State Reactions to Domestic Violence in Costa Rica and Norway: A Comparative Analysis

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Chapter 1

Abstract

This thesis examines the reaction of the Norwegian and Costa Rican governments to advocacy regarding gender-based violence by women’s organizations and movements. Examining the reactions to gender-based violence and analyzing why reactions by the government occurred are central to understanding the prevalence of violence within the country and the levels service provided for victims. Previous research has not applied a gendered lens to the cultural, economic, and historical aspects that have created two different models of countering gender-based violence in Norway and Costa Rica. This project compared qualitative primary data, including interviews and observations, and quantitative, secondary data specifically statistics of violence, to explore how these nations counter gender-based violence and promote justice for citizens. Field research and country residence in conjunction with secondary data established a cultural understanding of violence and the preventive measures by governmental and non-governmental organizations. This new approach in examining gender-based violence takes into account cultural views of gender, especially the belief of equality in performance versus essential difference, and the effects of these cultural beliefs on levels of violence.

Introduction

Once considered a private matter, domestic violence has transformed to a major political issue across the globe and is acknowledged as a public health issue and human rights violation (Basu, 2010; Lindström, 2004;). This paradigm shift, from private matter to a societal concern,
has been championed by women’s movements whose advocacy efforts have created government reform in the form of laws, policy, and prevention plans (Htun & Weldon, 2012). Previous literature concerning Norway has examined the impact of women’s organizations to create government supported programs, but not how the general structure and women friendly policies have worked to reduce domestic violence. Similarly, the literature surrounding Costa Rica has mainly focused on the high levels of domestic violence, but few articles address the services available for victims and organizations’ measures to prevent this type of violence. This thesis examines the impact of government prevention and treatment in Costa Rica, where tools are still emerging, and Norway, where a system has been established for nearly forty years.

Analyzing the two countries’ approaches to eliminating violence requires the application of two feminist theories: sameness and difference (Tong, 2009). Norway’s government applies the model of sameness between the two genders to establish equality, stating that both genders can perform similar actions such as childcare and paid work. Costa Rica adheres to the belief that the genders are essentially different and separates them when addressing gender based violence. The two models of sameness and difference correlate to the prevalence of violence where Norway has lower rates and Costa Rica higher rates of violence. Examining these two countries reactions to gender-based violence can be helpful in the implementation of new policies in the United States and elsewhere.

This introductory chapter examines gender-based violence as a human rights violation, the impact on women’s lives, and the influence of activism. In addition to assessing the prevalence of domestic violence in Costa Rica and Norway, this chapter also provides a framework for this research project including its purpose, hypotheses, and research methodology.
Chapter 2 discusses Costa Rica as a fairly peaceful country, but with considerable gender-based violence and what government and non-government structures do to address violence. Chapter 3 examines the strong feminist movement in Norway that has influenced the creation of social welfare programs that benefit women, establish equality, and reduce violence. Chapter 4 applies feminist theory to examine the different application of prevention and treatment by the two countries.

**Literature Review: Gender-based Violence and Human Rights**

Gender-based violence has emerged as a major social issue over the last twenty-five years (Linström, 2004) and is now acknowledged as a human rights violation (Reilly, 2009; True, 2012; Linström, 2004; Htun & Weldon, 2012; Basu, 2010). Violence has systematically been used to oppress and discriminate women based on general devaluation of feminine work and attributes. According to True (2012) “gender constructions of women as inferior or subordinate to men within and across societies have made violence against women both acceptable, in many places at many times, and invisible” (p. 9). Working to transform gender-based violence from a social norm, women’s social movements assert that gender-based violence is a human rights violation. Bond and Phillips (2001) note that “civil and political rights include rights such as the right to life; the right to nondiscrimination; the right to liberty and security of the person; the right to live free of torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; and freedom of association” (p. 483). Gender-based violence violates the right to life, nondiscrimination, security of person, and the right to live without degrading treatment.
Violence is a method to establish power that, when directed towards women, inherently oppresses and marginalizes them. Using violence to dominate within the home, men use this power to control women and keep them from claiming their full rights as humans. The shift to include women’s rights as human rights has led to the examination of traditional gender roles that reinforce male dominance. Gender roles place women in the role of reproducer in the private or domestic sphere, whereas men assume the role of the producer in the public sphere. Intimate relationships are heavily gendered (Holmes, 2009) and the family is a prime environment for male domination (hooks, 1984). According to Sagot and Canañas (2010) “the truth is that for many, especially women and girls, the family has been the most violent social group, and the home, the most dangerous place” (p. 138). Indeed, intimate relationships and violence are seen mostly in heterosexual pairings where violence “is inflicted by men against their female partners” (Imbusch, Misse, & Carrión, 2011) as a means of performing their gender role (Eriksson, 2002). This manifestation of dominance has a clear impact on women’s lives, health, and economic stability which will be examined below.

**Health, Economics, and Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence has been correlated with several long term health issues including physical and emotional problems (Alasker, Moen, & Kristoffersen, 2007; Vives-Cases, Ruiz-Cantero, Escribá-Agüir, & Miralles, 2010). Alsaker et al. (2007) state that those women “exposed to intimate partner violence are more likely to suffer multiple physical health problems than women not exposed” and that violent relationships “were a source of mental disorders” (p. 498) for many women. Their research found that the forty-two women in their study continued to experience mental, emotional, and physical pain a year after leaving violent partnership. In
addition, they had a lower quality of life than women who have not experienced violent partnerships, especially those women who endured extreme violence for long periods of time (Alsaker et al., 2007, p. 506-507). Stress, chronic pain, depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, and poorly perceived health states are highly associated with intimate partner violence (Vives-Cases et al., 2010; Stene, Dyb, Tverdal, Jacobsen, & Schei, 2011).

Damaging health effects such as these negatively impact women’s lives, but may also drive a dependency on drugs. A Norwegian study found that women who have experienced sexual, physical, or psychological intimate partner violence are more likely to use analgesic and psychotropic drugs (Stene et al., 2010). Obtaining these potentially habit forming drugs from multiple doctors, women increase their chances of addiction (Stene et al., 2010). It is now acknowledged that gender-based violence is a threat to women’s health in regards to mental (Vives-Cases et al., 2010), emotional, physical (Alasker et al., 2007), and reproductive health (Reilly, 2009).

Socioeconomic status also correlates to domestic violence and the violation of women’s human rights. True (2012) notes that “when women have access to productive resources and they enjoy social and economic rights they are less vulnerable to violence across all societies. In particular, women are less vulnerable to violence when they have a good economic status, including access to full employment” (p. 184). Alsaker et al. (2007) corroborate this statement noting that in the Norwegian study women “who lacked financial resources were more vulnerable to being physically assaulted than were women with strong support [systems] and socioeconomic status” (p. 506). Indeed, “women’s income was the best predictor of women
leaving their abusive partner” (Alsaker et al., p. 506, 2007) due to the ability to provide for themselves.

Costa Rica and Norway have varying models for women’s employment which correlates to the prevalence of gender-based violence within each country. Norway has high levels of employment for women (Hutchinson & Weeks, 2004) and lower levels of violence (see Chapter 3). Because prevalence of violence is high, Costa Rica is working to encourage economic independence among women, but problematically only those that have already experienced violence (see Chapter 2).

