus may not have a unified influence. Research in other settings additionally demonstrates that lay people's attitudes, values, and beliefs across a range of developmental and rights-based messages are connected, but somewhat more loosely than previously theorized (Allendorf and Thornton 2015:256-263). This suggests that exposure to specific cultural messages about a particular topic, such as VAW, may have an especially great influence on people's attitudinal alignment to that message.

Transnational organizations and foreign donors have supported several human rights projects addressing VAW in Malawi, which generally match the organizational forms of bureaucrat-led and activist-led projects. In summarizing these two types of projects, I synthesize

information from various official reports by the national government and transnational organizations, as well as several newspaper articles, which are listed in the Appendix.

Bureaucrat-Led Projects

The UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women direct the bureaucrat-led human rights projects on VAW in Malawi. They started their first projects in 2009 and then increased in earnest in 2012 when UN Women opened a country office in Malawi and UNFPA selected Malawi as one of the sites for two major global initiatives focused on "strengthening Gender Based Violence service delivery programs" (UN Malawi 2015:28-30; see also Joint Oxfam Programme in Malawi 2009; UNFPA 2017; UNFPA and EU 2017; UN Women Malawi 2017:20, 41).

In practice, projects provided "trainings" for community leaders about VAW and established Victim Support Units (VSUs) in order to provide access to justice for victims (MoGCDSW 2014; Nkhoma 2012; UN Women 2019; UN Women Malawi 2013). This strategy built on international trends emphasizing institutional capacity in handling cases of VAW (Booth and Carrington 2012). In Malawi, there were already two VSUs in Kanengo and Lilongwe that were previously built in the early 2000s. They were standalone buildings housed by full-time staff and police officers and featured multiple rooms (Government of Malawi 2015:48; Sabola 2003). Bureaucrat-led projects about VAW claim that they established over 120 VSUs attached to police stations and between 250-400 community VSUs (Kaufulu-Kumwenda 2014:23, 38; UN 2015b:6).

While these total counts of VSUs are impressive, these new VSUs differed dramatically from the originally two VSUs in Malawi. New VSUs at police stations were often open only one to two days a week and were staffed by either police officers or community volunteers that had

attended occasional short trainings lasting a few hours or days (UN Women Malawi 2018:44-49, 128-129). Community VSUs generally were not physical entities. Instead, transnational organizations and the national government counted community VSUs as any community leaders that attended a short-term VAW training hosted by domestic NGOs that transnational organizations' country office staff contracted. The idea was that these community leaders would then return to their communities and lead the charge against VAW (UK DFID 2011). They trained community leaders to record and report some basic descriptive information about each case of partnership conflict they adjudicated between couples in their community (Interviews with government officials at the MoGCDSW). This included items like the complaint, victim and perpetrator background information, whether the case was resolved or referred to other institutions, etcetera. Community leaders then reported this information to administrators of national-level databases maintained by government officials at the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW). In turn, these officials used this information in preparing their national reports and in communication with transnational organizations and international governing bodies like the United Nations' Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

While this strategy provided important data on VAW cases, it was limited in its ability to promote cultural messages criticizing VAW among Malawian citizens for several reasons. First, it relied on community leaders to spread messages condemning VAW to others, rather than trying to reach citizens directly. Second, community leaders generally lacked building space for community VSUs, so they tended to adjudicate disagreements between couples at their own home compound or "under a tree" nearby (Government of Malawi 2015:49). This was the way community leaders had long counseled quarreling couples as well as other social conflicts in

their communities, in which their primary goal has historically been to resolve cases and maintain continuity in their community social structure (Cammack et al. 2009; Eggen 2011). As a result, counseling sessions they hosted focused on reconciliation between couples and not charging abusive men with a crime and referring them to the police (Interviews with government officials at the MoGCDSW). Community leaders are overwhelming men and they are usually older. Many may be especially interested in maintaining existing social structures and, above all else, keeping the peace (Dionne et al. 2013). These challenges may have contributed to community leaders serving more "as marriage counselors rather than focusing on gender-based violence," as noted in project evaluation reports (UK DFID 2011:4; see also Chepuka 2013:267; Munthali et al. 2015:76-80).

Additionally, the trainings offered to community leaders appeared to have little impact. Leaders privately acknowledged their disagreement of trainings' condemnation of practices common in their community, and some of the contracted NGOs leading the trainings had little experience working on VAW (*Nyasa Times*, April 5, 2016; Page 2019; Pot 2019a; Swidler and Watkins 2017:160-161; see also UN Women Malawi 2017:54-55). The timeframe of the trainings was also very limited and NGO-led trainings in Malawi tend to be especially didactic and non-participatory following schooling lecturing practices (Swidler and Watkins 2015). Consistent with this, few people reported abuse they experienced to community VSUs (UN 2015a:8-10; see also Government of Malawi 2015:33, 52; United States Department of State 2014:2).[1]

[1] One evaluation study on adolescent girls in two districts, Balaka and Thyolo, reported that only three percent of those that experience sexual abuse reported the matter at a community VSU (Munthali et al. 2015:79; see also Mueller et al. 2019).

Thus, there are multiple constraints limiting the influence of bureaucrat-led human rights projects addressing VAW in increasing Malawians' expression of rejecting VAW. I expect that these projects did not increase people's stated rejection of VAW.

Activist-Led Projects

Activists led other human rights projects combatting VAW in Malawi. Early Malawian activists became aware of the international *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in the late 1990s (Kanyongolo and White 2017). This global campaign stemmed from Latin American regional feminist meetings in the 1980s, especially efforts by Dominican activists in starting the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, 1981 (Peguero 2005:169). As a transnational advocacy network developed, Malawian Emma Kaliya learned of it and began holding small-scale activities in Malawi during the annual campaign period of November 25th through December 10th as early as 2000, including public marches near Parliament and awareness campaigns in rural areas (*Arise!: A Newsletter of the Network Against Gender Violence*, November-December 2000; Semu-Banda 2003; UN 2004:11, 76; UN 2006:2; FEMNET 2003).

In 2008, the Norwegian Agency for International Development began funding a domestic NGO led by Kaliya, the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC), in order to substantially expand the annual *16 Days* campaign in Malawi (MHRRC 2007; 2013). Kaliya and other campaign leaders drew upon their prior organizing experience and connections to institutional leaders to design and implement a campaign that would resonate with lay people in Malawi. They recruited various types of leaders from the national government, major religions, musicians, law enforcement, and local community leaders to join them on a national bus tour. By design, most of the leaders they recruited were men, as activists viewed having males speak on

the importance of gender equality and condemning VAW would legitimate this message for many people and would hopefully reach men in particular (FEMNET 2009). Organizers were further aware that men might express resentment of projects that focus on women only (see Connell 2005). They further created many slogans for their t-shirts, posters, and other paraphernalia that specifically targeted men and played on themes of masculinity, such as their tagline, "*real* men stop violence: using my strength to prevent violence."

Together, the activists and leaders traveled across rural and urban communities in many areas of Malawi in three large touring buses filled to capacity (about 50-80 seats each) and performed dozens of large, outdoor, public presentations (Chavula 2009). Crowd size at the presentations varied, but usually was under 3,000 people, with a few swelling to nearly 13,000; organizers estimated a total attendance of 180,262 people at presentations during the 2013 campaign (MEGEN 2011; 2012; 2013). At each site, organizers played loud music on concert speakers and performed public dances. People from the surrounding area gathered, and then volunteers performed outdoor dramas and facilitated public dialogue sessions for two to three hours, asking members of the crowd to participate as certain drama characters or to describe their experiences of abuse. Figure 1 comes from the 2012 annual campaign report and shows an example of the presentations held during the *16 Days* campaign.

[Figure 1]

Public dancing and outdoor drama performance have a long history in Malawi (Kalipeni and Kamlongera 1996:63; see also Gilman 2011; Kerr 1996), and they previously were very successful in boosting girls' school enrollment in Malawi during the 1990s (Anzar et al. 2004). People watching the *16 Days* presentations explained that the dramas helped them imagine themselves in the victim's shoes, see how many others in their community agreed with the

messages presented, and learn how to intervene in abusive situations they knew occurred in their community, like a teacher pressuring a young female student for sex (MEGEN 2011:12; see also Bezner Kerr et al. 2019:559-560; Gurman et al. 2014; Smith et al. 2007).

During the presentations, certain volunteers—mostly those that were involved with the national police force—strategically dispersed themselves throughout the audiences. When they noticed someone that appeared to be strongly emotionally affects by the presentation, they approached that person and asked to speak with them away from the crowd. The person would often share their experience being abused and, with the volunteers' support, would file a formal compliant (MEGEN 2011:10). Campaign leaders shared this information with local law enforcement and then followed up by phone in subsequent weeks about whether the perpetrators had been prosecuted (MEGEN 2013:7). Beyond this, activists leading the campaign also recruited community leaders in the places they performed to join their network of VAW advocates, and they in turn often volunteered at police or community VSUs.

Given activists' many efforts to tailor their communication strategies to the Malawian context, I expect that lay people's exposure to these activist-led human rights projects increased their likelihood of rejecting VAW. Women may also be especially or more likely to be influenced by such projects. Riley and Dodson (2016) observe that women in Malawi are generally more receptive to messages condemning gender discrimination, and that men sometimes view projects aimed at gender equality issues as status threats. This is consistent with literature indicating that sub-populations that face discrimination are often more interested, persuaded, and emboldened by messages calling for their equality, or the equality of others (Davis and Robinson 1991). Men also may express resentment of projects that focus on women

only. Still, activists' efforts to recruit male leaders as spokespersons for their campaigns may have overcome these challenges.

Data and Methods

I test the influence of people in Malawi's likely exposure to human rights messages denouncing VAW on their subsequent declarative attitudes about VAW. Specifically, I perform multilevel logistic regression analyses to examine whether the amount of aid disbursed for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects carried out in a person's district before they were surveyed predicts their attitudinal rejection of VAW, controlling for other known predictors. I conduct this analysis separately for women and men. I draw upon four national surveys and administrative data on human rights projects.

A common issue that arises in analyses testing the effects of aid is selectivity. In this case, the question at hand is whether donors sent aid for VAW projects to districts that already had high levels of expressed rejection of VAW. I address this issue before testing the effects of aid on people's attitudes.

Data

Surveys. Four cross-sectional surveys comprise the individual-level data: the 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) and the 2013-14 UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) (Boyle et al. 2017; NSO 2015). DHS and MICS administrators worked together to make sure the surveys could be combined; much of the questionnaires are identical (Hancioglu and Arnold 2013). Each of the four surveys features a two-stage stratified cluster sample design: survey administrators stratified each of the 28 districts in Malawi into urban and rural areas, selected a sample of census enumeration areas within each strata, and then

identified a sample of households within selected census enumeration areas. All women in sampled households between the ages of 15-49 were asked to take the survey. All men ages 15-54 (except 15-49 for the 2013-14 survey) were selected from either one-fourth of households (2004 survey) or one-third of households (2010, 2013-14, and 2015-16 surveys). Individual-level response rates across the surveys were 86 percent or higher. I do not use data from the district of Likoma Island (estimated population of 10,414 in the 2008 census) because data was collected for this district only in the 2015-16 survey.

I create two samples—one for women and one for men. The women's sample combines female respondents from each of the four surveys, which leads to a sample of 83,510. The men's sample pools the 24,756 male respondents from all four surveys. Maintaining separate datasets for men and women allows me to disaggregate my analyses. It also follows the advice given by DHS and MICS administrators. Additionally, men in Malawi and most African countries are more likely than women to state that they reject VAW (Uthman et al. 2010).

Aid for Human Rights Projects. I combine these individual-level survey data with the district-level data on foreign aid-funded human rights projects from the Malawi Aid Management Platform. In 2012, the AidData Center for Development Policy and the Malawi Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MoFEPD) developed the national "Malawi Aid Management Platform." Debates over aid's effects and political pressures to justify aid motivated the collection of project-level data on aid (Weaver 2019).[2] The Malawi Aid Management Platform was the first effort by a national government to track and report as many aid-supported projects carried out in their country as possible, and researchers estimate that in 2012 they collected "approximately 80 percent of all external funding reported to the Malawi

[2] AidData and other organizations have since partnered with many governments around the world to create several other country-specific datasets and Aid Information Management Systems. More information, including a list of such datasets, is available at: https://iatistandard.org/en/using-data/IATI-tools-and-resources/aims/.

Ministry of Finance since 2000" (Peratsakis et al. 2012). Since this initial data collection effort, the Malawi MoFEPD made the database public and has continuously updated it (MoFEPD 2017). The database provides projects' geographic locations, goals, donors, descriptions, and annual funding disbursements. It has provided new insights about the effects, geographic distribution, and types of aid-funded projects (e.g. Berlin et al. 2018; Burrowes et al. 2018; Marty et al. 2017; Nunnenkamp et al. 2016).

In using these data, it is important to be clear about the difference between projects and programs. In the database, a foreign aid-funded project consists of the disbursement of aid to a particular district in a particular year for specific activities. Projects are often a part of larger programs, which consist of a general framework and plan for similar interventions in multiple locations and over many years. For example, a program that provided funding for activities in four districts for three years each would equate to twelve projects and each would be listed separately in the database.

I took several steps to determine which human rights projects in the database: (1) focused on preventing VAW; (2) whether these VAW projects were bureaucrat-led or activist-led; (3) how much money was disbursed to particular districts for both types of VAW projects. In particular, I used the database's information about projects' goals and aims, primary purpose codes, geographic locations, and annual funding disbursements. I also read many of the original reports that coders used to create the Malawi Aid Management Platform, which in turn led me to meet with Malawian administrators at several domestic NGOs, government ministries, and transnational organizations' Malawi country offices. These administrators personally led or were otherwise informed about the specific VAW projects that I identified in the database. I provide

more details about how I classified VAW projects as bureaucrat-led or activist-led in the Appendix.

Despite my efforts to capture all relevant VAW projects and classify them consistently, it is possible that another project related to VAW was missing from the database, or that there were errors in reported disbursement amounts. In addition, district-level funding for VAW projects is not a direct measure of an individual's personal level of exposure to projects featuring messages critical of VAW. Still, these measures are much more geographically and thematically refined than most previous work on the aggregate influence of human rights projects, and recent studies indicate that people often hear about human rights messages from others in their social networks even when they are not directly exposed to the interventions that spread these messages (Arias 2019; Smith et al. 2018; c.f. Wilke et al. 2020).

The top portion of Figure 2 presents the annual amounts of funding disbursed for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects, respectively, between 2004 and 2015. Transnational organizations distributed a total of $10,342,785 for 135 bureaucrat-led VAW projects between 2009-2015, with especially high disbursements in 2012 and 2015. In comparison, they disbursed a total of $6,383,982 to carry out 121 activist-led VAW projects between 2008-2015.

[Figure 2]

The bottom portion of Figure 2 depicts maps showing the geographic distribution of the total amount of aid disbursed for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects between 2004 and 2015. Bureaucrats at transnational organizations implemented VAW projects in nineteen of twenty-seven districts. Donors provided funding for activists to conduct their VAW projects

across all districts; they started by implementing projects across twelve districts from 2008-2011 and then expanded to carry out projects in all districts between 2012-2015.

Measures

Descriptive statistics for all individual-level and district-level variables described below are listed in Tables 2 and 3 respectively. I use the women's and men's sampling weights provided in the DHS and MICS surveys when reporting descriptive statistics for variables from the survey data.

[Table 2]

[Table 3]

Dependent Variables. My individual-level dependent variable for multilevel logistic regression analysis measures Malawians' rejection of the justification that a husband may beat his wife. Respondents were asked, *"Sometimes a husband is annoyed or angered by things that his wife does. In your opinion, is a husband justified in hitting or beating his wife in the following situations: (1) If she goes out without telling him? (2) If she neglects the children? (3) If she argues with him? (4) If she refuses to have sex with him? (5) If the food is not properly cooked?"* 83.1 percent of women and 87.5 percent of men stated that they rejected the justification of physical partner VAW in all five proposed situations. These five questions yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84 for women and 0.78 for men. A single factor principal-component analysis reveals loadings from 0.74-0.81 for women and 0.71-0.74 for men. Based on this, I construct a binary variable for rejection of VAW that identifies respondents that reject all five scenarios, which is standard in the literature (see Pierotti 2013).

Aid for Bureaucrat-Led and Activist-Led Violence Against Women Projects. I create time-varying measures of the cumulative amount of aid (in increments of $100,000 USD)

disbursed to districts for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects, lagged by one year. Cumulative measures of aid are useful because they do not confine the influence of disbursed aid to a single year (Ardnt et al. 2015; Woolcock 2009). This is especially important for projects with intended cultural outcomes, such as the prevention of VAW, which may emerge slowly even years after the original projects are implemented (Heideman 2018; De Koker et al. 2014). I lag these measures by one year to more accurately estimate the effect of aid on stated attitudes (see Clemens et al. 2012). For example, a person interviewed during the 2010 Malawi DHS would be assigned a value depicting the cumulative amounts of aid for each of these two types of VAW projects—bureaucrat-led and activist-led—disbursed up through 2009.[3]

As shown in Table 3, the district-level mean cumulative aid disbursed for bureaucrat-led VAW projects through the year before respondents were personally interviewed was $152,205 with a range of $0 to $1,006,102. 60 percent of the district-years analyzed had assigned values of $0. For activist-led VAW projects, the mean amount was $129,665; values ranged from $0 to $700,039, and 39 percent of the district-years analyzed had received $0.

Controls for Initial District-Level Conditions. Given my interest in understanding the importance of aid for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects on individuals' stated rejection of VAW, I use two additional district-level, time-invariant, control variables related to districts' initial conditions prior to receiving any aid. First, I rely on the 2004 Malawi DHS and calculate the percentage of women in each district that reject VAW. I do the same for men. I then take the district-level averages of these two percentages. By holding constant the district percentage of people that rejected VAW in 2004 in a regression analysis predicting individuals'

[3] Since survey administrators collected the 2013-14 Malawi MICS at the end of 2013 and mostly in 2014, I assign individuals' the cumulative aid disbursements to their district through 2013. The 2015-16 Malawi DHS similarly took place at the end of 2015 and in 2016, so I assign cumulative aid values through 2015.

rejection of VAW, the aid coefficients in the model indicate the influence of VAW projects net of any initial district-level differences in rejection percentages.