**Activism**

Often activists work on a case by case basis, aiding victims of domestic violence and then expanding to a larger social movement for mass change to legal, governmental, and societal systems to eliminate violence (Pence, 2001). Victim advocacy extends to larger social movements to challenge the state through “legislation, policies, and programs to empower women” (Subramaniam, 2006, p. 102). Many nonprofits acknowledge that strategies primarily aimed at victim care do not address the root of domestic violence, nor does it provide a framework for prevention. Wishing to prevent violence, women’s organizations often combine efforts with or establish social movements to create a paradigm shift (Pence, 2001). Htun and Weldon (2012) explain that “the importance of social movements is softening up the political environment, changing the national mood, and putting new issues on the agenda” (p. 548) and is a crucial step to change.

Social movements pressure governments to acknowledge, criminalize, and change the focus of domestic violence to a violation of human rights. Htun and Weldon (2012) note that
“violence against women is rarely raised as an issue, much less a priority without pressure from feminists” (p. 552) through social movements. This pressure from women’s movements on governments to respond to domestic violence is seen in both Costa Rica (see Chapter 2) and Norway (see Chapter 3; Eriksson, 2005).

**Purpose of this Project and Hypotheses**

The purpose of this thesis is to create a better understanding of the effectiveness of advocacy to change government policies. Costa Rica and Norway were chosen in part because of existing study abroad programs that would facilitate fieldwork and research. Relatively peaceful countries (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2013; Leitinger, 1997), these two countries are excellent case studies to examine the how reduction of violence is possible.

This thesis utilizes Htun and Weldon’s (2012) models of government response to women’s movements and non-government organizations. Using their measures to examine the responsiveness of a country to domestic violence, I will examine if 1) services for victims from government and non-government organizations 2) legal systems and the need for legal reform 3) preventive programs currently in existence in Costa Rica and Norway. These three measures effectively guided this research and informed the instrument used to interview women’s organizations and social movements. The research questions to address are: how do women in Costa Rica and Norway counter gender-based violence? What impact does activism create on policy? How do NGOs implement change to secure justice for victims and create shifts in culture to prevent violence?

Different hypotheses were developed for the two countries because of history, government structure, and existing literature. Strong women’s movements have been
documented in Norway and the response of the Norwegian government is generally positive considering the policy reform that was created in women’s favor. Acknowledged as a women friendly nation, non-government organizations were initially established by women’s organizations and now have been absorbed by the government. The Norwegian government funds all domestic violence shelters and is committed to preventing violence as evident in the literature. Costa Rica’s government still seems to be in the initial stages of countering violence with extensive collection of data, basic treatment of victims, and some preventive outreach efforts. The lack of existing academic research about women’s movements, non-governmental organizations, and advocacy measures implemented by the two does not provide a background for more specific hypotheses.

I hypothesize that in Norway:

1) strong women’s movements work to reform policy
2) a dialogue concerning women’s issues, especially violence, is continuous and widespread in activist groups and government sectors
3) the government will assist victims in leaving violent situations through shelter services

Because Costa Rica has similar non-profit organizations then one can assume that Costa Rica, follows the US model of shelters run by non-government organizations operating on a limited budget then it can be better understood that shelters exist, but are difficult to find. As far as Costa Rica, I hypothesize:

1) organizations will be well equipped to care for victims of domestic violence
2) several shelters are available to women, but might be difficult to access because of a lack of technology
These hypotheses and prevalence of violence will be further examined in the following chapters.

**General Methodology**

This cross-cultural thesis surveys advocacy and state reaction through qualitative and quantitative data in Norway and Costa Rica. The objective of both methods of data collection is to identify what impact women’s organizations and movements have on that nation’s government and to what extent the services provided reduce the prevalence of violence.

Qualitative data examining the efforts by women’s movements and the government to alleviate violence are measured through primary (interviews and observation) and secondary (literary) data. Qualitative primary data collection, interviews and observation, supports secondary research and provides a comprehensive view of tactics employed by non-government and government organizations countering violence. The four organizations interviewed were CEFEMINA, Cendros, and Red de Mujeres Rurales in Costa Rica and Ottar of Norway. Interviewing the three Costa Rican organizations explored hypotheses 1 and 2 (Costa Rica) that shelters exist and are well equipped to care for victims, but might be difficult to access. Speaking to Ottar examined hypothesis 1 (Norway) that there would be a strong women’s movement in Norway.

The instruments used for field work examine advocacy and general operation of these organizations to gauge the perceived importance of gender-based violence. Both interview instruments (Appendix A and B) measure the role of the organization in the community,
advocacy tactics, how the network is bridged with universities and government officials to provide outreach for education and prevention, and influence in legal reform. Instrument B is more concise than Instrument A because the first group of respondents felt that some questions were redundant. All interview questions were approved by the Valparaiso University Institutional Review Board (IRB), La Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana, the International Summer School at the University of Oslo, and the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

Initial research supplied a framework of government funded women’s rights offices in Costa Rica and state run shelters in Norway, but an examination of women’s non-governmental organizations and social movements were considerably more helpful due to previous documentation of their legislative efforts. Networking with local community members allowed me to interview the organizations documented in the following chapters. Heidi Michelson, the Valparaiso University program director at the Praxis Center in San José, and Elisabet Rogg, the instructor for Gender in the Nordic Countries at the University of Oslo, provided the resources to connect with the organizations interviewed in this thesis.

In addition to these qualitative sources, three organizations were directly observed in country which provided a better understanding of daily business tasks and physical amenities of local organizations. An internship at El Centro feminista de Información y Acción (CEFEMINA) allowed for an in depth glimpse into the organization and helped evaluate hypotheses 1 and 2 (Costa Rica). Attending a two hour presentation at Instituto WEM in Costa Rica conducted by one of the leading staff members¹ provided an understanding of alternative preventive measures

¹ Names and specific titles are kept confidential for personal privacy.
that are funded by the Costa Rican government. Another presentation and tour of the facilities
given by the director of the Oslo Krisensentersekretariatet (Oslo Crisis Center) explored
hypotheses 2 and 3 (Norway) over the course of four hours. Field notes were taken during each
session, conclusions were drawn, and corroborating evidence was found on the two
organizations’ websites. Secondary research also solidified findings at the Oslo
Krisensentersekretariatet because this shelter system has been documented by other researchers
(Alasker, Kristofferson, Moen, & Baste, 2011).

The secondary qualitative data demonstrates the history of women’s movements and
operations of non-government and government agencies that assist victims. Sources were
gathered before, during, and after visiting each country, utilizing the resources of the different
institutions attended. Of these secondary sources, a few of the Norwegian sources came directly
from coursework at the University of Oslo, but most were collected through general literature
searches.

The prevalence of violence is derived from secondary data sources (Durán, 2007; UN
Women, 2012). Understanding the statistics, demographics, and levels of violence establishes a
background for the preventive efforts and services of both countries. Other quantitative data,
such as gross national income, provides an economic variable which is known to influence
gender-based violence.

Throughout each chapter, secondary data is presented first in the form of a literature
review and is followed by primary data collected in the field. Quantitative data supplements
qualitative data by adding concrete evidence of domestic violence. The fourth chapter applies
feminist theory to Norway’s and Costa Rica’s response to gender-based violence through
treatment and prevention. Application of a gendered lens allows further dissemination of the countries’ abilities to assuage violence and assure human rights. Examining the two theories, equality in action and essential difference between the two genders, creates a better understanding of the two countries in question, Costa Rica and Norway.