Second, I account for the possibility that transnational organizations may have prioritized doing human rights projects in districts that they believed were in greatest need, generally speaking. Alternatively, donors may have unknowingly implemented VAW projects in districts where the percentage of people that rejected VAW was higher, relatively speaking, thereby inflating coefficients for aid effects. Since transnational organizations often focus on increasing economic and educational factors (see Brass 2012), I use the Malawi 2004 DHS to calculate a district-level index of the average level of educational achievement and percentage of non-agricultural employment in 2004. The index measure is based on a scale from 0-100; education and employment contribute equally.

Additional Control Variables. I use several controls for individual-level mechanisms of global cultural diffusion previously identified by other scholars. This includes a continuous measure of individuals' years of education completed (top-coded at thirteen) (e.g. Zhou 2013), and binary measures for urban living (Pierotti 2013) and Christian religious identity (Boyle et al. 2002). Given transnational organizations' strong influence over some media content in Malawi (Harris 2018), I also include several media variables. These include three binary measures for at least weekly newspaper, radio, and television use. I further use a variable gathered by Swindle (2020) that measures the number of newspaper articles that implicitly or explicitly condemn VAW published in the month prior to a respondent's specific day of interview. Articles included in this count measures describe an event of VAW by a man or they otherwise denounce the practice of VAW.

Several additional demographic controls are included that prior studies find as being important predictors of rejection of VAW. I use the household wealth index factor score measures given by the DHS and MICS, which are calculated as quintile position along an index of household asset ownership (Uthman et al. 2009). I rely on ethnographic literature to identify matrilineal ethnicities in Malawi (Ibik 1970) and construct a binary variable for matrilineal ethnicity. Matrilineal ethnic groups are predominant in Malawi and associated with relatively higher levels of women's authority and voice (Johnson 2018; Kuzara 2014). I further use a categorical measure of a person's marital history, with the options of never married (reference group), formerly but not currently married, currently in a monogamous marriage, and currently in a polygamous marriage. Marriage is positively associated with rejection of VAW in many societies across Africa (Hindin 2014), and polygamy is negatively associated with rejection in Malawi (Rani et al. 2004). I include a continuous measure for age, as older age is positively associated with rejection in Malawi and many other African countries (Pierotti 2013), unlike the United States (Copp et al. 2019).

Analytical Strategy

I first ensure whether it is appropriate to conduct regressions on aid effects by evaluating the possibility of geographic selectivity of aid disbursement. Aid coefficients would be inflated if the districts that received aid were already higher on the intended outcome on average. I accordingly use two ordinary least squares regression models analyzing the relationship between districts' initial conditions in 2004 on the cumulative amount of aid for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects that each district subsequently received. While these selectivity analyses are not exhaustive, they are an important introductory step before moving on to assess the effects of exposure to human rights messages about VAW.

I then carry out two logistic regression models, one using the women's sample and one using the men's sample, predicting the influence of bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects on individuals' stated rejection of VAW, including all control variables. Following Long and Mustillo (2018), I convert log-odds coefficients from these models to average marginal effects (AMEs) while keeping all other predictors at their actual values for each observation. This allows me to accurately compare coefficients within and across models (see also Allison 1999; Breen et al. 2018; Mood 2010). I also provide 95 percent confidence intervals for each coefficient. I mean-center all continuous control variables.

With respect to model design, I use fixed effects for survey years to account for temporal changes in Malawi, including the rising rejection of VAW over time. District-level differences are also important to consider given the violent colonial formation of Malawi that cut across the settlement patterns of many different ethnic groups. European colonization and Islamic trade routes also impacted parts of the country differently than others, including with respect to gender relations (Kudo 2017; Sicard 2000). I therefore employ district random effects, which allow for district-level differences while including important district-level covariates that are not time-varying, namely the district percentage rejecting VAW in 2004 and the district education-employment index in 2004. Though I use the individual-level survey weights provided by DHS and MICS program administrators when calculating descriptive statistics, I do not use them in multilevel models. West et al. (2015) demonstrate that using individual-level weights without also having district-level weights inflates standard errors, and neither the DHS nor the MICS report district-level selection probabilities due to privacy agreements.

In my presentation of these results, I focus primarily on the coefficients for aid for bureaucrat-led and activist-led VAW projects, which I interpret as the influence of likely

exposure to human rights messages denouncing VAW on a person's subsequent declarative attitudes about VAW. This interpretation is buttressed by the fact that I measure the cumulative amount of aid disbursed in the years prior to respondents' interview dates.

Analysis

Selectivity Assessment

Before analyzing the effects of aid, I check for selectivity in the geographic distribution of aid. Two ordinary least squares regressions at the district-level (n=27) test for such problems. The first model predicts the cumulative aid ($100K) disbursed to districts through 2015 for bureaucrat-led VAW projects. The first covariate, the district percentage of people rejecting VAW in 2004, is associated with a -0.073 decrease in such aid, but this coefficient is not statistically significant (CI=-0.202, 0.056). The estimate for the second covariate, the district education-employment index in 2004, is more robust and associated with a -0.651 decrease (CI=-1.302, -0.000). These estimates indicate that transnational organizations did not fund bureaucrat-led VAW projects in districts where people were more likely to reject VAW or to enjoy high levels of education and employment, rather they seemed to favor places with the opposite attributes. This means that any selectivity in districts' initial conditions will not bias estimated coefficients of aid on attitudes in a positive direction.

In the second model, I switch the outcome variable to the cumulative aid ($100K) disbursed to districts through 2015 for activist-led VAW projects. The district percentage of people rejecting VAW in 2004 is similarly associated with a statistically insignificant -0.038 decrease (CI=-0.114, 0.039) in aid for this type of projects. The coefficient for the district education-employment index in 2004 is a statistically insignificant 0.093 (CI=-0.292, 0.477).

Again, selectivity does not appear to be a significant problem. In addition, I control for the 2004 measures of the district percentage of people rejecting VAW and the education-employment index in my predictions of subsequent attitudes.

The Effects of Exposure to Violence Against Women Projects

Table 4 presents the results from multilevel logistic regression models predicting stated rejection of VAW. Beginning with the women's sample, each additional $100,000 US dollars for bureaucrat-led VAW projects is associated with a 0.001 increase in the AMEs for women and a 0.004 decrease in the AMEs for men in rejection of VAW. In other words, each $100,000 district-level aid disbursement for bureaucrat-led VAW projects is associated with a subsequent 0.1 percentage point increase in women's rejection of VAW and a 0.4 percentage point decrease in men's rejection. The result for women is consistent with my hypothesis of bureaucrat-led projects not shaping their attitudes, but the negative result for men is unexpected and striking, especially considering that the lower and upper bounds of the confidence intervals are both negative. Moving to the AME for aid for activist-led VAW projects, $100,000 of such aid is associated with a substantial and robust 1 percentage point increase in rejection of VAW for women as well as a comparatively weaker 0.2 percentage point increase in rejection for men.

[Table 4]

To better interpret these relationships given that the predictor variables are continuous, I derive the predicted probabilities of rejection of VAW across differing amounts of aid per person, which I provide in Figure 3. Among women, there is a flat slope in the predicted probability of women rejecting VAW across increasing values of aid disbursed for bureaucrat-led projects. However, women's probability of rejection increases from 81 to 88 percent across the full range of values of aid disbursed for activist-led VAW projects. This increase suggests

that the tactic activists employed—tailoring their human rights messaging to the everyday realities of lay people, leveraging the status of important leaders to publically proclaim their messages, and recruiting large public audiences—were successful at influencing women's declarative attitudes, but it does not clarify which of these strategies were most effective. These results match my theoretical framework depicting the advantages of activist-led VAW projects compared to bureaucrat-led projects.

[Figure 3]

The findings for men depict different trends. Men's probability of rejecting VAW shifts from 88 percent when their district receives no aid for bureaucrat-led VAW projects to 84 percent when they receive the maximum amount. The magnitude of the decline is sizable and robust, but not exceptionally large. The result implies that VAW projects led by bureaucrats influenced men's attitudes in the opposite direction than intended. Literature discussing Malawian men's resentment of challenges to their status position is one possible explanation for this negative effect (Riley and Dodson 2016; see also Adolfsson and Madsen 2020). In addition, bureaucrat-led projects' reliance on mostly male community leaders likely played an important role in the negative effect of aid for such projects on men's stated rejection of VAW.

Aid for activist-led VAW projects, though, slightly increases men's probability of rejecting VAW from 87 to 89 percent across the range of disbursement amounts. Activists may have mitigated men's potential feelings of resentment by specifically recruiting male leaders to join the *16 Days* campaign tours and lead additional awareness activities. Though their efforts were not as influential among men as they were among women, this small positive association is an improvement to the negative effect attributed to aid for bureaucrat-led projects.

To grasp the magnitude of these observed effects, I compare them to the observed associations between rejection of VAW and other theorized sources of exposure to cultural messages about human rights. I use the regression results to calculate the predicted probabilities of rejecting VAW across different values of several predictors.

I begin with comparisons based on the results for women. The probability of rejecting VAW for women with no education is 83 percent, whereas it is 92 percent for women with post-secondary education. This increase of nine percentage points from a full education is slightly larger than the 7 percentage point increase observed from the reception of the maximum amount of aid for activist-led VAW projects. Women in rural areas have an 82 percent chance of rejecting VAW compared to urban women's 85 percent chance, a more subtle increase that matches the amount attributable to about a $300,000 investment in activist-led VAW projects. Most notably, the probability of rejection increased from 75 percent for women interviewed when only one VAW newspaper article was published in the thirty days prior to their interview to 90 percent for those interviewed when 29 VAW articles had been published. This effect, consistent with Swindle's findings (2020), is substantially larger than the effect attributable to human rights projects.

Several other potential sources of exposure to human rights messages—such as Christian religious identification and at least weekly radio use—are positively associated with rejection, but the magnitude of their association is small. The relationship between rejection and weekly newspaper use is null, and weekly television use is negatively associated with rejection though not statistically significant, as alternative messages containing negative gender stereotypes are circulated through this type of media in Malawi (Swindle 2020). Overall, various sources of cultural diffusion are positively associated with women's rejection of VAW in Malawi.

Education and the publication of VAW newspaper articles are especially powerful. The effects of activist-led VAW projects are roughly comparable to these two diffusion sources, though the metrics are unique (aid funding, years of schooling, and newspaper articles).

The results for these variables for men are generally similar, but reduced in size. None of the coefficients are negative besides weekly television use, indicating that bureaucrat-led VAW projects may uniquely lead to some resentment among men or otherwise be counterproductive.

Save a few exceptions, the other covariates in the models presented in Table 4 are all positively associated with rejection of VAW. A few feature lower bound confidence intervals that extend into negative values, including being formerly married or currently in a polygamous relationship compared to never being married for men. Overall, the results for control variables confirm prior scholarship. They also contribute to the literature by establishing a positive relationship between matrilineal lineage and rejection of VAW.

As a robustness check on my results, I replicate the models using alternative measures of my district-level variables, top-coded at their 95th percentile to account for their right-skewed distributions. These results are very similar and I report them in the Appendix. Finally, I also use models with either aid for bureaucrat-led or activist-led VAW projects included in the model but not both. These results are nearly identical.

Discussion and Conclusion

Motivated by research theorizing the flow of human rights messages across publics worldwide, I address the role of transnational organizations' human rights projects in spreading such messages. I investigate the relationship between human rights projects and lay people's attitudes, focusing on the human rights issue of VAW in the context of Malawi. By pairing

uniquely detailed administrative data on aid disbursements for such projects with national surveys, I make two primary contributions.

First, the influence of transnational organizations is not limited to national governments' laws and policies, international corporations' social responsibility plans, or other macro-level rhetoric and practice. As theorized by scholars describing the reach of developmental idealism or efforts to construct a world society (e.g. Meyer 2010; Thornton 2005), human rights messages are disseminated among ordinary people and influence their declarative attitudes. I show that transnational organizations financially support targeted projects in specific locales as one of many means to spread human rights messages to individual citizens.

Second, human rights projects' individual-level influence varies by organizational form and across sub-populations. Programs that are designed at transnational organizations' headquarters and then implemented through standardized projects by career international development bureaucrats working at country offices are generally different than activist-led projects in which transnational organizations provide financial assistance. All audiences are not alike: sub-populations approach human rights issues from different backgrounds, given unique challenges they face or privileges they enjoy within their community, country, and the world at large. The influence of human rights projects may vary across many social categorizations, such as sexual identity, race, ethnicity, caste, and social class (Earl 2019).

In Malawi, aid for activist-led VAW projects had a strong effect on women's stated rejection of VAW. These projects benefitted from activists' understanding of lay people's concerns, their knowledge about what types of messaging strategies would be helpful in their context, and their connections to national and community leaders that could serve as advocates for change. In contrast, bureaucrat-led VAW projects were not successful at increasing

Malawians' stated rejection of VAW and in fact had a negative effect on men's rejection. One possible contributing factor to the failure of bureaucrat-led projects was their prioritization of increasing the counts of VSUs established and community leaders that received trainings over focusing on reaching as many people as possible. Regarding the negative effect of such projects on men, it may be that bureaucrat-led projects' reliance on community leaders that were mostly older males with an interest in maintaining the status quo reinforced norms of male dominance. This result is especially notable given that other sources of personal exposure to human rights messages that promoted gender equality and denounced VAW, such as education and urban living, were positively associated with men's stated rejection of VAW.

Still, this does not mean that bureaucrat-led projects are necessarily fruitless. While bureaucrats' efforts to train community leaders and establish VSUs were not successful at positively influencing people's rejection of VAW, these bureaucrats still brought substantial domestic and international attention among policymakers in Malawi to the issue of VAW. Their high status and connections to policymakers likely played a role in the passing of several new pieces of legislation that further protected people from aspects of gender discrimination, such as the Gender Equality Act in 2013, Trafficking in Persons Act in 2015, and the Marriage, Divorce, and Family Relations Act in 2015.[4] Future research could draw from the social movements literature and examine the differential influence of bureaucrats' versus activists' efforts over the long term on national legislation, legal enforcement, and other institutional outcomes besides citizens' attitudes (Reger and Staggenborg 2006; Staggenborg 1988).

The findings from my study raise additional questions for future research and have implications for research on VAW, human rights, transnational organizations, and global cultural

[4] Markowitz and Tice (2002) point out gender violence activists' common dilemma of gaining state legitimacy and access through professionalization, while sacrificing autonomy and having to water down their claims.

diffusion. First, distinguishing between the organizational forms of transnational organizations' projects can help adjudicate when their messaging campaigns do and do not affect lay people. This principle may be useful generally given conflicting findings in the literature, as many studies link INGOs to individual-level attitudinal conformity to certain human rights (e.g. Pandian 2018), but some studies find null effects (e.g. Charles 2019). Discrepancies in effects due to differences in project implementation could be a key source of varied outcomes (see Cooper et al. 2020). Understanding aggregate level trends and the particularities of project design are both crucial, but classifying generalized organizational forms allows researchers to analyze the cumulative influence of multiple projects at once without assuming equivalency across all projects that transnational organizations implement or in their persuasive appeal across sub-populations.

My findings about the flow of human rights messages at the level of ordinary people highlight potential direction for future research regarding whether public opinion shapes governments' responses to international pressure to adhere with human rights treaties. The macro-micro link between governments and citizens—do individuals pressure governments to conform to their ideas or do governments promote an ideology that individuals subsequently follow—merits further attention given rising global challenges to human rights (Ayoub and Page 2019). Moreover, competing transnational networks disseminate alternative cultural messages about human rights through information campaigns, such as rising public declarations that universities and schools stifle free speech (Schofer et al. 2020). The same opportunities that I identify in this study—tracking funding for projects to promote a given human rights message—apply to the study of cultural diffusion regardless of the campaign actors, be they powerful

organizations like the World Bank or illiberal international networks (Schneiker 2019; Velasco 2020).

Does human rights projects' influence extend beyond people's declarative attitudes to also shape women's experience of intimate partner violence? Some recent experimental studies on "training" programs about gender violence lasting several months provide mixed evidence that they do (e.g. Abramsky et al. 2014) and do not (e.g. Vaillant et al. 2020). The organizational form and particularities of projects' design may be a key distinguishing factor (Cooper et al. 2020). If women exposed to activist-led projects are less likely to justify VAW, will they then be more likely to report abuses they experience or to divorce their abusers? Does men's increased justification of VAW when exposed to bureaucrat-led VAW projects also translate to them being more abusive to their female intimate partners?

Besides answering such questions with additional experiments, future research could use the supplementary domestic violence module asked of a sub-sample of women in the DHS. Research in this space, however, must approach questions from this module because they ask women's to retrospectively describe their experiences being abused, which may be different than their actual life experiences (Blair et al. *forthcoming*; Danese 2020; Yount et al. 2011). Like stated attitudes, self-reports of abuse are elements of a person's declarative personal culture. As women are exposed to human rights messages, the way they remember and define certain life experiences can change, as can their understanding of what it means to be a "victim" (Boyle and Rogers 2020; Khan et al 2018). For instance, an abused woman exposed to human rights messages may be more likely to report being abused when asked on a survey than another abused woman that was not exposed to such messaging (see Baldwin et al. 2019; Widom 2019). In this way, message exposure would predict an increase in self-reports of experiencing violence (Bulte

and Lensink 2019). Conversely, if two men physically abuse their female partners and then one of these men is exposed to messages stating that VAW is a violation of human rights, then that man may be less likely to continue to engage in such violence, at least in theory. It will take creative uses of the questions asked in the DHS domestic violence module, or in other surveys, to sort between exposure to human rights projects' simultaneous contribution to an increase in self-reports of experiencing violence on the one hand while potentially leading to a decrease in violent acts on the other.

This paper demonstrates the important role of human rights projects in spreading cultural messages to citizens. The organizational forms these projects take is critical to their ability to accomplish their intended outcomes; projects that activists with requisite knowledge and experience led, designed, and carried out positively influenced Malawian women's likelihood of rejecting VAW whereas projects that sustained male community leaders responsibility to resolve conflict decreased men's rejection of VAW. Overall, these findings indicate that transnational organizations' messaging campaigns are powerful tools for cultural diffusion, but that the way campaigns are implemented shapes who they influence and to what extent.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Key differences between bureaucrat-led and activist-led human rights projects.a

	Bureaucrat-Led Projects	Activist-Led Projects
Information Sources	Transnational organizations' reports and domestic elites' stereotypes of rural citizens	Personal discrimination, transnational advocacy networks, and prior activism
Comparative Strengths	Strong influence over national government and relatively secure financial resources	Understanding of persuasive tactics, social institutions, and citizens' everyday lives

Table 2. Descriptive statistics from women's and men's samples for all individual-level variables, 2004-2016.

	Women (n = 83,510)					Men (n = 24,756)				
	%	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*	*%*	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*
Individual-Level Variables										
Rejection of VAW	83.1			0	1	87.5			0	1
Education		5.5	3.7	0	13		6.7	3.7	0	13
Urban	17.8			0	1	19.7			0	1
Christian	85.0			0	1	84.1			0	1
Newspaper Weekly	10.5			0	1	20.8			0	1
Radio Weekly	46.9			0	1	67.0			0	1
Television Weekly	12.8			0	1	24.6			0	1
VAW Newspaper Articles		13.7	6.3	1	29		13.9	6.3	1	29
Household Wealth		2.1	1.4	0	5		2.2	1.4	0	5
Matrilineal	77.3			0	1	77.7			0	1
Marital History										
Never Married	19.8			0	1	37.6			0	1
Formerly Married	13.0			0	1	3.5			0	1
Currently Married: Monogamy	57.6			0	1	53.9			0	1
Currently Married: Polygamy	9.4			0	1	4.9			0	1
Age		28.1	9.2	15	49		28.7	10.3	15	54

Note: Data are from the 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Malawi DHS and the 2013-14 Malawi MICS.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for all district-level variables, 2004-2016.

	Mean	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*	*District-Years (n)*
District-Level Variables					
Cumulative Aid ($100K) through 2015:					
Bureaucrat-Led VAW Projects	3.8	3.6	0	10.1	27
Activist-Led VAW Projects	2.4	2	0.4	7	27
Cumulative Aid ($100K) (Time-Varying):					
Bureaucrat-Led VAW Projects	1.5	2.6	0	10.1	108
Activist-Led VAW Projects	1.3	1.7	0.4	7	108
Percentage Rejecting VAW in 2004	73.7	10.6	57.3	92.9	27
Education-Employment Index in 2004	32.3	21	5.3	100	27

Note: Data are from the 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Malawi DHS, the 2013-14 Malawi MICS, and the Malawi Aid Management Platform.

Table 4. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from multilevel logistic regression models predicting rejection of violence against women.

Sample:	Women	Men
Dependent Variable:	*Rejection of VAW*	*Rejection of VAW*
District-Level Variables		
Cumulative Aid ($100K) (Time-Varying):		
Bureaucrat-Led VAW Projects	0.001	-0.004***
	[-0.000,0.003]	[-0.007,-0.002]
Activist-Led VAW Projects	0.010***	0.002
	[0.007,0.013]	[-0.002,0.006]
Percentage Rejecting VAW in 2004	0.005***	0.002***
	[0.003,0.006]	[0.001,0.003]
Education-Employment Index in 2004	0.001	-0.003
	[-0.061,0.078]	[-0.008,0.001]
Individual-Level Variables		
Education	0.009***	0.006***
	[0.008,0.010]	[0.005,0.008]
Urban	0.028***	0.018**
	[0.019,0.037]	[0.004,0.031]
Christian	0.006	0.011
	[-0.003,0.016]	[-0.002,0.024]
Newspaper Weekly	0.000	0.001
	[-0.009,0.009]	[-0.011,0.012]
Radio Weekly	0.006*	0.008
	[0.001,0.012]	[-0.002,0.017]
Television Weekly	-0.002	-0.005
	[-0.011,0.008]	[-0.016,0.005]
VAW Newspaper Articles	0.005***	0.002***
	[0.005,0.006]	[0.001,0.003]
Wealth	0.007***	0.005**
	[0.005,0.009]	[0.002,0.009]
Matrilineal	0.013**	0.021***
	[0.004,0.021]	[0.009,0.034]
Marital History (Ref.=Never Married)		
Formerly Married	0.037***	0.019
	[0.026,0.048]	[-0.007,0.045]
Currently Married: Monogamy	0.036***	0.058***
	[0.028,0.044]	[0.045,0.071]
Currently Married: Polygamy	0.020***	0.020
	[0.008,0.031]	[-0.004,0.045]
Age	0.003***	0.003***
	[0.003,0.004]	[0.003,0.004]

Model Effects and Statistics		
Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
District Random Effect	Yes	Yes
District Variance (Log Odds)	0.077***	0.039**
	[0.034,0.121]	[0.011,0.067]
Intra-District Correlation	0.023	0.012
	[0.013,0.040]	[0.006,0.024]
AIC	70561.2	17121.0
BIC	70747.6	17283.0
Districts (n)	27	27
Respondents (n)	82396	24409

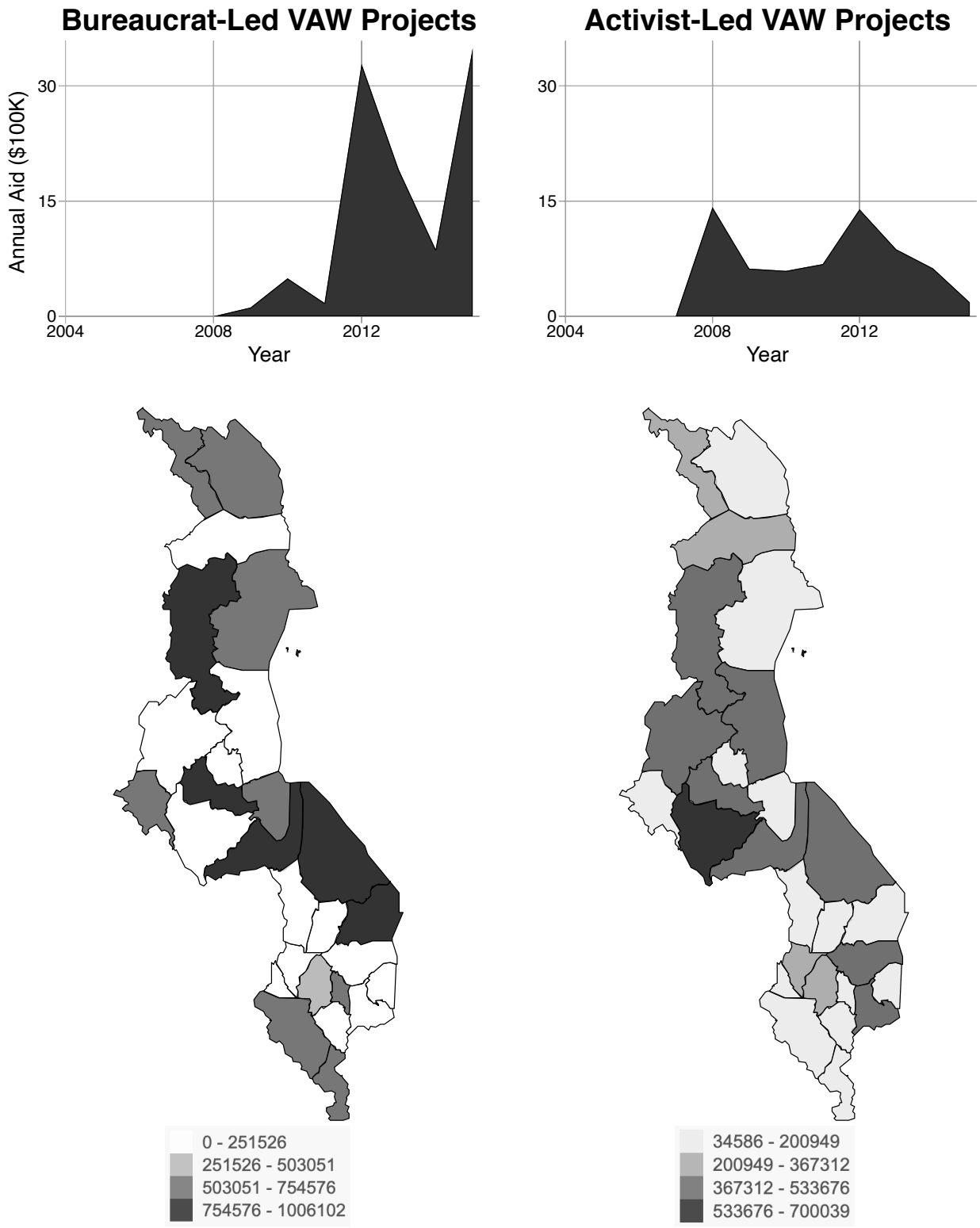
Note: Data are from the 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Malawi DHS, the 2013-14 Malawi MICS, and the Malawi Aid Management Platform. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Figure 1. Pictures from the final report of the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in 2011 (MEGEN 2011).

Well patronised shows

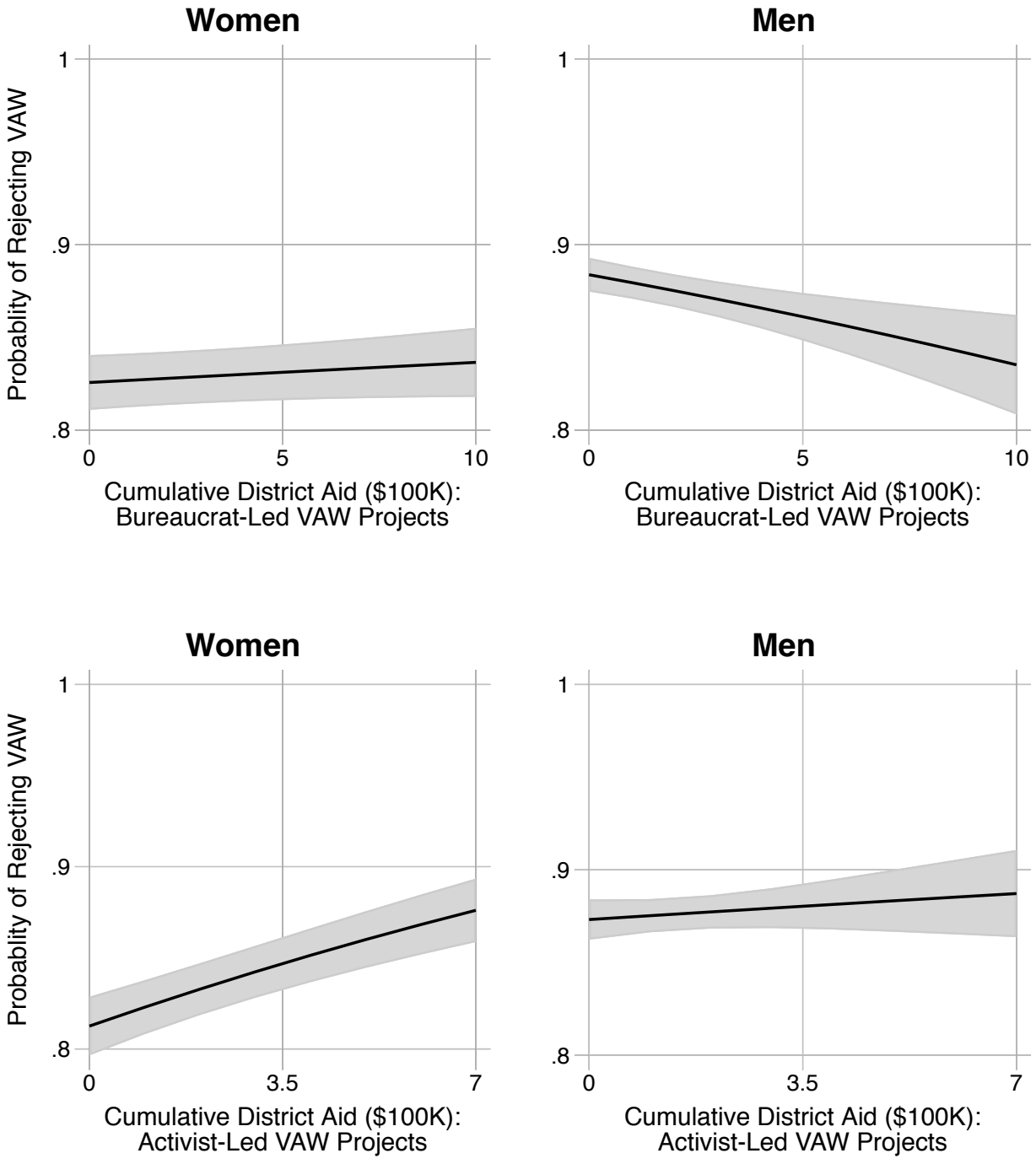
Police Performing Theatre in action

Figure 2. Aid for bureaucrat-led and activist-led violence against women projects in Malawi: temporal trends (2004-2015) and geographic distribution.



Note: Data are from the Malawi Aid Management Platform.

Figure 3. Probability of rejecting violence against women by cumulative district aid ($100K) for bureaucrat-led and activist-led violence against women projects.



Note: Data are from 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Malawi DHS, 2013-14 Malawi MICS, and Malawi Aid Management Platform. I derive the predicted probabilities of rejecting violence against women from the results in Table 4. Error shading indicates 95 percent confidence intervals.

Appendix

Categorizing Human Rights Projects About Violence Against Women

My strategy to categorize foreign aid-supported human rights projects related to violence against women (VAW) in Malawi was as follows. To begin, I identified projects whose primary purpose code in the database was "gender," or in their project description contained the terms *abuse, violence, GBV, IPV, VAC,* or *VAW*. I do not search for appearances of *gender-based violence* and instead only search for its common acronym of *GBV*. My searches for the generic term *violence* already capture appearances of *gender-based violence*. This reasoning holds for the other acronyms for *intimate partner violence (IPV), violence against children (VAC),* and *violence against women (VAW)*. I then analyzed the reports accompanying these projects that coders originally used to construct the database, as provided by staff at the AidData Center for Development Policy.

I further gathered information by: (1) reading additional Malawi government reports that discussed gender equality efforts, such as reports to CEDAW and the Malawi Growth and Development Plans; (2) conducting internet search queries of project titles, donor names, and geographic locations; (3) searching the database of 1,979 newspaper articles about VAW published between 2000 and 2016 in Malawi's two most popular newspapers that Swindle (2020) collected for articles that discussed these projects, which I then read. Several of the primary reports and newspaper articles I consulted are cited in the main text and listed in the sub-section of the Appendix titled "Official Reports and Newspaper Articles."

Finally, I met with several leaders in Malawi at important domestic NGOs, government ministries, or country offices of transnational organizations that were personally involved or

informed about VAW projects, including Child Rights Advocacy and Paralegal Aid Centre, Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Council for Non Governmental Organisations in Malawi, Malawi Council of Churches, Malawi Human Rights Commission, MHRRC, Malawi Institute of Education, Malawi MoGCDSW, Malawi Police Force, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, UNFPA Malawi, UN Women Malawi, Women and Law in Southern Africa—Malawi, and YONECO. Through these steps, I clarified which projects explicitly aimed to change people's attitudes about VAW and prevent VAW, and among those projects, which were bureaucrat-led, and which were activist-led.

I also identified four national-level programs projects that discussed VAW in their goals and aims but in practice did not address VAW. Or, if they did, it was limited to providing victims with economic, political, or educational opportunities and resources rather than focusing on VAW prevention (Government of Malawi 2014; Munthali et al. 2015; UK DFID 2011; US Embassy in Malawi 2017). For example, the largest of these projects was originally pitched in its grant proposal as increasing the ability of VAW victims to have their cases heard in front of judges, but the project mostly ended up focusing on more preliminary support for the judicial branch of Malawi's government more broadly (UK DFID 2016). While the potential effects of these programs are diverse, recent experimental research in other contexts suggests that activities to help victims are less likely to directly influence people's attitudes about VAW than campaigns aiming to prevent VAW or to change social norms (Green et al. 2015; Mueller et al. 2019; Roy et al. 2019). I therefore concentrate on bureaucrat-led and activist-led projects that addressed VAW prevention.