Chapter 2: Costa Rica

Introduction

As gender-based violence is recognized as a problem in Costa Rica, statistics are collected by the government program, INAMU (Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres). The government uses demographics to separate the statistics based on age and gender, divisions which allows for a better analysis of the populations most affected. The data reflect a meticulous methodology on the part of the Costa Rican government; however, the collection of data does not equate to the level of response. While one source states that domestic violence shelters have been created in Costa Rica (United States Department of State, 2011), the general population does not know of these services. Research is lacking on government run shelters and academic journals declare that non-government organizations do not use the shelter model (Carcedo, 1997). Non-government organizations, such as CEFEMINA (El Centro feminista de Información y Acción) who serve victims of violence, do not receive government funding. Rather, government funds are used to prevent all violence and restructure masculinity through programs such as Instituto WEM. This chapter examines Costa Rica’s strategies for countering gender-based violence through policy reformation and societal change.

Literature Review: “Costa Rica is Different”
Costa Rica’s official slogan “Pura Vida,” translates as “Pure Life,” and allows Costa Rica to set itself apart from other countries in the Latin American region. This official slogan shows how proud Costa Ricans are of their culture, level of environmental protection, overall good health as a nation, and peacekeeping efforts. According to Leitinger (1997) the Costa Rican culture is “characterized by a pervasive national tendency to avoid conflict and extremes of violent confrontation, preferring instead to get along sin hacer olas (without making waves)” (p. xii). Costa Ricans care for one another through cultural ties of community and family; thus, the culture is considered “peace loving and democratic” (Leitinger, 1997, p. xiii).

As a nation, Costa Rica invests in the human rights of its citizens through laws that guarantee that all are equal under the law (Republic of Costa Rica, 1949). The country is known throughout the world as a peaceful nation due to its insistence on human rights. Costa Rica provides its citizens health care, maternity and sick leave, and free education. Booth, Wade, and Walker (2010) explain, “Costa Rica’s government, a politically stable democracy, pursued a development strategy that invested in its citizens’ human development (especially education and health care) more than any other country in” Latin America (p. 7). Investment in human rights and citizens’ relative wealth differentiates Costa Rica other countries in Latin America.

The country’s considerable wealth distances it from other Latin American countries. According to Booth et al., (2010), “Costa Rica consistently dedicated more of its budget to social welfare partly because after 1949, it had no more armed forces” (p. 25) using that surplus. It also has a higher per capita income than many of its neighbors. Costa Rica has a Gross National Income per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP) of $12,590 in comparison with Honduras at $3,890; Nicaragua $3,960; Guatemala $4,960; El Salvador $6,790; and Belize $6,880. The only
country that has a higher GNI in the region is Panama at $17,830 (Population Reference Bureau, 2013).

This considerable wealth may also have a drawback as foreign donors are less likely to send funds to non-government organizations in democratic Costa Rica despite the lack of women’s rights. Leitinger (1997) notes that “the perturbing record of violence against women is becoming painfully visible and has given rise to an ongoing public debate” (p. xiii). The US State Department (2011) notes that the Costa Rican “government continued to identify domestic violence against women and children as a serious and growing societal problem” (p. 12) in the survey year. When the issue of gender-based violence is raised in Costa Rica, the form mentioned most frequently is domestic violence.

Field research granted me the opportunity to meet Costa Ricans who often asked why I traveled to Costa Rica. When I explained my master’s degree required two trips overseas to study a topic of my choice, which is gender-based violence, they usually responded that domestic violence is a problem in Costa Rica. Some women eagerly launched into their own personal accounts of domestic violence. Others were actively involved in non-government organizations that counter violence.

Because family relationships are so important in Costa Rica, families spend a great deal of time together. While this may seem a virtue, the home is often a dangerous place for women (Sagot & Canañas, 2010) where domestic violence can become fatal. Femicide, a potential outcome of domestic violence, is an issue in Costa Rica. According to former president of INAMU, Maureen Clarke, “femicide occurs because of problems in the home, the community, and the culture” (Ryan, 2012). Most femicides are committed by an intimate partner or an
ex-partner; indeed, out of 184 femicides reported in Costa Rica from 1990-1999, 113 (61%) were committed by the partners or former partners of the victim (Durán, 2007). According to Arias (2013) “from January to October [of 2013], a total of 14 women were murdered in Costa Rica, a 53 percent decrease over the same period last year.” Femicides fell in the year 2013, but the home is still a dangerous place for many women as domestic violence persists. The data in the next section provides a comprehensive view of the type of, prevalence of, and laws against violence.

Costa Rica, the Law, and the Statistics of Violence

Costa Rican law clearly defines domestic violence. In the penal code, the term violencia doméstica refers to virtually any type of domestic violence, encompassing psychological, physical, sexual, and patrimonial violence (Ley Contra La Violencia Doméstica, 1996). Physical violence is defined as an “action or omission that risks or damages the corporal integrity of a person.” Psychological violence is seen as actions that “degrade or control the actions, behaviors, beliefs or decisions of another person” through various measures. Sexual violence is defined as “actions that force a person to maintain sexualized contact, physical or verbal, or to participate in other sexual interactions through use of force” as well as other means of coercion. Patrimonial violence is the, “action or omission that implies damage, loss, transformation, subtraction, destruction, retention or distraction of objects, work instruments, personal documents, goods, valuables, rights or economic resources to satisfy the needs of any persons mentioned.” This last sanction allows for women to protect their inheritance and all the objects that they own both in and outside of the marriage or partnership. The laws appear complete and
competent in protecting citizens, but many are critical of its application to modern life in Costa Rica.

Critics of the Costa Rica laws claim that only women of the upper classes are served. Cabrera (1997) states that “most of the advances in knowledge and awareness have benefited highly educated women, leaving the great majority of Costa Rican women ignorant of their rights under the law” (p. 104). Even if they are aware of these rights, a life free from violence, a human right, comes at a price in Costa Rica. When pursuing a case “the woman must hire her own legal representative” in the case of family matters (Cabrera, p. 106). An affluent educated woman is more readily able to pay a good representative to argue her case in a court of law, than an impoverished woman in need of representation to escape a violent situation. Despite criticism against the Costa Rican government and its laws, INAMU continues to keep records of violence against women and to increase efforts towards prevention by funding Instituto WEM.

The Costa Rican government published white papers on the frequency of violence reported throughout the country. *El Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (INAMU)*; see below for more information,*La Sistema de Emergencias 9-1-1* (the Emergency System 911), *Departamento de Estadística del Poder Judicial* (the Department of Statistics for Judicial Power), *Delegación de la Mujer del Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres* (Delegation of Women of the National Institute of Women), and *Ministerio de Salud* (Ministry of Health) collaborated on the project. Data examine type of violence and in which jurisdiction the event occurred, as well as other useful demographic information, Table 1 indicates the frequency of calls received for intra and extra familial violence as well as sexual crimes by province from 2001-2007.
Table 1: Quantity of Calls Received by the 911 Emergency System for Intra and Extra Familial Violence and Sexual Crimes (Durán, 2007, p.9):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provincia</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Total provincia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alajuela</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartago</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guanacaste</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heredia</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limón</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puntarenas</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San José</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2.147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin Ubicar</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,327</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,163</strong></td>
<td><strong>502</strong></td>
<td><strong>545</strong></td>
<td><strong>425</strong></td>
<td><strong>385</strong></td>
<td><strong>98</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,445</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fuente: Elaborado por la Unidad de Investigación del INAMU con base en tabulados del Sistema de Emergencias 9-1-1.

NOTA: Para el año 2007 se calcula sólo el primer trimestre del año.