Official Reports and Newspaper Articles

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Table B1. Correlation matrix for all variables included in the multilevel logistic regression model for the sample of female respondents as reported in Table 4 in the main text.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
(1) Rejection of VAW	1																		
District-Level Variables																			
Cumulative Aid ($100K) (Time-Varying):																			
(2) Bureaucrat-Led VAW Projects	.00	1																	
(3) Activist-Led VAW Projects	.04	.29	1																
(4) Percentage Rejecting VAW in 2004	.10	-.10	-.21	1															
(5) Education-Employment Rank in 2004	.02	-.20	.10	-.01	1														
Individual-Level Variables																			
(6) Education	.05	-.02	.06	-.06	.18	1													
(7) Urban	.06	.04	.10	.09	.18	.32	1												
(8) Christian	-.02	-.08	-.03	-.19	.14	.16	.03	1											
(9) Newspaper Weekly	.02	-.03	-.01	.01	.07	.33	.20	.06	1										
(10) Radio Weekly	.01	-.16	-.11	-.01	.04	.20	.11	.05	.19	1									
(11) Television Weekly	.04	.01	.04	.03	.11	.33	.37	.05	.29	.23	1								
(12) VAW Newspaper Articles	.09	.28	.28	-.13	-.04	.04	.12	.04	-.02	-.11	.05	1							
(13) Wealth	.06	.01	.06	.02	.17	.46	.45	.08	.22	.31	.39	.06	1						
(14) Matrilineal	.06	-.10	.04	.24	-.14	-.12	-.03	-.20	-.03	-.01	-.05	-.00	-.13	1					
Marital History																			
(15) Never Married	-.04	.00	.03	-.01	.03	.27	.10	.04	.15	.02	.13	.04	.14	.00	1				
(16) Formerly Married	.02	-.00	-.02	.05	.00	-.07	-.01	-.01	-.04	-.13	-.05	-.01	-.12	.01	-.19	1			
(17) Currently Married: Monogamy	.03	-.01	-.01	.01	-.01	-.09	-.02	.02	-.06	.08	-.03	-.02	.00	.02	-.57	-.45	1		
(18) Currently Married: Polygamy	-.02	.01	-.01	-.07	-.04	-.13	-.08	-.08	-.06	-.02	-.06	-.01	-.05	-.05	-.16	-.13	-.38	1	
(19) Age	.07	.00	-.01	-.00	-.01	-.30	-.04	-.00	-.08	-.01	-.05	-.00	-.01	-.01	-.54	.20	.19	.18	1

Table B2. Correlation matrix for all variables included in the multilevel logistic regression model for the sample of male respondents as reported in Table 4 in the main text.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
(1) Rejection of VAW	1																		
District-Level Variables																			
Cumulative Aid ($100K) (Time-Varying):																			
(2) Bureaucrat-Led VAW Projects	-.02	1																	
(3) Activist-Led VAW Projects	.02	.28	1																
(4) Percentage Rejecting VAW in 2004	.06	-.11	-.21	1															
(5) Education-Employment Rank in 2004	-.00	-.19	.10	.02	1														
Individual-Level Variables																			
(6) Education	.06	-.01	.04	-.02	.17	1													
(7) Urban	.04	.04	.10	.12	.18	.30	1												
(8) Christian	.01	-.04	-.01	-.16	.13	.18	.01	1											
(9) Newspaper Weekly	.02	-.06	-.03	.04	.09	.38	.23	.06	1										
(10) Radio Weekly	.02	-.17	-.11	.01	.03	.17	.06	.02	.20	1									
(11) Television Weekly	.00	-.05	.01	.04	.10	.27	.28	.02	.33	.21	1								
(12) VAW Newspaper Articles	.02	.29	.28	-.13	-.04	.03	.11	.04	-.05	-.16	.01	1							
(13) Wealth	.04	.02	.06	.06	.16	.44	.44	.07	.25	.21	.31	.06	1						
(14) Matrilineal	.04	-.10	.05	.22	-.15	-.13	-.01	-.19	-.05	.00	-.06	.00	-.08	1					
Marital History																			
(15) Never Married	-.14	.02	.03	.01	.03	.10	.08	.03	.05	-.04	.11	.03	.11	-.01	1				
(16) Formerly Married	.00	-.00	-.00	.02	.01	-.03	.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.01	-.15	1			
(17) Currently Married: Monogamy	.14	-.01	-.03	.00	-.03	-.06	-.06	.01	-.03	.04	-.09	-.02	-.08	.03	-.84	-.21	1		
(18) Currently Married: Polygamy	.00	-.00	-.00	-.05	-.01	-.07	-.06	-.06	-.03	.02	-.03	-.02	-.04	-.04	-.18	-.04	-.25	1	
(19) Age	.15	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.00	-.09	-.03	-.02	-.02	.04	-.08	.00	.00	-.01	-.71	.09	.56	.22	1

Table B3. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from multilevel logistic regression models predicting rejection of violence against women.

Sample:	Women	Men
Dependent Variable:	*Rejection of VAW*	*Rejection of VAW*
District-Level Variables		
Cumulative Aid ($100K) (Time-Varying) (Top-Coded):		
Bureaucrat-Led VAW Projects	0.001	-0.005***
	[-0.001,0.002]	[-0.008,-0.003]
Activist-Led VAW Projects	0.013***	0.003
	[0.009,0.016]	[-0.001,0.008]
Percentage Rejecting VAW in 2004 (Top-Coded)	0.005***	0.002***
	[0.003,0.006]	[0.001,0.003]
Education-Employment Index in 2004 (Top-Coded)	-0.003	-0.006*
	[-0.011,0.005]	[-0.011,-0.001]
Individual-Level Variables		
Education	0.009***	0.006***
	[0.008,0.010]	[0.005,0.008]
Urban	0.028***	0.018**
	[0.019,0.037]	[0.004,0.031]
Christian	0.007	0.011
	[-0.002,0.016]	[-0.001,0.024]
Newspaper Weekly	0.000	0.001
	[-0.009,0.009]	[-0.011,0.012]
Radio Weekly	0.006*	0.008
	[0.001,0.012]	[-0.002,0.017]
Television Weekly	-0.002	-0.006
	[-0.011,0.008]	[-0.016,0.005]
VAW Newspaper Articles	0.005***	0.002***
	[0.005,0.006]	[0.001,0.003]
Wealth	0.007***	0.005**
	[0.005,0.009]	[0.002,0.009]
Matrilineal	0.013**	0.020**
	[0.004,0.021]	[0.008,0.032]
Marital History (Ref.=Never Married)		
Formerly Married	0.037***	0.019
	[0.026,0.048]	[-0.006,0.045]
Currently Married: Monogamy	0.036***	0.058***
	[0.028,0.044]	[0.045,0.071]
Currently Married: Polygamy	0.020***	0.020
	[0.008,0.031]	[-0.004,0.045]
Age	0.003***	0.003***
	[0.003,0.004]	[0.003,0.004]
Model Effects and Statistics		

Survey Fixed Effects	Yes	Yes
District Random Effect	Yes	Yes
District Variance (Log Odds)	0.080***	0.035**
	[0.035,0.125]	[0.009,0.061]
Intra-District Correlation	0.024	0.011
	[0.014,0.041]	[0.005,0.022]
AIC	70549.1	17116.8
BIC	70735.5	17278.8
Districts (n)	27	27
Respondents (n)	82396	24409

Note: Data are from the 2004, 2010, and 2015-16 Malawi DHS, the 2013-14 Malawi MICS, and the Malawi Aid Management Platform. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

CHAPTER IV

Vernacularizing World Culture:

Varied Effects of the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* Campaign in Malawi

Abstract

The globalization of cultural models of development and human rights transcends nation-states. As these cultural models are applied to specific locales, they sometimes are modified. How does this shape their influence on lay people? I examine the case of the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in Malawi in 2015. I theorize that meso-level actors vernacularized gender violence messages into an existing concept of *nkhanza* in Malawi—which defines violence as unjust behavior within the normative expectations of a social relationship—may have led to varied individual-level effects. Leveraging the overlapping timing of the campaign and a nationally representative survey, I find that people were more likely to condemn physical partner violence after the campaign, yet women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner slightly decreased. I further find that the campaign increased women's self-reports of experiencing physical partner abuse more than one year ago. Thus, meso-level actors' interpretations of world cultural models can lead to outcomes that international organizations do not intend to produce, such as increasing unwanted sex. Additionally, the human rights information paradox shapes self-reported life experiences at the individual-level.

Introduction

Institutional theoretical accounts of global cultural diffusion describe the influence of cultural models about societal development and the inherent rights of individual people (Meyer 2010). These cultural models are expansive in their topical coverage. Some of the cultural scripts incorporated in these cultural models include: economic growth is foundational to a developed society, education improves well-being, advanced societies respect human rights and are democratic, and small families are modern. These scripts are cultural in the sense that they arose from particular historical and social circumstances, though today they are evangelized across the world and promoted as universally applicable for all people and societies (Latham 2000; Meyer et al. 1997; Thornton 2001). Cultural models about human rights and societal development are so prominent that movements challenging democratic governance and human rights principles either directly confront the legitimacy of these models or instead posit that their propositions are more accurate applications of these widely accepted models (Frank and Moss 2017).

Cultural globalization in this sense has contributed to many worldwide social changes, such as the spread of democratic governance, individual rights and personhood, and formal education systems, as well as massive reductions in total fertility rates (Baker 2014; Frank and Meyer 2020; Thornton 2005). At the individual-level, citizens' ideological expressions across diverse countries worldwide increasingly match world cultural models and are positively correlated with people's likely exposure to such models via many theorized sources, including international nongovernmental organizations, education, media use, and urban living (Charles 2019; Givens and Jorgenson 2013; Hadler and Symons 2018; Hadler et al. 2012; Pandian 2018; Roberts 2018).

Yet, the evidence is also clear that world cultural models are often presented and disseminated across a given society in a modified format. Societal brokers are pivotal, as they receive world cultural models and then are tasked with helping diffuse them in a given society (Peters 2020; Swidler and Watkins 2017). In the "vernacularization" (Levitt and Merry 2009) process of applying foreign models to new locales, brokers interpret world cultural models through the cultural lenses they have acquired through a life of split-consciousness—at once linked to the organizations of world culture and firmly rooted in their society and its norms and expectations (Merry 2006:180-181).

I build upon this work, and ask: How does exposure to vernacularized world cultural messages influence people's moral attitudes and self-reported life experiences? I draw on insights from multiple branches of research about measuring different cultural modes (e.g. Mohr et al. 2020), and the translation and fit of imported public culture in new settings (e.g. Merry 2006). I focus on the condemnation of gender violence, an issue of great importance in world cultural models. Stated attitudes toward physical intimate partner violence against women have increasingly shifted toward greater rejection worldwide (Kurzman et al. 2019; Pierotti 2013), yet there is no documentation of a corresponding decline in women's self-reported victimization of gender violence.

I focus empirically on the individual-level effects of a global campaign sponsored by the United Nations (UN) that runs from November 25th to December 10th each year: the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence*. I leverage the timing of the 2015-16 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey, a nationally-representative survey which was carried out over a five month period that fortuitously happened to overlap with the *16 Days* campaign, with about half of the respondents being interviewed before the campaign and about half afterwards. I consider how

world cultural models positing that "gender based violence is harmful for development" are presented and viewed in Malawi, where existing cultural norms denounce physical cruelty and injustice, yet consider sexual refusal within a long-term intimate partnership as a form of abuse (Saur et al. 2005). The Malawian case of sexual violence is of particular interest because rejection of physical violence against women has dramatically increased over time (Pierotti 2013), but efforts to influence norms about sex have met strong resistance (Tavory and Swidler 2009).

Accounting for differences in individual-level characteristics between these two sets of respondents, I examine the effects of the *16 Days* campaign on Malawians' declarations about the morality of physical intimate partner abuse against women and women's ability to refuse having sex with their male partner. I also use survey questions about women's self-reported experiences of partner abuse, and the timing of such abuse, to assess whether women's willingness to report abuse increased after the campaign. My analysis provides insights about processes of global cultural diffusion at the individual level, including how people's exposure to vernacularized world cultural models informs their stated attitudes and self-reported experiences.

Theoretical Framework

World Culture and Ordinary People

Scholars interested in global cultural diffusion initially established many worldwide trends at the national level: the vast majority of countries from all regions of the world signed the same international treaties and established similar national policies, and many enacted matching laws (for a review, see Schofer et al. 2012). Yet, when scholars turned their attention to nations' enforcement of these treaties, policies, and laws, they uncovered vast decoupling between what

countries say they will do and what they actually do. National governments' "empty promises" (Hafner-Burton and Tsutsui 2005), however, often lead to political pressures that bind them and eventually lead to changes in enforcement. Moreover, even governments that do not make such commitments may be bound to these globalized models as they become accepted elsewhere (Meyer 2007:264-265).

Emerging research on global cultural diffusion at the individual level in many ways corresponds with earlier research on national-level diffusion processes. Trends of international convergence in publics' ideological statements parallel isomorphism in governments' rhetorical commitments. Cross-national surveys indicate that people in many countries express similar beliefs about the characteristics indicative of societal development, namely economic growth, democracy, personal freedoms, technological capacity, education, low fertility, and older ages at marriage (Abbasi-Shavazi et al. 2012; Dorius 2016; Lai and Thornton 2015; Melegh et al. 2016; Swindle et al. 2020; Thornton et al. 2012; 2017). As new dimensions of such models are promoted worldwide, lay attitudes often change in sync.

Second, initial and sometimes persistent decoupling between "sayings" and more substantive "doings" likely occurs at the individual-level, just as scholars have thoroughly documented occurs at the national-level. Pierotti (2013) writes, "decoupling may manifest itself as a disconnect between stated attitudes and action" (p. 262). Large majorities of lay publics worldwide show alignment in the attitudes, aspirations, beliefs, and values they declare toward many different human rights and other cultural models of societal development (for a review, see Thornton et al. 2015), yet research drawing on ethnographic, qualitative, and archival data documents how people savvily make use of cultural models about human rights and development, adhering to and subverting them in different moments (Merry 2006; Michelson

2019; Swidler and Watkins 2017; Tsutsui 2018). A most revealing example comes from Frye's (2012) work on educational aspirations in Malawi. Only about 7% of Malawian students graduate from secondary school, yet the overwhelming majority of students expect to do so. This low correlation between people's aspirations and reality suggests a strong socialization of what constitutes a meaningful and successful life. Accordingly, people's exposure to world cultural models can have an independent causal influence on their understanding of their world and their reflections about their own life experiences (Thornton et al. 2015).

Equally important is how imported cultural models fit with the widely understood norms of a given society. Of crucial significance are processes of vernacularization, which involve intermediary brokers' translation of universalized cultural models for specific settings (Levitt and Merry 2009; Peters 2020; Swidler and Watkins 2017). In understanding the role of such meso-level cultural factors, I turn to helpful recent work in the sociology of culture, drawing upon interdisciplinary research on human cognition, to distinguish between *public* culture and *personal* culture (Frye 2017; Lizardo 2017; Mohr et al. 2020; Patterson 2014; Strauss 2018; Strauss and Quinn 1997). This helps elucidate a theoretical framework of how world culture can flow from foreign sources to lay people, and potentially shape their views and perceptions.

Transmitting World Culture From the Public to the Personal

Public culture incorporates material symbols, shared narratives, and institutionalized cultural scripts; it can be dichotomized into its macro- and meso-levels (Rinaldo and Guhin 2019). International organizations like the World Bank posit macro-level public culture, such as cultural scripts about small families facilitating development and women's empowerment that are in turn disseminated on a global scale. They use various tools to broadcast this message, implementing targeted development projects, sponsoring global declarations like World Heritage

Sites, writing numerous reports and disseminating them to national governments, and hosting international conferences (Elliott and Schmutz 2016; Swiss 2017; Zapp 2020).

Many intermediary brokers at the meso-level are tasked with translating such messages for a given audience. This includes contracted civil society organizations' employees when they implement a World Bank project in a given community, as well as school teachers using textbooks written by World Bank education specialists (Helleve et al. 2009; Peters 2020). While brokers tend to be more informed of world cultural models than most people in their own countries, they also learn other cultural models from their own communities and societies. This can lead them to, at times, interpret world cultural models in ways that are different than international organizations or other promoters of such models originally expected. In addition, brokers sometimes alter their presentation of world cultural models such that it fits their beliefs about what their intended audience needs to hear (Helleve et al. 2009). They also have self-interested needs, such as maintaining their job and securing social status (Kaler and Watkins 2001; Ugwu 2019; Watkins and Swidler 2013).

When individuals are exposed to public cultural symbols, narratives, or scripts—including those associated with world cultural models—they are generally capable of remembering this new information after very few repetitions or even a single episode, and then deploy it as "declarative" personal culture (Johnson-Hanks et al. 2011; Lizardo 2017). Moreover, prior personal culture can either facilitate or diminish their embrace of new world cultural models, and this process can ebb and flow over time (Luke and Watkins 2002; Watkins and Hodgson 2019). Some imports are easily incorporated because they either fill a cultural hole or only slightly modify an existing model; others are more complex in their design or present a perceived challenge to longstanding norms (Jijon and Kay 2019; Wyrod 2016).

The public-personal connection of world cultural models is facilitated in contexts where many people associate foreign cultural models about development and human rights with power and authority, and where international organizations and foreign governments regularly fund data collection projects (Swidler and Watkins 2015). This may introduce a kind of social desirability bias in which people may be more likely to draw upon their declarative knowledge of cultural scripts about human rights and societal development during a survey interview than when they are hanging out casually with friends. Several research studies demonstrate this by comparing findings elicited across multiple types of data collection strategies (e.g. Angotti and Kaler 2013; Schatz 2003). However, this is consistent with Meyer's (1986) argument that the degree to which people would align their "subjective self" with a specific cultural script depends on the level of institutionalization of that script in the broader society.[1] Measuring the effects of exposure to world cultural models on people's ideological expressions can capture important evidence of cultural globalization at the individual-level (Behrman and Frye 2019:29; Pierotti 2013:261-262; Thornton et al. 2012b:337).

As people learn new public cultural models that they associate with organizations or other sources of information that they respect and value, their perceptions of their world also shift. They may recognize social phenomena that they previously overlooked or took for granted (Zerubavel 1993). This is especially relevant when it comes to people's exposure to cultural models about human rights and can lead to an "information paradox" (Keck and Sikkink 1998:194-195), in which reports of human rights violations increase after societies are exposed

[1] "We may hypothesize, then, that modern people—and within modern society, those with the most highly institutionalized life courses—show a lower degree of consistency over time on all sorts of measures of the subjective self, just as their consistency in reflecting on the life course is enhanced. … Overall, the modern liberated subjective self should score well on all the modern virtues" (Meyer 1986b:210; see also Jepperson 2002:246-247).

to human rights messages even when behavior was unchanged and there was not an increase in actual violations.

Thinking through the analytical lens of public versus personal culture in this way draws the following steps in the process of cultural globalization at the individual level. World cultural models about an issue are publicly circulated through a variety of information sources. Meso-level intermediary brokers in a society are personally exposed to world cultural models; the version of these models they transmit to others in their society depends on their interpretation and translation. People are able to rapidly learn this new information and it becomes a part of their agglomeration of declarative personal culture. This can shift how they classify and label things in the world, including how they remember and reflect on their own experiences.

This framework sets up two generalizable expectations regarding the influences of exposure to brokered world cultural models about human rights. First, in societies where international organizations exert great influence, people's declarative ideological statements are likely to be influenced by the world cultural messages about human rights that they are exposed to. However, people's stated ideological expressions are likely to reflect the version of world cultural models that intermediary brokers disseminate. Second, exposure to world cultural models about human rights often provides people with new categories, resulting in increasing reports of experiencing human rights violations. More reports of abuse can occur at the same time that actual abuse is unchanged or declining.