Most of the violence was reported in the capital region of San José, with Alajuela reporting the second highest. Only a small number of calls appears in 2007 as the document was written in the first trimester of that year. A general picture regarding victimization is broken down further by province, the type of violence, and demographic of victim, including minors, seniors, and adult women (Durán, 2007).

Nearly 58% of women acknowledge experiencing violence within their lifetime (see Graph 1), but Table 2 shows only a fraction of these incidents are reported. San José received the most calls at 121,404 and Guanacaste with the least at 15,035.
Graph 1: Women Who Have Suffered Physical or Sexual Violence (Durán, 2007, p. 87):

![Graph showing women who have suffered physical or sexual violence](image)


Table 2: Quantity of Calls Received of Some Type of Aggression Against Women (Durán, 2007, p. 62)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provincia</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>Total provincia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alajuela</td>
<td>1.934</td>
<td>6.838</td>
<td>5.305</td>
<td>5.564</td>
<td>5.620</td>
<td>6.074</td>
<td>2.379</td>
<td>33.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guanacaste</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>2.762</td>
<td>2.241</td>
<td>2.480</td>
<td>2.613</td>
<td>3.010</td>
<td>1.190</td>
<td>15.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin Ubicación</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13.357</td>
<td>48.940</td>
<td>39.221</td>
<td>44.415</td>
<td>43.837</td>
<td>48.984</td>
<td>18.135</td>
<td>256.889</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fuente: Elaborado por la Unidad de Investigación del INAMU con base en tabulados del Sistema de Emergencias 9-1-1.

NOTA: En el año 2007 se contempló solo el primer trimestre del año.
The number of reported calls are low compared with the anonymous survey conducted by INAMU (Graph 1) measuring how many women overall have experienced violence within their lives. This survey suggests that violence is more prevalent than previously thought. Encuesta Nacional de Violencia Contra Las Mujeres-2004 surveyed 908 women living in Costa Rica to determine the prevalence of violence. The sample included a range of ages, ethnicities, nationalities, educational backgrounds, and marital status. Of these women, 58% experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives. That over half of the adult female population admitted to having experienced gender-based violence testifies to its prevalence.

The relationship between the women and the perpetrator is delineated in Table 3. The primary perpetrators of violence are former husbands or partners, with the second most common being a current husband or partner. This graph examines the primary perpetrator of violence being a male partner showing that the emphasis on home life can create dangerous relationships. Furthermore, stressing quality family time and creating a shortened work week in order to spend time with family may contribute to the feeling of obligation to be within the home and being with one’s husband or partner. The increased time that hostile partners spend together, the more likely that they are to fight and abuse to occur.
Table 3: Perpetrators of Violence (Durán, 2007, p. 93):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perpetrador</th>
<th>Porcentaje</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Esposo, compañero anterior</td>
<td>38,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esposo, compañero actual</td>
<td>22,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otro hombre conocido</td>
<td>13,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novio anterior</td>
<td>10,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraño</td>
<td>8,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otro pariente</td>
<td>4,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novio actual</td>
<td>1,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Acknowledged (Graph 1) and reported violence (Table 1 and 2) have drastically varying numbers. This gap grows when considering the number of cases opened compared to the number of cases tried. In 2010, the US State Department (2011) reported “12,510 cases of domestic violence throughout the country. There were 393 cases tried and 196 persons sentenced for crimes of violence against women” (p. 12). The Costa Rican Ministry of Health documented the number of cases of domestic violence ranging between 1,715 to 10,009 between 2000 and 2004 (Durán, 2007). As I compare these data, it seems that the number of cases being reported is increasing, an increase that parallels my conversations with Costa Ricans: that the general public is aware of the problem of domestic violence (see “Costa Rica is Different”). Awareness of domestic violence allows more women to realize that such behavior is unacceptable and violates their human rights. As a result, more women are likely to bring cases against their partner. However, the enormous gap between the number of domestic violence cases opened (12,510) versus those actually tried (393) suggests that justice is not being served.
The Costa Rican government has acknowledged the problem of violence against women in the country, with meticulous data collection and the passage of laws against violence, but prevention and treatment have developed slowly.

**Hypotheses and Research Procedure**

At the outset of my research, I proposed two hypotheses about women’s organizations in Costa Rica: 1) women’s support organizations would be well equipped in caring for victims and 2) a number of shelters would be available to aid women. I posed three basic research questions: 1) How do organizations work to impact political policy? 2) What forms of activism do they employ? 3) How is legislation changed through activism? I surveyed both non-government and government organizations that counter gender-based violence and congruently work to prevent, treat, and end violence.

**Field Results: Government Organizations**

The Costa Rican government has set up its own organizations, institutions, and programs to help women who experience violence. The main organization *INAMU* which segments into several organizations, states that it is “a public institution that promotes and protects the human rights of women, through services of training, advice and psycho-social and legal attention” (*INAMU*, 2009). Promoting women’s rights is shown through the services provided to victims. *INAMU* “assists women and children who are victims of domestic violence in its regional office in San José and in three other specialized centers and temporary shelters…[it] maintain[s] a domestic abuse hotline connected to the 911 emergency system and” provides counseling services for victims (United States Department of State, 2011, p. 12). *INAMU* also “launched a separate media campaign to educate civil society about the equal rights of women” (United
States Department of State, p. 13) in 2010. The program supports multiple organizations that have developed with their own specific projects for the protection of women.

PLANOVI, el Plan Operativo Nacional para la Atención y la Prevención de la Violencia Intrafamiliar (The National Operative Plan for the Attention and Prevention of Intra Family Violence), works specifically with gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, domestic violence, and sexual assault. PLANOVI has two objectives,

“the timely, complete and quality attention to the women in violent situations of family relations and of the couple, also in cases of sexual harassment and rape” and “the development of substantial actions and sustained material of the promotion of human rights and gender equality, for the equality that prevents violence against women” (INAMU, 2009).

PLANOVI helps victims of gender-based violence through prevention, research, training, monitoring, and evaluation of violence (INAMU, 2009). The organization specifically acknowledges the human rights of women that it wishes to protect including, “the right to live free of violence” (INAMU, 2009). The government’s interest, and indeed the investment in, women’s rights through a funded prevention plan is a major advancement.

Prevention and education is a part of PLANOVI’s plan to counter violence against women. Services are offered

“to women 15 years of age and older affected by violence in family relations and part of the couple, also for sexual harassment and rape...that permit the restitution of their rights, to break the cycle of violence and to assess alternatives and resources in order to enjoy a life of dignity and free of violence” (INAMU, 2009).
Part of these services funded by the government include training for victims of violence such as job search skills and small business development. State run services work toward eliminating gender-based violence through government programs, but some funding is also given to non-government agencies.

Field Results: Non-government Organizations

Several non-government organizations in Costa Rica have established preventive measures against violence and influenced the reformation of laws. These organizations include, but are not limited to, Cenderos (El Centro de Derechos Sociales del Migrantes or The Center of Social Rights of Migrants), Cefemina (Centro feminista de Información y Acción or Feminist Center of Information and Action), Red de Mujeres Rurales (Rural Women Network) and Instituto WEM (The Costa Rican Institute of Masculinity, the Couple, and Sexuality).

Cenderos works to improve the lives of migrant populations in Costa Rica. Its mission states that it is:

“a social non profit organization that works for the prominence and empowerment of the Nicaraguan migrant population and of the border, in particular with women and children for the construction of a just society with gender equality” (Cenderos, 2012).