The Empirical Case: The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence in Malawi

Bringing the Global Campaign Against Gender Violence to Malawi

I apply these expectations to the empirical case of gender violence in contemporary Malawi. The global movement to condemn gender violence has become an increasingly important component of public culture worldwide (Htun and Weldon 2012), receiving an increase in attention in international forums during the twenty-first century after initial global estimates that about one-third of women self-report as victims of physical or sexual violence (UNIFEM 2003). 189 nations have ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Violence Against Women and only eight have abstained (UN OHCHR 2020). Goal 5.2 of the current Sustainable Development Goals is to "eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres" (UN 2017). World cultural models condemning gender violence are explicit about physical abuse, and sexual violence is also widely condemned (Frank et al. 2010). However, in many contexts the bounds of what constitutes sexual abuse within marriage are more contested (Yllö and Torres 2016). World cultural models about gender violence have historically focused on men engaging in violent actions toward women in the context of heterosexual relationships, although this is beginning to change.

Following a few years of cross-continental feminist meetings in Central and South America, activists in the Dominican Republic proclaimed November 25, 1981 as the first *Day of Non-Violence Against Women* (Peguero 2005:169; Robinson 2006:150). In 1991, activists from dozens of countries worldwide gathered at the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University in the United States expanded these efforts into the annual *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* international campaign from November 25 through December 10 (Bunch 2012; Miller 1991). The UN began sponsoring the campaign in 2000 (UN 2019). At least 5,167 different organizations in 187 countries engaged in campaign efforts between 1991 and 2016 (Center for Women's Global Leadership 2016).

Malawian activists began holding different public activities in Malawi during the annual *16 Days* campaign period as early as 2000, including marches near Parliament, meetings with victims, community leaders, and law enforcement officials, and most notably large-scale awareness campaigns in rural and urban areas across the country (*Arise!: A Newsletter of the Network Against Gender Violence*, November-December 2000; Semu-Banda 2003; UN 2004:11, 76; UN 2006:2; FEMNET 2003). Beginning in 2008, activist Emma Kaliya and her organization the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre (MHRRC) vastly expanded their campaign efforts with a large grant from the Norwegian Embassy (MHRRC 2007). When the grant was renewed in 2012, they had sufficient funds to carry out the campaign in all of Malawi's 28 districts (MHRRC 2013; Norwegian Embassy 2012).

Their campaign included three large touring buses of activists and campaign volunteers with high social status—major national political leaders, district commissioners, and police officials—who conducted two or three public presentations in various locations each day (MEGEN 2011; 2012; 2013). They would spend several hours at each locale performing drama skits, leading public discussions, and hearing speeches from local community leaders, all of which was intended to publicly convey the cultural script that gender violence is a violation of people's human rights. Importantly, they held a two-week training for volunteers before leaving on tour to ensure messaging was curated to the Malawian context.

In later years, their campaign expanded in scope and gradually become a nationally organized social movement. The campaign "launch" events in Lilongwe were hosted by UN Women's new country office in 2012, and then by President Joyce Banda in 2013 (MEGEN 2012; 2013). Various embassies, international organizations, domestic NGOs, and the national government organized their own events and awareness tours (M'bumpha 2014; Nkhoma 2012;

Van Kamande 2014; YONECO 2017; *The Daily Times,* December 11, 2014; *The Nation,* December 10, 2014). During the *16 Days* campaign in 2015, the particular year I examine in the empirical analysis, activities included the MHRRC national bus tour, a similar but smaller-scale tour led by the Malawian NGO Youth Net and Counselling (YONECO), the national gender conference, several multimedia art exhibitions, public concerts, a youth peace parade, expert panel discussions, the nightly lighting of the Parliament Building, multiple press conferences, and many speeches by government leaders (ECPAT International et al. 2016; UN Women Malawi 2015). Organizers generally provided funding for journalists to attend their events and they would in turn publish stories and broadcast programs condemning gender violence (Kanyemba 2015; Moyo 2016).

What was the effect of the *16 Days* campaign in 2015 on Malawians' personal attitudes about gender violence and women's self-reports of experiencing abuse? Answering this question demands a thorough understanding of the flow and vernacularization of cultural messages condemning gender violence in Malawi. I note that several recent randomized control trials of behavioral change interventions related to gender violence in East, South, and West Africa mostly show declines in women's self-reported experience of partner violence (Abramsky et al. 2014; Alangea et al. 2020; Decker et al. 2018; Doyle et al. 2018; Gibbs et al. 2020; Green et al. 2020; see also Roy et al. 2019), though some do not or only show effects on attitudes (Green et al. 2015; Gupta et al. 2013; Vaillant et al. 2020; see also Wagman et al. 2015). These studies on targeted treatment effects, however, differ from testing the influence of a national social movement because people's level and type of message exposure varies more than in a controlled study.

The Vernacularization of "Gender Violence" as "Nkhanza"

Much of the messaging content of the *16 Days* campaign in Malawi is consistent with the public culture posited by international organizations denouncing all forms of gender violence. However, differences in relationship norms in Malawi versus those implicitly assumed in world cultural models highlight meso-level tensions that come from the vernacularization of gender violence.

Malawian activists have long collapsed various phrases in English like *gender violence, gender-based violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence,* and *violence against women* into the Chichewa term *nkhanza* (Saur et al. 2005). The Chichewa language comes from the largest ethnic group, the Chewa, and it has been widely spread since the country's independence. *Nkhanza* means cruelty, injustice, and abuse. It is a broader term and is used more liberally than "gender violence" in English (Johnson 2018:18-19). There is no direct translation of "gender" in Chichewa (Matiki 2001; McNamara 2015; see also Englund 2004:156-159). These translation dilemmas introduce important variations in what is commonly considered "violence" in Malawi compared to world cultural models.

Table 1 provides a non-exhaustive list of four general behaviors often considered *nkhanza* in Malawi. Beginning with the first listed act, physical partner violence is generally not condoned and qualifies as *nkhanza* (Saur et al. 2005). Couples are expected to instead resolve their disagreements through discussion, turning to their customary marriage/partnership counselors (designated aunts and uncles) or community leaders for assistance if necessary (Kambalame et al. 2008). 82.6 percent of women and 86.3 percent of men in Malawi in 2015-16 stated that they reject the notion that "a husband is justified in beating his wife" (NSO and ICF 2017). These percentages are higher than all other African countries with comparable data except Mozambique and South Africa (ICF 2020). However, some people do draw upon the notion of

kulangiza, which means advising and counseling, to justify "educational" (Saur et al. 2005:74) physical beatings of a partner or a child that has erred from their normative responsibilities (Chepuka 2013:79-80; Chepuka et al. 2014:4-5; Nthala 2013:65).

[Table 1]

Influential, long-time Malawian activists explain that, normatively, a woman is not expected to have sex if she is menstruating, recently had a baby, or is sick (Kanyongolo and White 2017:180-181). The use of physical force to rape one's partner in particular is often considered unjust and cruel, and is the second form of *nkhanza* listed in Table 1 (Masina 2014). Consistent with this, the majority of women in Malawi, 70.1 percent, say that they can say no to their male partner if they do not want to have sex (NSO and ICF 2017).

Still, some question whether physically forcing one's partner is *nkhanza*, arguing that marital rape is "impossible" because the partners consent to provide sexual access to one another when initializing their union (e.g. *The Nation,* November 21, 2012). This argument highlights the tension between world cultural models of what constitutes gender violence and the central role of relationship expectations and duties in the Malawian definition of *nkhanza.* As many scholars explain, social relationships in Malawi are socially and economically intertwined (Englund 2004; 2012; Swidler 2009). This intertwining is especially thick in heterosexual intimate relationships (Poulin 2007; Swidler and Watkins 2007; Verheijen 2013), which constitute the vast majority of publicly-disclosed, long-term intimate partnerships since the state outlaws homosexuality. Men are expected to provide money for their partner and children, including school fees, whereas women are expected to take care of all household members (see *The Nation,* December 10, 2012). Not fulfilling these gendered duties is considered abuse and is the third form of *nkhanza* in Table 1.

An integral part of a person's commitment to their partner is to regularly have sex with them, and the denial of sex is the fourth widely perceived form of *nkhanza* outlined in Table 1 (Swidler and Watkins 2007; Tawfik and Watkins 2007). "Conjugal rights" are legally protected in Malawi, a vestige of British common law (Hayes 2016; see also Shanley 1989:156-188). Desire for sex is often described using metaphors of hunger (Tavory and Swidler 2009; Undie et al. 2007; *The Daily Times,* April 27, 2010). Partners are described as being "forced" to seek sex elsewhere if their partner refuses, which is considered a dangerous endeavor given the HIV/AIDS epidemic (Kasalika 2013; Watkins 2004; *The Nation,* December 28, 2012).

Refusing to have sex with one's partner is also highly suspicious, in part because it has economic implications, especially for women. If a man does not want to have sex with his long-term female partner, she not only wonders if he has a girlfriend and may acquire HIV/AIDS, but also whether he will stop providing money to her and their children (Swidler and Watkins 2007). On the other hand, a woman that refuses to have sex with her long-term male partner is often thought to be getting both money and sex from another man (Kamyongolo and Malunga 2011:12). While it is generally uncommon for people to report the abuse they experience to the police or community leaders, women that do report abuse often file a complaint that their male partner is not providing them with money whereas men often file complaints that their female partner is denying them of their conjugal rights (Masina 2014; *The Nation,* December 28, 2012).

Messaging About Gender Violence in Practice

Many intermediary brokers in Malawi hired by international organizations to lead public presentations during the *16 Days* campaign and other "trainings" (Swidler and Watkins 2009) about gender violence reproduced these norms about what constitutes *nkhanza* in a long-term heterosexual intimate partnership. On the one hand, they widely condemned physical forms of

violence, strongly reinforcing the norm in Malawi and world cultural script that such behavior is unjustified. They also strongly encouraged being open about the abuse one has experienced, and they strengthened institutional supports for people to report abuses. Conversely, they often encouraged women to have sex with their husbands, defining the act of refusing one's partner's sexual advances as a form of *nkhanza* or "gender violence." This stands in contrast to world cultural models that generally promote women's autonomy, individual rights, and sexual consent.

Outside observers of domestic NGOs' presentations noted that NGO facilitators often directly recommended that participants sexually submit to their partners' wishes, in part to respect their partner's conjugal rights and in part to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS should their partner go elsewhere for sex. Further, facilitators did not intervene when participants publicly told other onlookers at presentations that people are entitled to conjugal rights (Clarbour 2016; Gaynor and Cronin 2016:64). A guidebook for faith leaders, developed as part of a large HIV prevention project, implores leaders to counsel couples to not demand sex following birth or other circumstances, but then states, "you will not deny each other sex just as the Bible says;" it also provides citations from the Qur'an (Magombo et al. 2012:95).

These same ideas were expressed in public presentations given as part of the *16 Days* campaign in Malawi. A newspaper article featuring an interview of the director of the MHRRC's bus tour during the *16 Days* campaign in 2014, Marcel Chisi, states, "Chisi says men's groups have revealed that it is not only women who face GBV (gender-based violence) but also men: 'The main problem that men present here is to do with conjugal rights'" (Mthawanji 2014). YONECO, another prominent, Malawi-based but internationally-supported NGO giving public presentations during the annual *16 Days* campaigns since at least 2015, felt comfortable enough

with one man's response to their facilitator's question about the types of abuse people face in their community to post it on their YouTube channel. The video, titled "WOMEN SHOULD NEVER REFUSE SEX TO THEIR HUSBANDS," features the man's response in which he describes conjugal rights and their importance (YONECO 2017).

This also happened at other NGO presentations that I attended during the *16 Days* campaign in 2016. At one such presentation, for example, attendees were invited to publicly share forms of *nkhanza* in their community and discuss how people should combat these problems. One woman came forward to use the microphone and said, "When a wife has refused to have sex with her husband, the husband sleeps with his own daughter. That's violence too. … A man [may] even sleep with his stepdaughter—it happens because of a woman refusing to do her *work*." The two NGO facilitators then invited the crowd to clap and they thanked her for explaining things so clearly. The comment was taken in stride and the presentation continued. These types of interactions during the campaign period—whether through presentations, media coverage about gender violence, or other means—likely strengthened the notion that refusing to have sex with one's partner is a form of gender violence.

Research Hypotheses

My consideration of the vernacularization of world cultural models about gender violence through domestic understandings of *nkhanza* leads to several research hypotheses respecting the influence of the *16 Days* campaign in 2015. I consider the campaign as an external event that likely exposed many Malawians to vernacularized messages about gender violence. If they were not directly exposed to such messages via activists' public presentations and marches, special events, or media programming, they may have heard about these messages from others (see Arias 2019; Smith et al. 2018).

World cultural models positing that physical forms of gender violence are not justifiable are consistent with the normative understandings of *nkhanza* that brokers disseminated. Subsequently, my first hypothesis is that being interviewed after the *16 Days* campaign, compared to prior, increased a person's likelihood of rejecting physical intimate partner violence against women. Since the campaign likely reinforced the notion that refusing sex to one's partner is a form of *nkhanza*, my second hypothesis is that there was a decrease after the campaign in a woman's likelihood of stating that she personally can say no to her partner if she does not want to have sex.

The *16 Days* campaign may have lessened the silence over gender violence, helping people feel safe to share their experiences of abuse and providing people with a new framework to define their life experiences (Bulte and Lensink 2019; Iyer et al. 2012; see also Baldwin et al. 2019; Danese 2020). Malawian activist Emma Kaliya endorsed this idea, stating in a newspaper interview that increasing reports of domestic violence to the police are probably because "nowadays people have had a lot of awareness" compared to before when people were "just keeping quiet" (Masina 2014). Thus, my third hypothesis is that the campaign increased women's likelihood of reporting their partner physically abused them. I do not make a similar hypothesis about women's reports of experiencing sexual partner violence given conflicting messages during the campaign; on the one hand, brokers condemned the use of physical force to rape one's partner, but on the other hand, they supported the idea that refusing to have sex with one's partner is abusive.

Data

I frame my hypotheses around an empirical design leveraging the overlapping timing of the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in Malawi and the 2015-16 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). My analytical strategy is to first compare various survey-based indicators of attitudes about gender violence and self-reported experiences of violence before and after the campaign. Taking into account differences between the characteristics of people interviewed before and after the campaign, I then turn to logistic regression models to assess the effects of the campaign at the individual-level by focusing on the influence of whether a respondent was interviewed before or after the campaign. Comparing outcome variables for survey respondents interviewed before and after an important event is a long-standing research strategy (for a review, see Muñoz et al. 2020). For example, social scientists recently used terrorist events (e.g. Gorman and Seguin 2018), civil conflict and repression (e.g. Jakiela and Ozier 2019), speeches by the Pope (Bassi and Rasul 2017), and sports game outcomes (e.g. Depetris-Chauvin et al. 2020) as influential events in the midst of survey data collections.

The 2015-16 Malawi DHS is part of an internationally recognized cross-national survey program. The data are nationally representative: households are selected from enumeration areas, which are selected across Malawi's 28 districts. Women from all selected households and men from one-third of households are asked to participate. This yielded one sample of 24,562 women and another sample of 7,478 men, all of whom were interviewed between October 19, 2015 and February 14, 2016. In addition, one woman from one-third of selected household received an additional domestic violence survey module, which was given at the same time as the main survey. Privacy could not be obtained in four percent of these cases and 6,379 women ultimately participated in this module. The DHS provides separate survey weights for the women's sample,

men's sample, and women's domestic violence sample. Though scholars have proposed improvements to the survey questions about gender violence in the DHS (e.g. Merry 2016; Yount et al. 2014), the surveys and the domestic violence module specifically are of high quality. International experts designed the module and continue to use it as a model for other survey programs (Heise and Hossain 2017; Kishor 2005; Kishor and Johnson 2004), and the instrument used to measure gender violence in the survey is empirically validated (Schraiber et al. 2010).

Measures

Relying on the 2015-16 Malawi DHS, I use a variety of outcome variables, a key indicator of whether a respondent was interviewed before or after the *16 Days* campaign, and a number of independent variables. All variables are described below and descriptive statistics—calculated using the complex survey design attributes of the strata, clustering, and women's, men's, and domestic violence module weights—are provided in the Appendix.

Outcome Variables. I examine several outcome variables related to Malawians' attitudes about and experiences of physical and sexual violence. These variables follow common strategies in the literature using DHS data. Since survey questions about women's experience of partner abuse do not distinguish whether they were married or cohabiting with the partners that abused them, I use the term partner rather than spouse or husband and wife, unless referring to the wording of a specific survey question.

I use five linked questions in the DHS to create a binary measure of rejection of physical partner violence (e.g. Pierotti 2013). These questions, which were asked of all respondents, are: *"Is a husband justified in hitting or beating his wife in the following situations: (1) If she goes out without telling him? (2) If she neglects the children? (3) If she argues with him? (4) If she*

refuses to have sex with him? (5) If the food is not properly cooked?" I code respondents that replied "no" to all five situations as rejecting physical partner violence.

I rely on a dichotomous indicator of women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner, as pulled from the survey question, *"Can you say no to your (husband/partner) if you do not want to have sexual intercourse?"* This question notably asked about the respondent's personal ability to refuse unwanted sex with their partner rather than their attitude about the justification of unwanted sex generally. Only currently partnered women were asked this question.

Turning next to women's statements about experiencing abuse, I recognize that retrospective reports about interpersonal violence are the "tip of the iceberg" (Palermo et al. 2014) and likely underestimate the actual violence women experience, including in Malawi specifically (Fan et al. 2016). For this reason, women's reports of abuse are useful for assessing whether the *16 Days* campaign may have increased women's ability to disclose abuse and their willingness to discuss it.

I rely on a series of questions from the domestic violence module in which ever partnered women were asked to confirm whether their current or most recent male partner has done *"any of the following things to you: Push you, shake you, or throw something at you? Slap you? Twist your arm or pull your hair? Punch you with his fist or with something that could hurt you? Kick you, drag you, or beat you up? Try to choke you or burn you on purpose? Threaten or attack you with a knife, gun, or other weapon?"* For each of these questions, those who responded affirmatively were subsequently asked whether each act occurred *"during the last twelve months"* or sometime before the past year. This temporal distinction is crucial given my study design. Reports about partner violence experienced in the past year are too broad of a time frame

to determine whether the *16 Days* campaign decreased self-reported violence. For example, a women interviewed in the middle of January could have experienced abuse in the month since the campaign or during many months before the campaign but within the past year. Reports about violence prior to the past year, however, are useful for assessing the effects of the campaign on women's willingness to report abuse. Any increase after the campaign period in women's self-reports of partner violence they experienced over a year ago is likely due to their exposure to campaign messages condemning *nkhanza*. I therefore create multiple binary variables identifying: (1) women that reported being physically abused by their partner in any of these ways in the past year; (2) women that reported experiencing any of these forms of physical partner violence before the past year, yet not during the past year.