The issue of gender-based violence is not its primary goal as with other organizations, rather, the rights of the immigrant community is the focus.

A formal interview conducted with one of the organization's employees further informed my understanding of Cenderos. Isadora² agreed to an interview and I met her at the office of Cenderos. She confirmed the mission of the organization in that it aims to help migrant people

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² All names have been changed to ensure privacy of the respondent.
know and obtain their rights. They work mostly with Nicaraguan women and children, the primary migrant population in Costa Rica, their role in the community is to aid migration, specifically to help migrants realize and actualize their rights. Cenderos has approximately 3 employees and 150 volunteers that work throughout the year. The organization uses radio commercials, brochures, emails, and word of mouth. An established website and a Facebook page were found after an initial search, but Isadora did not acknowledge these two tools as a way for victims to find the organization despite my asking in the interview.

Cenderos aids victims through psychological counseling, encourages them to file police reports, and makes referrals to other networks for further assistance, but because the operating budget is low, the organization cannot offer shelter or monetary aid. “If she [the victim] acknowledges a problem, we can give psychological help and have her work on a healthy relationship with the family. Sometimes we can’t help,” Isadora explains. Isadora describes a common phenomenon that help can be received once the woman admits there is a problem. No one can force her to leave a situation that seems destructive to the outside viewer.

While Cenderos works towards helping clients on an individual basis, violence prevention through community outreach is a priority. A local theater company centralizes some of their plays around the organization’s goals so that Cendros’ mission can reach a larger audience. Isadora acknowledges a close relationship with the Universidad de Costa Rica, as they jointly conduct women’s health conferences. The frequency with which these events occur was not clear: Isadora explained that “it depends,” but did not give any further information. Participation in protests, including November 25 which is the Día Internacional de la No Violencia Contra las Mujeres, is key for the organization to raise awareness. Preventive
measures are often accomplished with the aid of other institutions for Cenderos; however, Cenderos does work to reform legislation, especially for migrants.

Cenderos collaborates with legislators to reform the legal code for the betterment of the lives of migrant citizens. Isadora explained that “We don’t work with all the legislators. We only work with 3 or 4. When we have a project, we work with them about 3 times a week.” Legislation reform requires much time and effort on the parts of both the advocates and legislators. Isadora acknowledged that Cenderos gives many referrals to other networks so victims can find the organization that can best help them, as gender-based violence is not Cenderos’ primary focus.

Another organization that works indirectly to eradicate violence is Red de Mujeres Rurales. Red de Mujeres Rurales describes itself as an organization “that joins rural women in the country, whether we formulate part of groups or organizations of women or of mixed organizations, in defense of our interest and rights” (Red de Mujeres Rurales, 2013). Its primary goals are the promotion of the rights of rural women with varying education levels. Fernanda, a staff member, explained that the organization aims to “inform women of their rights and work on the issues that women face. [The organization] helps defend their minds, dreams, and achievements.”

In terms of aiding victims of violence, the organization offers many of the same types of services as Cenderos. Red de Mujeres Rurales refers women to other organizations, encourages them to make police reports, and generally supports women as they seek help. They do not give financial aid or shelter, or assist in filling out restraining orders and police forms. It was unclear whether they provide women with psychological counseling. Coffee meetings (reunión café) are
arranged for women to come together with the intention of providing them time for themselves in the company of other women so that relationships outside of the home are nurtured. No specific topic frames the discussion; however, the leader of the group may speak of her own experience with domestic violence to direct the discussion. Connecting with others that share an issue is encouraged so that women are less likely to feel that they suffer alone.

Coffee meetings are one technique that organizations such as Red de Mujeres Rurales and CEFEMINA use to counter violence and provide support. Workshops, like coffee meetings, are structured around general health, not specifically gender-based violence. Framing workshops around general health not only ensures a broader audience, but does not alienate women because of the subject matter. Workshops allow a general discussion about women’s issues and a safe place for women to speak about their experiences.

Women generally find Red de Mujeres Rurales through word of mouth, radio ads, television, brochures, a newsletter called Las Despiertas (The Awakened Women or The Awakenings), activities the organization sponsors, notices posted around the community, the Red de Mujeres Rurales’ website, and their Facebook page. The organization works throughout rural areas in Costa Rica with 200 workers and 150 volunteers. In addition to local level meetings, several protests and marches including the national Día Internacional de la No Violencia Contra las Mujeres are organized by the organization.

The organization also works with legislators for the reform of laws affecting rural areas. Fernanda reflected that this process takes time, including one law reformation that took 8 years to complete. Members speak with legislators on a regular basis about reform and the two reform laws that they have directly worked on are: La Ley de Medidas Protección (The Laws of
Protective Measures\textsuperscript{3} and La Ley de Penalización (The Law of Penalization). Clearly, Red de Mujeres Rurales has a direct link to the legislation making and reformation process

However, this organization uses only coffee meetings as a form of prevention, according to Fernanda. Coffee meetings are restricted to women and do not involve men, who are the higher percentage of perpetrators. It is unclear then, how coffee meetings could be used as prevention other than informing women that domestic violence is a direct violation of their right to live a life free of violence before they experience any violence. Activism for other human rights of country women-- including clean water, indigenous rights, and land rights-- are an important part of the organization’s mission.

While Red de Mujeres Rurales is focused on the rights of rural women, CEFEMINA is focused on the general rights of women. This latter group is the most broad based organization concerning women’s issues. Based on my interview with Celeste, a staff member, CEFEMINA is a non profit organization that has various sections to handle the major issues that women face. CEFEMINA is divided into four main areas: Ciudadanía Mujer (Woman Citizenship)--immigration, Mujer No Estás Sola (Woman, You Are Not Alone)--gender-based violence including rape and domestic violence, Protección de los Derechos de las Madres y sus Hijos (Protection of the Rights of Mothers and their Children)--mother and children’s rights, and Mujeres, Economía y Trabajo (Women, Economy, and Work)-- economic inequality in Costa Rica. I focused on the section of Mujer No Estás Sola as it is the only section that counters violence against women through a female run organization in Costa Rica.

\textsuperscript{3} Commonly known as restraining orders in the US.
CEFEMINA is focused on gender-based violence in a way that most other organizations are not. Celeste, who works for the organization, states that CEFEMINA starts “with the problems of daily life looking for alternatives that we allow women, our families, the community, and society together to eliminate social disadvantage in that we encounter with women.” These social disadvantages include domestic violence and sexual assault which the organization counters through a hotline and self help groups. As with other organizations in Costa Rica, they do not give economic aid to women, shelter them, or help file legal forms such as restraining orders. According to Celeste, clients find the organization “through the social networks (webpage, Twitter, and Facebook), brochures, and recommendation of other women.” CEFEMINA also maintains an extensive library which includes books and brochures about gender-based violence. Many of the library holdings have been sponsored or printed through the organization, including copies of the legal and penal codes.

This organization works toward the prevention of violence through the use of presentations, workshops, and conferences in the public and private sector. Celeste noted that the organization gives three conferences annually about violence against women, in conjunction with local universities, the Universidad de Costa Rica and the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica. Protests, marches, and rallies are important events throughout the year. CEFEMINA is the leading organization for El Internacional Día de No Violencia Contra las Mujeres, a march and protest that occurs each year on November 25. Protests often focus on laws or policies needing reform. General awareness of women’s issues is also promoted. According to Celeste, “we do lobby in the Legislative Assembly in defense of the laws and projects that better the quality of
life for women. Also in the public institutions like \textit{INAMU}.” Celeste stated that legislators only get involved with them when legislators choose to do so.