Following this logic, I also construct two binary measures of women's self-reports of any sexual partner violence they experienced (1) in the past year, or (2) only before the past year. To do so, I use the following three survey questions asked of women given the domestic violence module about their partner's behavior toward them: *"Physically force you to have sexual intercourse with him when you did not want to? Physically force you to perform any other sexual acts you did not want to? Force you with threats or in any other way to perform sexual acts you did not want to?"*

Exposure to the 16 Days Campaign. The *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in Malawi circulated cultural scripts condemning gender violence (*nkhanza)* across Malawi though many different sources. I therefore consider all people in Malawi to have experienced this treatment. I divide respondents into two groups: those interviewed before the *16 Days* campaign and those interviewed after. I refer to these groups as the before and after groups. It is unclear whether respondents interviewed during the campaign period would have been

exposed to campaign messages at the time of their personal interview or not, so I exclude them from the main analysis presented and instead include them in robustness checks.

The *16 Days* campaign is generally held from November 25 to December 10 each year, but in 2015 it began with a National Gender Conference on November 24 and was extended to December 12, a Saturday, for a Youth Peace Parade among other activities (UN Women Malawi 2015). I therefore consider the *16 Days* campaign to have spanned a somewhat longer period from November 24 through December 12, 2015. The number of respondents that were interviewed before this period was 13,795. An additional 5,727 people were interviewed during the campaign and 12,518 after it concluded.

Independent Variables. To assess the effects of the *16 Days* campaign on various outcomes, the groups of respondents interviewed before and after the campaign must be sufficiently balanced across important cultural, socioeconomic, and demographic attributes. Any imbalances should be controlled for in a multivariate regression framework. I incorporate a number of additional covariates in my analyses that are established in the literature as potentially confounding predictors of my outcomes variables.

Scholarship on cultural globalization at the individual-level theorizes that world cultural models about gender equality are disseminated to lay people through school curriculums, international Christian religious networks, and various activities in urban areas and work environments (e.g. Boyle et al. 2002). I therefore use a continuous variable of respondents' years of education along with three dichotomous indicators for living in an urban area, identifying as Christian, and working in a non-agricultural job. In the literature on gender violence specifically, these variables are often shown to predict attitudinal rejection of physical partner violence (e.g. Pierotti 2013). Media is another a source of transnational cultural diffusion, so I use three

dummy variables for individuals' at least weekly use of newspaper, radio, and television use, respectively. Media in Malawi contains both cultural scripts normalizing violence from foreign entertainment media companies and cultural scripts condemning gender violence from international organizations heavy influence, complicating the relationship between Malawians' personal media use and the outcome variables (Swindle 2020).

I use several socioeconomic and demographic predictors often associated with gender violence attitudes and self-reports. This includes a measure of respondents' household wealth quintile, which is based on an asset-based index common across cross-national survey programs like the DHS (Cools and Kotsadam 2017). I further use a continuous variable for age and a binary variable for matrilineal ethnicity, the latter of which is uniquely important in Malawi because land passes through women in matrilineal ethnicities; women from matriarchal ethnicities generally have more social influence in their community compared to women in patriarchal ethnic groups (Ibik 1970; Johnson 2018; Kuzara 2014). I measure partnership status categorically: never been in a long-term intimate partnership, previously partnered, currently in a monogamous partnership, and currently in a polygamous partnership. Partnership is positively associated with rejection of physical partner violence in many societies across Africa (Hindin 2014). In Malawi, polygamy is negatively associated with rejection of physical partner violence (Rani et al. 2004). Divorce, separation, and widowhood are strongly related to higher self-reports of retrospective partner violence (Capaldi et al. 2012).

Analytical Strategy

To provide a first cut at evaluating possible changes in Malawi surrounding gender violence following the *16 Days* campaign, my analysis begins with a visual assessment of daily changes in the outcome variables across the duration of the survey data collection. This is

followed by a comparison among those interviewed prior to the *16 Days* campaign versus those interviewed after the campaign finished in the percentage of respondents coded as "yes" for the outcome variables. I incorporate the survey design attributes (strata, clustering, and weights) when calculating these estimates. I then provide weighted p-values from bivariate regression models testing the effect of being interviewed after the *16 Days* campaign on each outcome variable. To estimate the statistical significance of the difference between the estimates for each outcome variable, I also provide weighted p-values from bivariate regressions in which I test the influence of being interviewed after the *16 Days* campaign on each outcome variable. I cluster standard errors by interview week because of my interest in a temporal effect. While these descriptive analyses are informative, it is unclear to what extent any observed differences in the outcome variables among survey respondents interviewed before the campaign versus those interviewed after it are due to distinctions in group characteristics. Accordingly, I further examine the balance across the two groups of respondents for all independent variables, in the same manner I do for the outcome variables.

This motivates a set of logistic regression models in which I test the effects of the *16 Days* campaign on each outcome variable. In all models, I include as controls any independent variables that are imbalanced between the groups of survey respondents interviewed before and after the campaign period. I also include fixed effects for geographic districts. This is important because it helps account for historical differences that may shape gender dynamics. For example, Christian missionaries from Europe were especially prevalent in Rumphi and other districts where they established missions, and these missionaries encouraged a patriarchal family structure and division of labor (Hayes 2016; Kudo 2017). Islamic traders brought Islam to Machinga, Mangochi, and other nearby districts, bringing a different set of gender ideologies

(Sicard 2000). Matrilineal land possession and inheritance are common among the Chewa and other ethnic groups across most of the central and southern districts, which also contain the country's largest two cities (Mandala 1984; Peters 1997). Finally, I use the sampling weights provided by the DHS and I further adjust my models by clustering coefficients' standard errors by interview week because of my interest in identifying a temporal effect (Bassi and Rasul 2017).

Analysis

Descriptive Changes From Before to After the 16 Days Campaign

I first examine daily rates in the outcome variables across the data collection period. I provide this information in a series of scatterplots, one for each outcome variable, in Figures 2 and 3. These temporal observations offer hints at the effects of the *16 Days* campaign. Dot size reflects the relative number of respondents interviewed on a given day, which ranged from 10 to 482.[2] The campaign period is marked in light gray. When interpreting the graphs, it is helpful to focus on the darkest clusters of overlapping dots because this represents periods of high similarity across many respondents.

[Figure 2]

[Figure 3]

Figure 2 presents the daily percentage for the first three outcome variables. I first observe a clear increase in women's stated rejection of physical partner violence over time, and probably a slight increase among men. At first glance, the trend in women's rejection of physical partner

[2] I do not show data for days when less than ten people were interviewed because it sometimes led to either very high or very low daily percentages. I also exclude respondents interviewed on days with means that extended beyond the y-axis range for each graph. Both of these exclusions were minimal, never combining to more than 20 respondents.

violence appears to be gradually increasing through the course of the survey time period. Upon closer examination, there are four segments. There is a rapid rise in October, a steady November in the weeks before the campaign, a gradual increase during the campaign and into the next week, and then a batch of interview days with higher rejection rates at the beginning of 2016. While the latter three trend segments are logical given my expectations, it is unclear why rejection rates rapidly rise in October. These especially low values could be the result of sampling in October being mostly in places with historically lower rejection of violence against women. It is also possible that another historical event, unobserved in my analysis, may have contributed to this rise. In order to isolate the effect of the *16 Days* campaign, this highlights a need to include a robustness check excluding respondents interviewed in October when I move on to evaluate the influence of the *16 Days* campaign on people's rejection of physical partner violence.

I observe that a slight decline in currently partnered women's ability to refuse having sex with her partner. However, the especially low values in February—in comparison to December and January—may not be solely the result of the *16 Days* campaign. Besides the possibility of sampling in February being mostly in places where women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner is historically lower, it is also possible that another unobserved historical event may be influencing this outcome in February. There is a need for a robustness check undertaken without respondents interviewed in February. Overall, Figure 2 indicates movement over time in terms of people's attitudes about physical partner violence, but little if any shift in women's ability to refuse sex.

Figure 3 presents four related graphs for the daily percentages of ever partnered women's self-reports about experiencing: (1) physical partner violence in the past year; (2) physical

partner violence before the past year; (3) sexual partner violence in the past year; (4) sexual partner violence before the past year. Overall, there is much more day-to-day variation across these graphs than those in Figure 2, likely due in large measure to the smaller sample sizes given that these questions are for women selected to participate in the domestic violence module. In the first row of graphs, there appears to be a subtle decrease after the *16 Days* campaign in ever partnered women's reports of experiencing physical partner violence in the past year, and potentially a slight increase in women's reports of experiencing such violence before the past year. In the second row, there also seems to be a small decreases after the campaign in women's reports of sexual partner violence in the past year. In contrast, there is substantial daily variation and no obvious shift after the campaign in women's reports of sexual partner violence before the past year.

Table 2 builds on these observations and presents comparisons of weighted percentages for each of these outcome variables between those interviewed before the *16 Days* campaign and those interviewed after. For many variables, percentages differed little while a few showed greater shifts. The largest change occurred in the percentage of women that rejected physical partner violence against women, which increased from 78.5 percent before the campaign to 87.5 percent thereafter (p=0.000); rejection also increased among men from 84.7 to 88.6 percent (p=0.007). The percentage of currently partnered women that expressed the ability to refuse having sex with their partner if they did not want to have sex was largely unchanged after the campaign. Ever partnered women's reports of physical partner violence in the past year also remained stable while their reports of such abuse before the past year subtly rose after the campaign from 8.2 to 10.2 percent (p=0.072). Women's self-reported experience of sexual

partner violence in the past year slightly decreased from 16.7 to 13.9 percent (p=0.155), and so did their reports of such abuse before the past year, going from 4.2 to 3.1 percent (p=0.258).

[Table 2]

These descriptive observations about changes in the outcome variables align with some of my hypotheses, but not others. As expected, people's expressed rejection of physical partner violence increased after the *16 Days* campaign. Contrary to my expectations, there was not much of a decrease after the campaign in women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner . Ever partnered women's self-reports about their experience of physical partner violence before the past year also rose as hypothesized, but the increase was not statistically significant. Regression analyses are needed to examine whether these observations hold when controlling for group characteristics that are distinct between the groups of respondents interviewed before and after the campaign.

I next examine how the attributes of respondents interviewed before the campaign may have differed from those interviewed after it. As displayed in Table 3, respondents interviewed before the campaign were somewhat less educated than those interviewed after it. Most importantly, respondents in the before group were much less likely to live in urban areas. The percentage of urban residents was about 11-12 percent prior to the campaign and 25 percent afterwards. Since urban living is often theorized as a source of greater exposure to world cultural models and has been shown to be positively associated with rejection of physical partner violence in Malawi and most other contexts (Pierotti 2013), this represents an important difference between the two groups of respondents surveyed before versus after the campaign. There were also statistically significant group differences in radio use, as well as the proportion of never partnered men and people in a polygamous relationship. In other words, there is

imbalance between respondents interviewed before the *16 Days* campaign and those interviewed after the campaign in terms of their education, radio use, and partnership history. To account for these imbalances, these attributes must be included as control variables in any regression analyses testing the influence of the campaign. In robustness checks, I include all independent variables as covariates.

[Table 3]

The Effects of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

Tables 4 and 5 presents results from seven logistic regression models testing the effects of the *16 Days* campaign on each outcome variable, controlling for urban living, radio use, and partnership history. I convert all coefficient estimates from log odds to average marginal effects (AMEs), paired with 95 percent confidence interval estimates, so that I can accurately compare AMEs within and across models (Ai and Norton 2003; Breen et al. 2018; Long and Mustillo 2018; Mood 2010). In presenting results, I focus primarily on the AME of being interviewed after the national *16 Days* campaign rather than the AMEs of the control variables, and I simplify my presentation of the results by visualizing the predicted probabilities of each outcome variable for those interviewed before and after the campaign, as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

[Table 4]

[Figure 4]

As shown in Figure 4, derived from the results in Table 4, women's predicted probability of stating that they reject physical partner violence increased from 78.9 before the *16 Days* campaign to 87.1 percent after it, even after accounting for the associations between the outcome variable and the first set of control variables. Men's probability of rejection of such violence rose from 84.8 to 88.5 percent. These statistically significant increases are consistent with my first

hypothesis. Moreover, they are substantial in size, especially for women and in light of the short-term nature of the campaign. As a comparison, consider the predicted probabilities of rejection among women by their level of education, which is theorized in the literature as a powerful, long-term "treatment" that exposes people to world cultural models. The predicted probability of rejection among women with no education is 76.6 while for women with thirteen or more years of education it is 88.3. While this 11.7 percentage point increase from a women receiving a full education is greater than the 8.2 percentage point increase from the *16 days* campaign, the latter occurs in a much shorter period of time. This suggests that the direct messaging denouncing gender violence that occurred during the *16 Days* campaign had a strong positive effect on Malawians' stated rejection of physical partner violence.

Moving to the final graph in Figure 4, I observe that the predicted probability of currently partnered women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner when they do not desire to have sex decreased significantly from 70.4 percent before the campaign to 68.0 percent thereafter. While small in magnitude, this change supports my second hypothesis based on my explanation that the promotion of vernacularized world cultural messages condemning *nkhanza* strengthened women's inability to refuse unwanted sex with their partners.

Figure 5 presents the predicted probabilities for women's self-reports of experiencing gender violence. The corresponding regression results appear in Table 5. This evidence of a recency Beginning with the graph in the top left of Figure 5, I observe a small but noisy effect of the *16 Days* campaign on the predicted probability of ever partnered women stating they experienced physical partner violence in the past year, which declined from 17.2 to 16.0 percent. Moving to the top-right graph, I find that the probability of women reporting that they experienced physical partner violence before the past year rose from 7.9 to 10.7 percent, a

statistically significant increase that supports my third hypothesis. The graph in the bottom-left of displays that the probability of women stating that their partner sexually abused in the past year, which declined from 16.6 percent prior to the campaign to 14.1 percent after the campaign period. The confidence intervals for these probabilities substantially overlap and their difference is not statistically significant. The final graph in the bottom-right shows that women's probability of reporting sexual partner violence that happened before the past year was essentially unchanged, going from 3.5 before the campaign to 3.9 percent thereafter. Overall, the rising rate of women's reported physical partner violence from before the past year, and the relative lack of statistically significant movement in the probabilities of the other types of gender violence reported in Figure 5, supports the information paradox described in the human rights literature. Additionally, Figure 5 makes clear that women are more likely to report experiencing more violence in the past year than before the past year. This is unlikely to be the case, but it is consistent with other literature arguing that people are much more likely to recall experiences of interpersonal violence during surveys when they occurred recently (Fay and Li 2010; Widom 2019).

[Table 5]

[Figure 5]

Robustness Checks

I conduct several robustness checks. First, I replicate all models while including all independent variables as covariates. Second, I include respondents interviewed during the *16 Days* campaign period. To accommodate this, I change my interview date variable to become categorical, with the reference group being interviewed before the campaign and the two comparison groups being interviewed during and after the campaign. Third, I carry out two

additional robustness checks that arose from my observations of daily percentages of the outcome variables in Figures 2 and 3: I replicate Models 1 and 2 testing the effect of the campaign on rejection of physical partner violence against women but I exclude respondents interviewed in October, and I also replicate Model 3 excluding respondents interviewed in February. The full results for all robustness checks are reported in the Appendix.

Overall, findings from the robustness checks are very similar, and in some cases nearly equivalent, to those in Tables 3 and 4. One important difference is that when I exclude respondents interviewed in October from the men's sample, the AME of 0.025 for being interviewed after the *16 Days* campaign is not statistically significant (CI=-0.006, 0.056; p=0.120). This somewhat diminishes the claim that the campaign influenced men's rejection of physical partner violence, but this must be considered in light of the facts that the size of the AME was not appreciably lower and that in all other models the AME for this variable was statistically significant.

Conclusion

This paper addresses the global circulation of cultural models of development and human rights to lay people. Previous work demonstrates the importance of these world cultural models on national governments and other macro-level organizations. Some recent scholarship finds that world cultural models also reach down to the individual level. Similar to observations made at the national-level, lay people's exposure to world cultural models is often positively associated with attitudinal conformity to these models. A few studies also show relationships between exposure and self-reported life experiences, but more work is needed. At the same time, a substantial literature finds people subvert and make use of these models in unintended ways.

Scholars emphasize how world cultural models are modified and they question claims about an emergence of global cultural homogeneity. I propose that both of these processes—the dissemination of world culture and vernacularization—occur simultaneously. Accounting for both macro- and meso-levels of cultural globalization processes can help anticipate what types of changes we can expect to see at the individual-level.

In the empirical case, I examined how the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign carried out in Malawi in 2015 influenced lay people. The campaign is part of a global effort to condemn gender violence, which Malawian activists have led with support from foreign donors. The translation of world cultural models about gender violence into public discourse in Malawi was in some ways smooth and in other ways changed its meaning. Intermediaries in the cultural diffusion processes interpreted these international messages about gender violence through their understanding of what constitutes *nkhanza,* or abusive between given expectations of intertwined economic and social relationship responsibilities and privileges. In this way, the campaign strengthened existing norms that physical violence is not acceptable, but also labeled some forms of sexual violence—namely refusing to have sex with one's long-term intimate partner without a socially sanctioned reason—as a form of abuse.

Using survey data from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS, I show that this vernacularization process had bearing on the type of influence the *16 Days* campaign had. I find that people interviewed after the campaign were more likely to oppose physical partner violence than people interviewed before the campaign, yet women were more likely to say they could not refuse to have sex with their partner after the campaign period than before it. I also found evidence that the campaign increased ever partnered women's likelihood of reporting abuse they experienced prior to the past year.