CEFEMINA has a strong presence in Costa Rica due to two factors. First, it was established in 1975, which has allowed it to evolve and grow over time. Second, a strong activist, Ana Carcedo, fronts the group and frequently publishes academic papers on violence against women in conjunction with other feminist scholars in Costa Rica. Often these papers and collaborations were completed through connections between the group and the Universidad de Costa Rica. The history of the organization and the alliances built by the current director have allowed CEFEMINA to become a particularly strong force countering violence against women. CEFEMINA heads the feminist dialogue about violence against women, but Instituto WEM spearheads prevention among men.

Through coursework in Costa Rica, I discovered an organization, Instituto WEM, that works with men to end violence. I attended a presentation about the organization, its services, and the issues that clients face in terms of gender and masculinity. Despite my efforts, I was not permitted an interview, but I found their website and the presentation to be helpful in understanding the mission of the organization.

Instituto WEM not only works toward the prevention of violence against women but also addresses issues of gender and masculinity. Instituto WEM was established in 1999 as a non-profit organization “in order to work on the themes of gender, masculinity, sexuality and the couple” (Instituto WEM, n.d.). Before my arrival in Costa Rica, I had not heard of an organization such as Instituto WEM anywhere in the world, working with men and the issues
that surround masculinity. The organization “promotes the formation of new men that want to
better their personal lives as fathers, spouses, boyfriends, and sons” (Instituto WEM, n.d.).

Instituto WEM has various services which include support groups, reflections, and
psychological therapy. It has a weekly schedule for group meetings in different areas of the
country, though meetings are concentrated in the more populated areas. The meetings are
intended for men with difficulties communicating at home and with their partners; having
feelings of anger, jealousy, depression, and infidelity; experiencing legal issues with their spouse
including divorce, separation or other such lawsuits; showing bad character or violence;
encountering stress or problems at work or with friends, and dealing with protection measures
(Instituto WEM, n.d.). The groups are a safe place where men can discuss their lives, feelings,
and emotions. Most of the groups are supported by the local government having free admittance,
but two require entry fees of about $5 each. Some men are mandated to attend these sessions as
stipulated in their sentences by a court of law.

Instituto WEM has a variety of publications available for sale, a Facebook page, a blog, a
website, and a crisis hotline for men. They also sponsor public events, courses, and workshops
that can be accessed online. The organization is connected with an international network to end
violence against women and children called Campaña Lazo Blanco Costa Rica (Campaign of the
White Ribbon) (Campaña del Lazo Blanco, 2013). The extensive website of Instituto WEM far
outstretches those of the women’s organizations with a greater amount of information about the
organization’s goals and services. Instituto WEM’s concentration on men’s issues works to
reform the social construction of masculinity for the betterment of the community and to create a
more peaceful existence for both men and women.
Limitations

Several limitations surfaced in this field research. An exhaustive list of organizations responding to gender-based violence has not been identified. Other organizations may exist, but are not currently known to me. Some organizations do not have web pages or printed literature upon which this research has relied. Both of these forms of distributing information are costly to produce and maintain. Before arriving in Costa Rica, I was faced with the problem of outdated information, including some web pages that were nearly 20 years old.

Another limitation is that of translation although I have done my best to accurately translate all interviews and written documents using the assistance of bilingual scholars.

Discussion

Costa Rica prides itself in protecting the human rights of its citizens, including a life free of violence. Establishing several government organizations and providing funds to non-government organizations for the continuation of services are two measures the Costa Rican government has taken in pursuit of this goal. Grassroots organizations, such as Instituto WEM, desire to change societal standards of masculinity through group therapy. Women’s organizations, CEFEMINA specifically, create awareness of women’s issues through protests and demand the government to reform laws.

At the Legislative Assembly, an office is dedicated to receiving petitions and proposals. Organizations or individuals can bring forth proposals for a new or reformed law. If the proposal meets the required number of signatures, it will go through the legislative process where it may become law.
One continuing problem is the enforcement of laws by the police and the judicial system. Many organizations believe that despite efforts toward legislative reform, laws do not work in Costa Rica. CEFEMINA’s Celeste blatantly said “Laws do not function.” A number of times I heard that it is pointless to call police using the 911 system in Costa Rica because of their slow response, if they respond at all. Additionally, the Ley Contra La Violencia Doméstica does not include gay, lesbian, transexual or transgender persons. It places violence into a heterosexual domestic framework, which admittedly is where most violence against women occurs; however, it excludes other citizens from legal protection if they do not fit into the confines of the law. So while laws may be in place legal guarantees do not always mean that citizens are adequately protected.

How does Costa Rica believe that gender-based violence can be stopped? This question was answered through my interviews and leads to a further discussion of cultural views within Costa Rica. Isadora of Cenderos claimed that there was no way to end violence against women, that domestic violence and sexual assault is an epidemic that cannot be stopped or, in fact, lessened. Celeste explained that we must “diversify the means and forms of communication…and always (provide) the help for women by women.” In a casual conversation, a Gender Studies professor at the UCR stated that the way to end violence is through education beginning at a young age for both sexes. Boys must be taught to value women and women to value themselves. She indicated that an entire cultural shift must happen in Costa Rica so that the machismo cultural value is eradicated.
Summary

Initially, I proposed two hypotheses 1) organizations would be well equipped to care for victims of violence and 2) several shelters would be available to victims. My hypotheses proved to be incorrect in Costa Rica. Shelters are not provided by non-government organizations, but support is given through coffee meetings, referrals, health workshops, and local theater productions as a means of education for victims. Physical shelter and relief from violent situations are not easy to find in Costa Rica since state run organizations providing shelter to victims of violence are virtually unknown to the general public. The quality of care and services provided within the state institution is also unknown, due to a lack of evidence, resulting in victims not receiving relief from violence and a denial of human rights.

My three research questions included: 1) How do organizations work to impact political policy? 2) What forms of activism do they employ? 3) How is legislation changed through activism? All three women’s organizations, CEFEMINA, Red de Mujeres Rurales, and Cenderos, prioritized law reformation by protesting, marching, advocating, lobbying, corresponding with legislators, creating newsletters, and publishing papers in conjunction with academic researchers. Reforming laws is a lengthy process as seen with Red de Mujeres Rurales and activism plays an enormous role in reformation, but justice continues to evade victims with a lack of convictions of domestic violence cases.

Women’s organizations continue to protest and advocate for change; however Instituto WEM, does not advocate for policy reformation. Working with perpetrators at an individual level, this organization receives government funding, but does not initiate in marches or circulate
petitions to change laws. This organization questions standards of masculinity in Costa Rica not laws that keep communities safe, penalize perpetrators, and provide a life free from violence.

The rate domestic violence in Costa Rica is high, but the country is moving slowly towards a solution. Recognition by the state allows for programs such as Instituto WEM to reconsider the construction of gender in conjunction with violence and address the manifestations of inequality. Human rights must continue to be examined in Costa Rica with statistics being gathered, support provided by both government and non-government organizations, reformation of law, education of the public, and a just court system.
Chapter 3: Norway

Introduction

Gender equality as a norm has continually developed in Norway and, more broadly, Scandinavia. Both the Nordic model and women-friendly policies allow gender equality to thrive; however, the question remains whether violence is still a problem for women. Due to Norway’s political structure as a social welfare state, certain services are available to members of society that are not accessible elsewhere such as in the US and Costa Rica. The Norwegian government provides fully funded sexual assault centers and domestic violence shelters. The women-friendly social welfare government was due to a strong women’s movement during the time of state formation in the early 1900s.

My research explored the use of domestic violence shelters and the role of the women’s movements in creating public policy reform. This chapter examines, in particular, how women’s movements shaped the Nordic model and influenced policy formation to end violence against women. Some questions to consider are the following: does Norway have a women’s movement? If so, how does this movement work to end violence? How do women’s shelters partner with government agencies to end gender-based violence? What impact does activism have on public policy in Norway and have policies changed?

Literature Review: The Nordic Model

Norwegians insist that the genders are equal, an attitude which is entrenched in both culture and policies. Men are expected to contribute to the domestic sphere, caring for children to assuage women of unpaid labor. The state reinforces this redistribution of labor with the
“daddy quota” that requires them to take 10 weeks off work when their child is born (Korsvik, 2011). Culturally, men are highly encouraged to share in the household duties (Holter, 2009), especially building and remodeling the home, as a means of strengthening the bond between the couple (Aarseth, 2007). Sharing the household chores and wage earning allows both genders to work towards equality which is reinforced by the Norwegian government through state benefits. Alleviating men from the role of breadwinner, women’s right to work provides another reinforcing gender equality policy.

Often, part of the cycle of violence is economic reliance on the abusive partner; however, women in Scandinavia do not have the same financial relationship with their spouses or partners as in the US and Costa Rica. The emphasis on a dual breadwinner model (Borchorst, 2008) where both genders work outside of the home provided women with economic independence for most of the last century. According to Wetterberg and Melby (2008), “it was urgent to give married women a more independent position within the family which was achieved through women’s inclusion and participation in the labor market” (p. 45). By instilling a sense of a dual breadwinner, where both genders work outside of the home, equality and self reliance became foundations within the family.

Because women initially lost their rights to vote and retain their wages once they married, women’s movements throughout Scandinavia championed economic independence. According to Sainsbury (2001) “married women in Norway were the first in Scandinavia to attain majority and be recognized as legal persons” (p.116). Understanding the need for women to keep their own wages, women’s movements advocated for self reliance economically so that a woman can support herself and her children. The right to keep one’s wages (Sainsbury, 2001) strengthened
women as a whole within Scandinavia. Women’s participation in the labor market ensured them as economic equals alongside men and they were no longer dependent on men’s wages.

The Nordic model of men contributing to the household duties including caring for children and women participating in the workforce creates a structure for equality within the family. Women do not have to fear corporeal retribution and are more free to leave an abusive partner due to economic independence. These women friendly policies include women’s right to work (Ellingsæter, 1999), state sponsored child care and cash benefit for families who choose not to send children to daycare (Korsvik, 2011), paid parental leave with up to 80% salary compensation for both genders (Borghorst, 2008), and an emphasis on women’s economic development (Sainsbury, 2001). Advocates and grassroots movements aided in the creation of equality within Norway.

Generations of women’s movements working toward equality actualized economic citizenship for women. Women’s movements created a backbone for state formation which already had a feminist slant and paralleled the development of the modern Nordic states in 1905.

The Women’s Movement

The dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway in 1904 allowed for Norway to become a sovereign nation. The establishment of the state paralleled strong women’s movements which helped create Norway as a women-friendly welfare state. According to Sainsbury (2001), “women’s political rights [were] intertwined in the Norwegians’ struggle for national independence and a sovereign state of their own” (p. 120). Suffrage was a part of the modern construction of the state as women were first denied the right to vote in the plebiscite. Sainsbury (2001) examines the issue further, “when [women] were excluded from the plebiscite,
women mounted an impressive campaign to demonstrate their involvement in national affairs. Nearly three hundred thousand women—roughly half of the adult female population—signed a petition addressed to parliament, demanding dissolution” (p. 120) concurring with male voters. Women, specifically suffragists in this case, used their political power to shape the state and were ultimately a major part of its configuration in Norway. Thus, their political involvement has been a part of Norwegian history from the beginning. Women’s rights were being promoted throughout the world at the time, with New Zealand being the first nation to grant women suffrage in 1893 and Norway following Australia (1902) and Finland (1906) in 1913 (Ross, 2008). After suffrage the women’s movements continued to advocate for women’s rights in Norway, including paid maternity leave for married women in 1915 (Sainsbury, 2001) and the day care movement of the early 1970s (Korsvik, 2011); however, the pertinent movement to this thesis is the shelter movement which established state funded facilities to relieve victims of violence.

**The Shelter Movement**

In 1976, women’s movements advanced beyond suffrage and focused on violence against women due to the deliberation of the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women in Brussels in 1976. A group of Norwegian women attended the tribunal, noting that Norway was in need of a system that better addressed violence. Upon their return, their grassroots movement introduced a hotline for victims and then a shelter system which was later funded by the Norwegian government.

When shelters were first established in Norway after 1976, they allowed women to stay, along with their children, for as long as they wished. Alasker, Kristofferson, Moen, and Baste
(2011) explain that “the women’s shelters were and are still considered low-threshold services, where medicalization and diagnoses are banned, where residents can be safe and stay as long as they want to with their children” (p. 952). These organizations provide shelter for victims as soon as they leave a violent situation if they cannot provide shelter for themselves (Hutchinson & Weeks, 2004); however, shelters do not participate in psychiatric evaluations, drug rehabilitation, or treatment of mental illnesses. Currently, 50 domestic violence shelters across the country (Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police, 2009) are funded by the government and municipalities administering meals, some counseling services, and job search skills. According to the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police (2009), “the main reason for providing a statutory women’s shelter service is to ensure that victims of domestic violence receive good quality assistance” (p. 6). These measures establish a way to counter violence against women, which works in conjunction with social welfare systems where the government funds benefits for all citizens.

Statistics, Violence, and the Law

Norway takes its place among several other Scandinavian countries in the top ten most peaceful countries in the world. According to the Institute for Economics and Peace (2013), there are eight elements that define a peaceful society: “a well functioning government, a sound business environment, an equitable distribution of resources, an acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbours, free flow of information, a high level of human capital, and low levels of corruption.” The combination of these variables makes for a peaceful society free of violence. Norway ranks as the 10th most peaceful country in the world under these standards.
While Norway as a whole is considered peaceful, the women’s movements still must work towards ending violence against individual women. UN Women (2012) notes that 13.9% of Norwegian women have experienced physical intimate partner violence, 9.4% have experienced sexual intimate partner violence, and 26.8% have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence in their lifetimes. The Norwegian government documents the types of crimes that are committed and what percentage are solved.

*Table 3: Offences Investigated, 2012 (Statistics Norway, 2014)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of crime</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent solved (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual crime [unspecified]</td>
<td>4,136</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual intercourse by threats, cunning behavior, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual intercourse with unconscious person</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted rape</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sexual crime</td>
<td>1,808</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime concerning family relations</td>
<td>2,252</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime of violence against the person [unspecified type]</td>
<td>14,823</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows only the types of crimes that this paper investigates and the percentage solved in 2012.
The statistics did not specify domestic violence cases, but it is possible to assume that some, if not all, cases are represented in the broader category of “crime concerning family relations” (Statistics Norway, 2014). It is unclear why the specification of domestic violence is not made under this heading, but it could serve to encompass a broader range of crimes other than domestic violence.

The Norwegian government has a comprehensive plan against domestic violence. Proving its commitment to counter domestic violence, the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police (2009) developed a plan where:

“A. Victims of domestic violence will be ensured necessary assistance and protection.