These results highlight that world cultural models did reach down to the grassroots and affected ordinary people in Malawi through the *16 Days* campaign. Many international and domestic actors played an important role in this process. However, the effects of the campaign across unique outcomes also draws out the importance of vernacularization. In my analysis, the individual-level influence of the public diffusion of world cultural models about gender violence was not entirely aligned with broader principles of individualism, consent, and women's rights that international organizations and global elites propagate. Of crucial importance was the literal translation of "gender violence" into the much broader term for injustice and cruelty in Chichewa, *nkhanza.* This opened the door for intermediary brokers that connect international organizations to lay people in Malawi to modify the messages about gender violence promoted across the country. Existing norms about relationships being founded on both social and economic links thereby informed what was considered *nkhanza,* and many brokers reinforced the view that partners have "conjugal rights." In this way, the *16 Days* campaign actually promoted the idea that refusing to have sex with one's partner could be a form of gender violence.

This type of reinterpretation of world cultural messages about gender violence may not be limited to Malawi. Warren (2015:144-147) documents a similar translation process in Ghana, and the term "abuse" is often translated into other languages by using an already familiar term that has a slightly different meaning (Navarro et al. 2019). Several studies document lay people's perceptions that denying conjugal rights is a form of gender violence not only in Malawi but also in countries across the world, including several regional neighbors in Africa (e.g. Adjei 2015; Smith 2016; Stern and Heise 2018; Watts et al. 1998). Future research across other contexts is needed to evaluate the influence of gender violence campaigns across multiple outcomes related to physical and sexual forms of partner violence.

Research about the effects of world cultural models confronts an "information paradox" (Keck and Sikkink 1998:194-195). As awareness of an issue grows because actors say they will comply, so too does monitoring and reporting about actors' violations. This dilemma is at the crux of current debates about whether nations' human rights practices are improving or declining over time (Cingranelli and Filippov 2018; Fariss 2019). In my analysis, the information paradox also applied at the individual-level with self-reported experiences. More generally, people's exposure to universalized cultural models about an issue may simultaneously shape their behavior as well as their reports about how they and others act.

To conduct future research evaluating the effects of exposure to world cultural models on action, it will be necessary to disentangle increases in reporting that comes with greater exposure to and institutionalization of world cultural models about human rights (see Hadler 2016). Here, researchers can again turn to work distinguishing different types of cultural modes, in particular the "declarative" and "nondeclarative" aspects of people's personal culture (Lizardo 2017; see also Vaisey and Frye 2019). Unlike the fast acquisition of public culture as declarative personal culture, people's nondeclarative knowledge—which strongly informs their everyday habits, skills, and value dispositions (Leschziner and Brett 2019; Miles 2015; Vaisey 2009)—depends on "slow learning" and comes only from "repeated long-term exposure to consistent patterns of experience" (Lizardo 2017:92). The cultural models people learn from their societal context are thus more likely to shape their nondeclarative personal culture than foreign cultural models about human rights and development, or gender violence specifically, at least to the extent that people are introduced to these foreign models later in life and exposed to them less. Still, the transitioning of world cultural models informing only the declarative to also shaping the

nondeclarative realms of an individual's personal culture can occur over time through habitual adjustment and repeated exposure (Cohen and Leung 2009; Strand and Lizardo 2015).

Overall, this paper demonstrates that people's exposure to world cultural models shapes their ideological expressions in conjunction with the manner in which these models are presented to them. Brokers' interpretations of world cultural models is the messaging that lay people often receive, and therefore what influences them. Discrepancies between the messaging content international organizations intend to spread and what brokers' disseminate can manifest at the individual-level. Additionally, people's exposure to world cultural models changes the way they conceptualize and discuss their own past experiences. With respect to human rights, this implies that people's self-reported experiences of having their human rights violated will increase with more exposure to world cultural models, even net of any actual change in actual violations of human rights.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Four normatively accepted types of *nkhanza* among long-term heterosexual intimate partners in Malawi.

Action	Perpetrator	Victim
Partner physically attacks	The partner that uses physical force	The partner that is hit, beaten, kicked, etcetera.
Partner physically forces sex	The partner that uses physical force	The partner that is forced
Partner does not perform expected relationship duties	The partner that neglected their duty	The other partner
Partner refuses to have sex	The partner that refuses to have sex	The partner that desires to have sex

Table 2. Differences in outcome variables between people interviewed before versus after the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign from November 24 – December 12, 2015.

	Women			Men		
	Mean / %		*p-value*	*Mean / %*		*p-value*
	Before	After		Before	After	
Outcome Variables						
Rejection of Physical Partner Violence Against Women	78.5	87.5	0.000	84.7	88.6	0.007
Women's Ability to Refuse Sex with Partner[a]	69.8	69.0	0.336			
Women's Self-Reported Experience of:						
Physical Partner Violence in the Past Year[b,c]	16.9	16.4	0.871			
Physical Partner Violence Before the Past Year[b,c]	8.2	10.2	0.072			
Sexual Partner Violence in the Past Year[b,c]	16.7	13.9	0.155			
Sexual Partner Violence Before the Past Year[b,c]	4.2	3.1	0.258			

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS.
[a] = Currently partnered women.
[b] = Ever partnered women.
[c] = Women included in the domestic violence module.

Table 3. Balance of attributes between people interviewed before versus after the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign from November 24 – December 12, 2015.

	Women			Men		
	Mean / %		*p-value*	*Mean / %*		*p-value*
	Before	After		Before	After	
Covariates						
Education	5.6	6.2	0.036	6.8	7.2	0.085
Urban	10.9	24.5	0.010	11.6	24.8	0.012
Christian	86.2	86.7	0.876	84.3	87.7	0.107
Newspaper Weekly	8.0	8.2	0.820	14.3	14.0	0.870
Radio Weekly	31.5	28.2	0.017	53.2	43.5	0.000
Television Weekly	10.0	12.9	0.195	26.5	18.6	0.430
Non-Agricultural Work	27.2	26.4	0.669	49.9	43.9	0.063
Household Wealth	1.9	2.2	0.072	2.1	2.3	0.094
Age	28.2	28.0	0.285	29.0	28.8	0.488
Matrilineal	79.4	78.3	0.745	79.2	78.4	0.747
Partnership History						
Never Partnered	19.4	23.0	0.000	37.1	38.9	0.333
Formerly Partnered	13.5	13.0	0.541	3.7	3.3	0.321
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	57.5	56.7	0.225	53.6	54.0	0.816
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	9.6	7.3	0.001	5.6	3.8	0.042

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS.
[a] = Women included in the domestic violence module.
[b] = Ever partnered women.

Table 4. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting people's rejection of physical partner violence, and women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner.

Dependent Variable	Rejection of Physical Partner Violence Against Women		Women's Ability to Refuse Sex with Partner
Sample	*Women*	*Men*	*Currently Partnered Women*
Model	1	2	3
Interview Date			
After Campaign	0.088***	0.032*	-0.016*
	[0.062,0.115]	[0.005,0.059]	[-0.029,-0.004]
Covariates			
Education	0.009***	0.006*	0.013***
	[0.008,0.011]	[0.001,0.011]	[0.011,0.014]
Urban	0.076***	0.056**	0.037*
	[0.037,0.115]	[0.015,0.098]	[0.001,0.072]
Radio Weekly	0.076***	0.056**	0.037*
	[0.037,0.115]	[0.015,0.098]	[0.001,0.072]
Partnership History (Ref.=Never Partnered)			
Formerly Partnered	0.087***	0.100***	
	[0.055,0.118]	[0.074,0.126]	
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	0.081***	0.128***	
	[0.053,0.108]	[0.110,0.145]	
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	0.075***	0.102***	0.000
	[0.044,0.107]	[0.044,0.160]	[-0.029,0.030]
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
N	20153	6160	12973

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Table 5. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting women's self-reports of experiencing physical and sexual partner violence in the past year or before the past year.

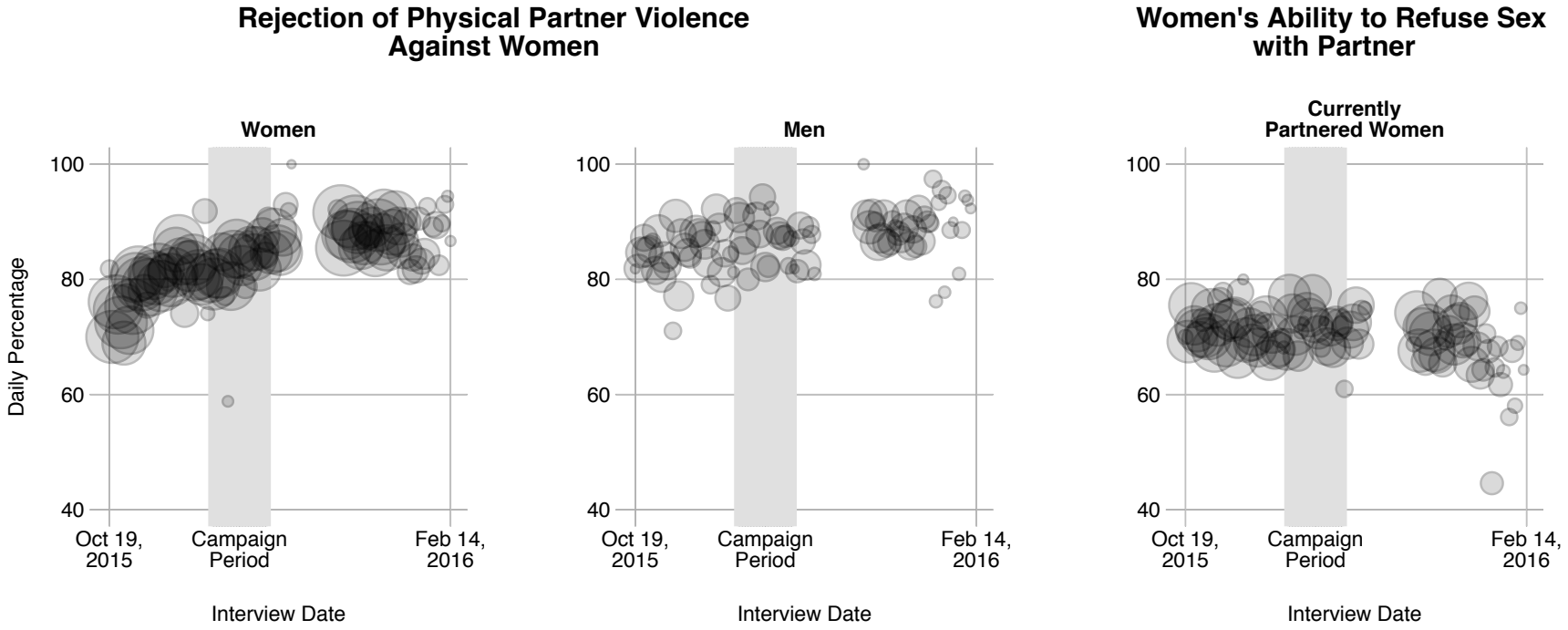
Dependent Variable	Women's Self-Reported Experience of Physical Partner Violence		Women's Self-Reported Experience of Sexual Partner Violence	
	In the Past Year	Before the Past Year	In the Past Year	Before the Past Year
Sample	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*
Model	4	5	6	7
Interview Date				
After Campaign	-0.013	0.027**	-0.025	-0.004
	[-0.064,0.039]	[0.008,0.047]	[-0.059,0.008]	[-0.020,0.013]
Covariates				
Education	-0.001	-0.004*	-0.002	-0.001
	[-0.006,0.004]	[-0.008,-0.000]	[-0.007,0.002]	[-0.003,0.000]
Urban	0.024	-0.001	-0.029	-0.005
	[-0.018,0.066]	[-0.029,0.027]	[-0.095,0.036]	[-0.033,0.024]
Radio Weekly	-0.023	0.018	0.003	0.017
	[-0.054,0.009]	[-0.007,0.043]	[-0.034,0.039]	[-0.005,0.039]
Partnership History (Ref.=Formerly Partnered)				
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	-0.061*	-0.068**	-0.001	-0.090***
	[-0.112,-0.009]	[-0.117,-0.020]	[-0.038,0.036]	[-0.123,-0.057]
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	-0.008	-0.093***	0.045	-0.069**
	[-0.094,0.079]	[-0.145,-0.040]	[-0.022,0.113]	[-0.113,-0.024]
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
N	4399	4399	4399	4322

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Figure 1. Public presentation during the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* in 2010.

Note: Photo courtesy of the Malawi Human Rights Resource Centre.

Figure 2. Daily percentages over the course of the 2015-16 Malawi DHS of people's rejection of physical partner violence, and women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner.

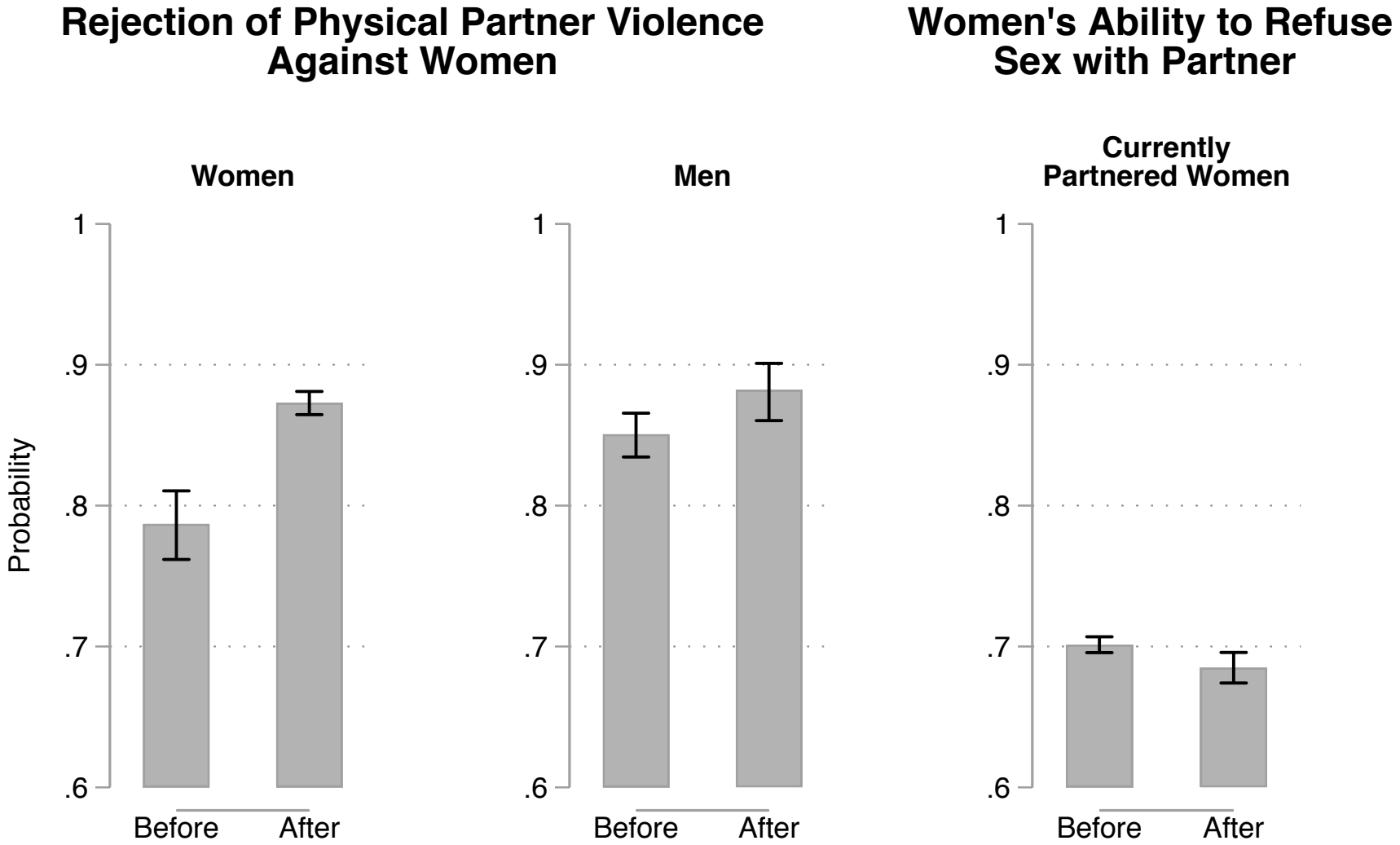


Note: Data are from 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Dot size indicates the relative daily number of interviewees.

Figure 3. Daily percentages over the course of the 2015-16 Malawi DHS of women's self-reporting that they experienced physical and sexual violence in the past year or before the past year.

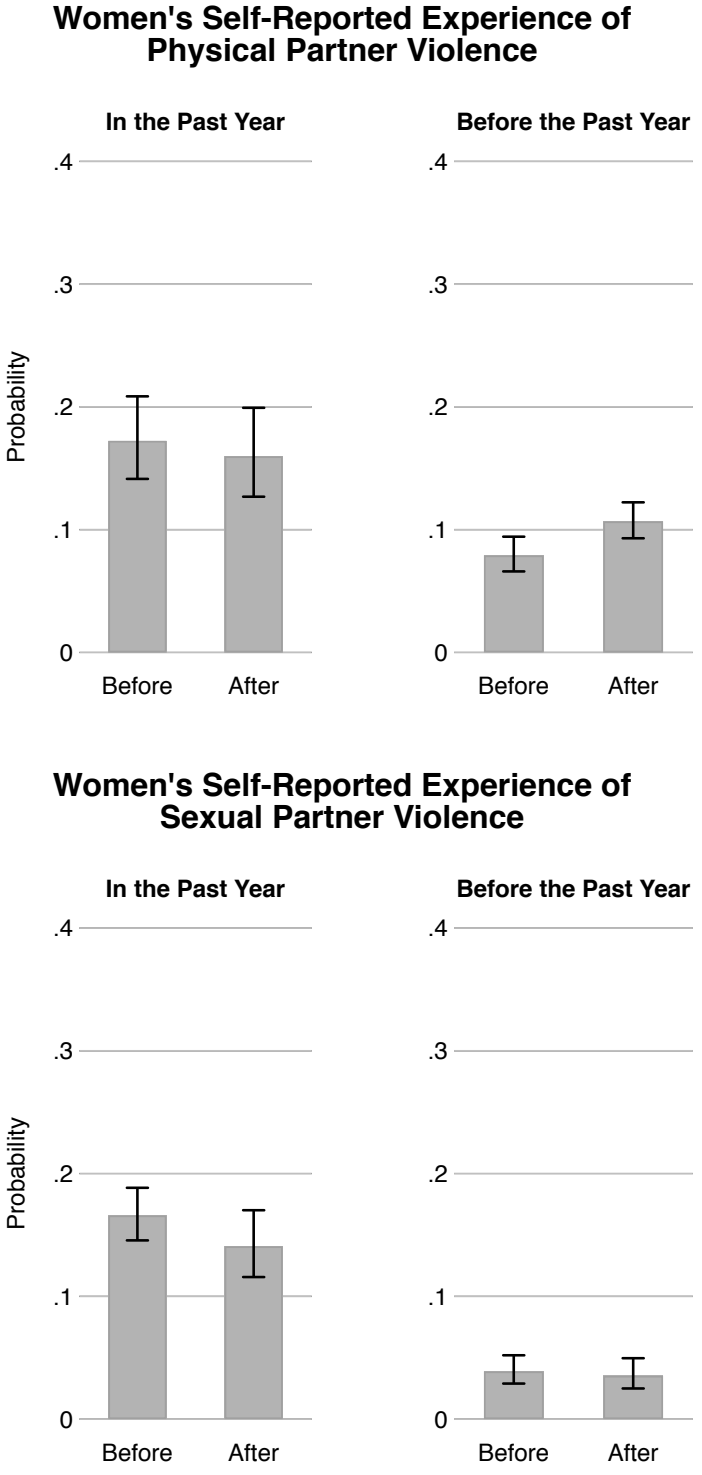
Note: Data are from 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Dot size indicates the relative daily number of interviewees.

Figure 4. Comparison of people's predicted probability of rejecting physical partner violence, and women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner, by whether they were interviewed before or after the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in 2015.



Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Results derived from logistic regression models reported in Table 2. Error bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals.

Figure 5. Comparison of women's predicted probability of self-reporting that they experienced physical and sexual partner violence in the past year, or before the past year, by whether they were interviewed before or after the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign in 2015.



Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Results derived from logistic regression models reported in Table 3. Error bars indicate 95 percent confidence intervals.

Appendix

Table C1 provides the descriptive statistics for all variables for the full women's and men's samples. The results for five robustness checks for Tables 4 and 5 in the main text are also provided in Tables C2-C6 of this Appendix. The robustness checks, and their associated Tables, are as follows:

Tables C2-C3, Models 1.1-7.1:	Models 1.1-7.1 include all independent variables.
Tables C4-C5, Models 1.2-7.2:	Models 1.2-7.2 include respondents interviewed during the *16 Days* campaign.
Table C6, Models 1.3-3.3:	Models 1.3 and 2.3 exclude respondents interviewed in October. Model 3.3 excludes respondents interviewed in February.

Table C1. Descriptive statistics from women's and men's samples for all variables.

	Women					Men				
	%	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*	*%*	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*Min*	*Max*
Outcome Variables										
Rejection of Physical Partner Violence Against Women	82.3			0	1	86.3			0	1
Women's Ability to Refuse Sex with Partner[a]	70.1			0	1					
Women's Self-Reported Experience of:										
Physical Partner Violence in the Past Year[b,c]	16.2			0	1					
Physical Partner Violence Before the Past Year[b,c]	9.6			0	1					
Sexual Partner Violence in the Past Year[b,c]	15.4			0	1					
Sexual Partner Violence Before the Past Year[b,c]	3.7			0	1					
Independent Variables										
Interview Date										
Before Campaign	44.9			0	1	44.3			0	1
During Campaign	19.6			0	1	19.3			0	1
After Campaign	35.5			0	1	36.4			0	1
Education		6.0	3.7				7.0	3.6		
Urban	18.3			0	1	18.5			0	1
Christian	86.9			0	1	86.1			0	1
Newspaper Weekly	8.3			0	1	14.8			0	1
Radio Weekly	30.0			0	1	49.0			0	1
Television Weekly	11.5			0	1	17.7			0	1
Non-Agricultural Work	27.7			0	1	48.1			0	1
Household Wealth		2.1	9.3				2.2	1.4		
Age		28.1	1.4				28.9	10.6		
Matrilineal	79.0			0	1	79.7			0	1

Partnership History						
Never Partnered	21.0	0	1	38.3	0	1
Formerly Partnered	13.3	0	1	3.5	0	1
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	57.3	0	1	53.6	0	1
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	8.4	0	1	4.6	0	1

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS.
[a] = Currently partnered women.
[b] = Ever partnered women.
[c] = Women included in the domestic violence module.

Table C2. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting people's rejection of physical partner violence, and women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner, and including all independent variables.

Dependent Variable	Rejection of Physical Partner Violence Against Women		Women's Ability to Refuse Sex with Partner
Sample	*Women*	*Men*	*Currently Partnered Women*
Model	1.1	2.1	3.1
Interview Date			
After Campaign	0.087***	0.031*	-0.016*
	[0.062,0.113]	[0.003,0.059]	[-0.028,-0.004]
Covariates			
Education	0.010***	0.006**	0.013***
	[0.008,0.012]	[0.001,0.010]	[0.010,0.015]
Urban	0.052*	0.049	0.026
	[0.008,0.095]	[-0.001,0.100]	[-0.017,0.069]
Christian	0.034*	0.001	-0.014
	[0.004,0.065]	[-0.027,0.029]	[-0.036,0.009]
Newspaper Weekly	0.003	0.007	-0.018
	[-0.021,0.028]	[-0.029,0.043]	[-0.070,0.034]
Radio Weekly	-0.016	0.026*	0.020*
	[-0.038,0.006]	[0.001,0.051]	[0.000,0.039]
Television Weekly	0.017	-0.005	0.037
	[-0.008,0.042]	[-0.027,0.017]	[-0.014,0.089]
Non-Agricultural Work	0.006	-0.003	0.023
	[-0.016,0.028]	[-0.024,0.017]	[-0.006,0.052]
Household Wealth	0.009**	0.002	-0.002
	[0.003,0.016]	[-0.004,0.007]	[-0.008,0.004]
Age	0.003***	0.005***	0.000
	[0.002,0.004]	[0.003,0.006]	[-0.001,0.002]
Matrilineal	0.020*	-0.005	0.018
	[0.002,0.037]	[-0.049,0.039]	[-0.019,0.055]
Partnership History (Ref.=Never Partnered)			
Formerly Partnered	0.040*	0.018	
	[0.009,0.072]	[-0.024,0.059]	
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	0.041**	0.054***	
	[0.014,0.067]	[0.032,0.076]	
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	0.025	-0.004	
	[-0.007,0.056]	[-0.112,0.104]	
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓

N	20153	6160	12973

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Table C3. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting women's self-reports of experiencing physical and sexual partner violence, and including all independent variables.

Dependent Variable	Women's Self-Reported Experience of Physical Partner Violence		Women's Self-Reported Experience of Sexual Partner Violence	
	In the Past Year	Before the Past Year	In the Past Year	Before the Past Year
Sample	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*
Model	4.1	5.1	6.1	7.1
Interview Date				
After Campaign	-0.011	0.026**	-0.023	-0.004
	[-0.062,0.040]	[0.007,0.045]	[-0.058,0.011]	[-0.020,0.012]
Covariates				
Education	-0.002	-0.002	-0.003	-0.000
	[-0.008,0.005]	[-0.006,0.001]	[-0.008,0.003]	[-0.002,0.001]
Urban	0.039	-0.009	0.006	-0.006
	[-0.007,0.084]	[-0.049,0.032]	[-0.050,0.061]	[-0.032,0.021]
Christian	-0.018	0.022	0.021	0.007
	[-0.125,0.089]	[-0.017,0.061]	[-0.031,0.073]	[-0.012,0.027]
Newspaper Weekly	-0.033	0.002	0.029	-0.021
	[-0.083,0.018]	[-0.034,0.037]	[-0.027,0.086]	[-0.048,0.005]
Radio Weekly	-0.009	0.015	0.019	0.020
	[-0.042,0.025]	[-0.013,0.044]	[-0.020,0.057]	[-0.002,0.042]
Television Weekly	-0.087*	-0.031	-0.087	-0.025
	[-0.157,-0.018]	[-0.082,0.020]	[-0.180,0.005]	[-0.061,0.010]
Non-Agricultural Work	0.033	0.014	0.042*	0.017***
	[-0.002,0.068]	[-0.016,0.045]	[0.010,0.074]	[0.010,0.023]
Household Wealth	-0.001	0.005	-0.015**	0.000
	[-0.015,0.013]	[-0.004,0.013]	[-0.026,-0.004]	[-0.006,0.007]
Age	-0.003*	0.003***	-0.003*	0.001
	[-0.005,-0.000]	[0.002,0.004]	[-0.005,-0.001]	[-0.000,0.002]
Matrilineal	-0.035	-0.014	-0.034*	0.004
	[-0.091,0.021]	[-0.058,0.031]	[-0.066,-0.002]	[-0.032,0.041]

Partnership History (Ref.=Formerly Partnered)				
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	-0.069* [-0.124,-0.015]	-0.056* [-0.105,-0.008]	-0.002 [-0.040,0.035]	-0.083*** [-0.113,-0.053]
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	-0.007 [-0.093,0.078]	-0.085** [-0.138,-0.032]	0.051 [-0.016,0.119]	-0.064** [-0.104,-0.023]
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
N	4399	4399	4399	4322

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Table C4. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting people's rejection of physical partner violence, and women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner, and including people interviewed during the *16 Days* campaign.

Dependent Variable	Rejection of Physical Partner Violence Against Women		Women's Ability to Refuse Sex with Partner
Sample	*Women*	*Men*	*Currently Partnered Women*
Model	1.2	2.2	3.2
Interview Date			
(Ref.=Before Campaign)			
During Campaign	0.037*	0.008	0.010
	[0.005,0.069]	[-0.019,0.035]	[-0.014,0.034]
After Campaign	0.088***	0.031*	-0.015*
	[0.062,0.114]	[0.005,0.057]	[-0.028,-0.003]
Covariates			
Education	0.010***	0.007**	0.013***
	[0.009,0.011]	[0.003,0.012]	[0.012,0.014]
Urban	0.061***	0.051**	0.033*
	[0.027,0.095]	[0.015,0.087]	[0.001,0.065]
Radio Weekly	0.000	0.015	0.019*
	[-0.019,0.020]	[-0.012,0.043]	[0.002,0.035]
Partnership History			
(Ref.=Never Partnered)			
Formerly Partnered	0.084***	0.098***	
	[0.058,0.110]	[0.075,0.122]	
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	0.081***	0.133***	
	[0.058,0.103]	[0.114,0.152]	
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	0.073***	0.120***	-0.000
	[0.044,0.102]	[0.067,0.174]	[-0.025,0.024]
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
N	24562	7478	15802

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Table C5. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting women's self-reports of experiencing physical and sexual partner violence, and including people interviewed during the *16 Days* campaign.

Dependent Variable	Women's Self-Reported Experience of Physical Partner Violence		Women's Self-Reported Experience of Sexual Partner Violence	
	In the Past Year	Before the Past Year	In the Past Year	Before the Past Year
Sample	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*	*Ever Partnered Women*
Model	4.2	5.2	6.2	7.2
Interview Date				
(Ref.=Before Campaign)				
During Campaign	-0.035	0.032*	-0.009	-0.008
	[-0.073,0.002]	[0.001,0.062]	[-0.033,0.014]	[-0.026,0.011]
After Campaign	-0.017	0.027**	-0.031	-0.005
	[-0.069,0.034]	[0.007,0.047]	[-0.066,0.003]	[-0.020,0.010]
Covariates				
Education	-0.001	-0.005**	-0.002	-0.002*
	[-0.005,0.003]	[-0.008,-0.001]	[-0.005,0.002]	[-0.003,-0.000]
Urban	0.014	0.005	-0.017	-0.008
	[-0.026,0.055]	[-0.026,0.035]	[-0.074,0.040]	[-0.030,0.014]
Radio Weekly	-0.020	0.009	-0.002	0.013
	[-0.046,0.006]	[-0.016,0.033]	[-0.032,0.027]	[-0.006,0.032]
Partnership History				
(Ref.=Formerly Partnered)				
Currently Partnered:	-0.052**	-0.096***	-0.007	-0.088***
Monogamy	[-0.091,-0.013]	[-0.144,-0.048]	[-0.043,0.029]	[-0.115,-0.060]
Currently Partnered:	-0.008	-0.106***	0.042	-0.077***
Polygamy	[-0.080,0.064]	[-0.148,-0.064]	[-0.013,0.097]	[-0.114,-0.039]
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
N	5406	5406	5406	5284

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

Table C6. Average marginal effects and 95 percent confidence intervals from logistic regression models predicting people's rejection of physical partner violence (excluding people interviewed in October 2015), and women's ability to refuse having sex with their partner (excluding people interviewed in February 2016).

Dependent Variable	Rejection of Physical Partner Violence Against Women		Women's Ability to Refuse Sex with Partner
Sample	*Women*	*Men*	*Currently Partnered Women*
Model	1.3	2.3	3.3
Interview Date			
After Campaign	0.068***	0.025	-0.016*
	[0.054,0.081]	[-0.006,0.056]	[-0.031,-0.002]
Covariates			
Education	0.009***	0.006	0.013***
	[0.007,0.010]	[-0.000,0.012]	[0.011,0.014]
Urban	0.057**	0.054**	0.037*
	[0.022,0.091]	[0.014,0.093]	[0.000,0.073]
Radio Weekly	-0.003	0.020	0.019
	[-0.029,0.023]	[-0.002,0.041]	[-0.002,0.041]
Partnership History (Ref.=Never Partnered)			
Formerly Partnered	0.063***	0.097***	
	[0.038,0.089]	[0.065,0.129]	
Currently Partnered: Monogamy	0.062***	0.112***	
	[0.034,0.090]	[0.094,0.131]	
Currently Partnered: Polygamy	0.064**	0.126***	0.003
	[0.025,0.103]	[0.081,0.172]	[-0.027,0.033]
District Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
N	15849	4925	12389

Note: Data are from the 2015-16 Malawi DHS. Significance tests (p-value): * .05, ** .01, *** .001.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

Overview

Across the three empirical studies of this dissertation, I assessed the spread and individual-level impact in Malawi of cultural models that are critical of intimate partner violence and condemn it as a human rights violation. I also examined the flow of alternative cultural models that perpetuated negative gender stereotypes, as well as how intermediary actors in Malawi translated and implemented foreign cultural models in Malawi given contextual norms. Drawing upon national surveys supplemented with an array of data from administrative, archival, organizational, and newspaper sources, I provided evidence that media sources, human rights projects, and the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence* campaign contributed to the dissemination of various cultural models across Malawi and shaped citizens' stated attitudes about intimate partner violence and their self-reports about experiencing such violence. These empirical findings inform the literature on global cultural diffusion in multiple ways, including: broadening its vision of the types of cultural models circulated on a global level; recognizing that the presentation of cultural models can lead to substantial differences in individual-level influence; and providing evidence that brokers' modified interpretations of cultural models about human rights can influence lay people, including in ways transnational organizations did not originally intend. In this chapter, I highlight some of the most important findings from the three empirical studies I conducted.

Key Findings

The first study analyzed media content in Malawi and its influence. Transnational organizations successfully shaped media content by leading "trainings" for journalists, and paying them to write stories about their projects and about specific topics. This was reflected in newspaper content. I found that articles about men's perpetration of violence against women dwarfed articles about other types of interpersonal violence. Importantly, the recent publication of newspaper articles about violence against women prior to individuals' personal interview dates had a strong, independent association with their expressed rejection of physical partner violence against women.

Much of the television content and movies available in Malawi were primarily violent action films that reiterated gender stereotypes. Corresponding with Gray's (2011; 2014) observations that this type of television consumption was especially common among men, I found that men's probability of stating that they rejected physical partner violence was negatively associated with weekly television viewing.

These findings suggest that media content in Malawi is filled with internationally influenced content, but that different media pathways contain content that would either discourage violence or normalize it. Exposure to these different media pathways was associated with divergent attitudinal outcomes. More broadly, this study suggests that there are specific sources through which distinct cultural messages are disseminated, and that transnational organizations are not alone in disseminating their messages on a global scale.

The second study shifted attention to the influence of human rights projects, distinguishing projects by their management and implementation. The design of bureaucrat-led

projects about gender violence relied heavily on community leaders to promote human rights messages among people in their communities, but provided them with little reason or resources to change their previous strategies of managing cases of partner abuse. The amount of aid disbursed in support of bureaucrat-led projects in a person's district failed to subsequently influence women's attitudes and it had a negative effect on men's stated rejection of physical partner violence. Conversely, activist-led projects were effective at increasing women's rejection of such violence. Activists implemented projects that allowed them to communicate directly with people across the country, including those in remote rural areas, and they carefully presented their messages using established techniques in Malawi. Nevertheless, there was not strong evidence that they were able to positively influence men's rejection of physical partner violence against women. This suggests that the projects' organizational forms informs whether and how cultural models about human rights are widely circulated among lay people, which in turn affects the types of attitudinal influence projects have on people from different sub-populations.

The third study provided evidence that the *16 Days* campaign disseminated vernacularized cultural messages about gender violence. The way meso-level brokers in Malawi interpreted and translated the gender violence messages that transnational organizations disseminated helped reinforce existing cultural norms about what constitutes "violence" (Saur et al. 2005). People interviewed after the national campaign were more likely to state they rejected physical partner violence, but women were slightly less likely to say they could refuse having sex with their partner. This is consistent with the cultural norms reproduced during the campaign period in support of the concept of "conjugal rights" but critical of physical abuse (Kamyongolo and Malunga 2011). I also found intriguing evidence that the campaign increased ever partnered women's self-reports of being abused before the past year. These results show that people's

exposure to cultural models about human rights shape the way they discuss and define past life experiences.

Summarizing across these studies, this dissertation provides evidence that cultural models are shaping ordinary people's perceptions of the world. The institutional power of cultural models of development and human rights extends to lay publics (Thornton 2005), but other, alternative cultural messages are similarly globally circulated. The individual-level effects of cultural models, however, hinge on how they are disseminated to lay people; this includes processes of vernacularization and the messaging strategies that brokers employ. The dissemination, implementation strategy, and vernacularization of various types of imported cultural models collectively inform how cultural models influence lay people.

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