B. The spiral of violence will be halted by improving treatment services for offenders.

C. Victims of domestic violence will be offered arranged conversations with the offender (restorative justice).

D. Cooperation between and competence in the support services will be improved.

E. Research and development activities will be initiated and continued.

F. There will be [a] stronger focus on raising public awareness of domestic violence.

G. Domestic violence will be prevented by changing attitudes” (p. 3).

Steps to counter violence are clearly delineated as giving assistance to victims (A and C), rehabilitating offenders (B), furthering research (D and E), and working towards prevention by changing attitudes within the community (F and G). Funding for the initiatives of the shelters requires that educate the public to change cultural attitudes towards victims of violence and alleviation of violence. Rehabilitation of both the victim and the offender is clear within this action plan.
The data on gender-based violence is not necessarily optimal because of gender neutrality. Female and male data are combined. According to Women Against Violence Europe (2012), national statistics are available to the public, but are “neither gender nor age disaggregated, and the relationship between victim and perpetrator is not evident” (p. 199). Identity protection of victims and perpetrators creates anonymity, but it also blurs patterns in specific populations. Data interpretation through a gender specific lens is not possible in this instance. Experts working towards countering violence may not be able to identify certain demographics, be it male, female, young, old or a type of relationship such as heterosexual pairings to focus their prevention efforts. Despite the omission of gender and age demographics, the Norwegian government’s formal plan of prevention and eradication of violence is strongly supported by Norwegian law.

Norwegian law concerning violence protects victims of rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, human trafficking, forced marriages, and sexual coercion (Harvard School of Public Health, 2009). The statutes use gender neutral language except for female genital cutting and note minimum and maximum sentences in prison or fines for the convicted perpetrator. Laws against human trafficking, forced marriage, and female genital cutting are apparent results of immigrant populations within Norway, as some of these forms of violence are traditions in the Middle East and Africa.

**Hypotheses and Research Procedure**

I hypothesized in Chapter 1 that Norway would:

1) have a strong women’s movement which works toward policy reformation

2) contain a dialogue on violence against women
3) support shelters which would allow victims to leave violent situations

I proposed a methodology similar to that of my field research in Costa Rica. Taking classes at the International Summer School at the University of Oslo provided immersion opportunities and application of field research there through interviews. Appendix B shows that the interview instrument was more concise than that for Costa Rica. I networked with prominent gender studies leaders and activists in the field and specifically with my professor, Elisabet Rogg, to make connections and conduct interviews.

Despite following the proper procedures, including obtaining clearance by both the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) and the Valparaiso University Institutional Review Board (IRB), I was able to obtain only one interview. Most workers are on summer holiday during the months of June, July, and parts of August. As this included almost the entirety of my six weeks at the International Summer School, it was difficult to make contact with people during the time allotted. The interview I did conduct was with the Feminist Group Ottar which has several locations throughout Norway including Oslo, Stavanger, and Bergen. This interview was brief, but it reinforced my researched view on the current women’s movements in Norway.

In addition to obtaining an interview, I was able to tour one of the shelters for domestic violence, the Krisensentersekretariatet Oslo (Oslo Crisis Center). Our class was given a lecture on the function of the organization, which greatly informed my understanding of shelters in Norway. This observation proved informative; however, I conducted most of my research through literature searches both in Norway and the US. Articles about domestic violence in
Norway were few and far between and procuring statistics, much less gender specific statistics, was difficult.

The visit to the Krisensentersekretariatet in Oslo was especially helpful to understand domestic violence in Norway and how the government works to counter it. The results of my research follow in two sections: crisis centers and the current women’s movement against gender-based violence.

**Field Results: Crisis Centers**

The shelter system in Norway was created through the efforts of a feminist grassroots movement in 1976, but was soon supported by the Norwegian government in 1978 (Krisensentersekretariatet, 2013). Government involvement and funding spread throughout the country to create the modern system of 50 shelters. Local municipalities fund the shelter’s overhead operations 100% (Krisensentersekretariatet, 2013) with some in-kind donations from community members. All staff members are full time with a required quota of at least two male staff members who provide positive role models for children housed at the center.

Funding for the shelter includes modern and clean environment to keep victims and staff safe and to help them become adjusted to a new life free from violence. The facility is modern, containing playrooms, libraries, kitchens, and private rooms for each family. A housekeeper and cook help clients focus on changing their lives and healing through counseling services and job searches, not mundane tasks of everyday life. Meals are shared family style between staff and clients so that a healthy home and community environment is instilled in clients.

Facilities are public and open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the year with no secret address, although bullet proof glass and panic buttons exist throughout the shelter.
Hotlines for specific demographics, such as teenagers, are also a part of the services of the shelter. Non-discriminatory policies create a haven for victims of violence, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation.

Open to all individuals, male and female, the *Krisensentersekretariatet* (Crises Center) serves clients of all languages and ethnicities. Data collected by the Oslo *Krisensentersekretariatet* notes that clients in 2013 were 40% Norwegians and 60% foreign residents, a client population supported by the literature which notes that the majority of victims are of foreign birth (Hutchinson & Weeks, 2004; Vatnar & Bjørkly, 2009). The vast number of clients are women and children, but according to law men must not be denied services. Table 4 shows one demographic breakdown.

**Table 4: Demographics of Clients at Oslo Krisensentersekretariatet 2011-2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children [gender neutral]</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>156</strong></td>
<td><strong>169</strong></td>
<td><strong>174</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Services provided must accommodate all people without discrimination on the basis of gender, language, or ethnicity. A separate wing with a private entrance was created for men. Accommodating clients of all ethnic backgrounds means staff members are at least bilingual and printed literature is translated into 26 different languages. If a client’s native language is not
spoken by a staff member, a translator is called. While clients are welcomed at the main entrance in dozens of different languages and state of the art facilities are provided for their comfort, the shelters have established limitations on the length of a victim’s stay.

Despite earlier reports in the literature that clients could stay for as long as they wish (Alsaker et al., 2011), a maximum of four weeks residence is enforced at the Oslo Krisensentersekretariatet. According to staff members, clients may return at a later time repeatedly and unconditionally, and no judgement is to be passed for returning to a violent situation. Establishing a healthy lifestyle where all may live a life free from violence is important to the Krisensentersekretariatet, and the Norwegian government supports this goal even if clients have to repeat their visits.

Preventive measures undertaken by the Oslo Krisensentersekretariatet are also encouraged by the Norwegian government. Maintaining a relationship with public schools and conducting lectures on gender equality to sixth grade students are important components of the Krisensentersekretariatet’s action toward prevention and societal change. By informing the next generation of the affliction of gender-based violence and the importance of human rights for all persons, Norwegian culture can effectively progress to a future where gender-based violence is minimized. The Krisensentersekretariatet would not have been possible without the initiative of grassroots movements in the 1970s by concerned women who advocated aid for victims of domestic violence.

Field Results: Modern Women’s Movements
One of the active women’s organizations in Norway is the Feminist Group Ottar (henceforth known only as Ottar). Mona⁴ explained that the mission of Ottar is to “fight patriarchy and to end the oppression of women.” The organization works “politically to raise awareness about men’s violence against women, especially through pornography and prostitution.” The dialogue that surrounds violence against women in the Nordic countries clearly emphasizes these issues.

Ottar has worked towards “creating the law that criminalize[s] the buying of sex, in 2008” as well as “the new procuring law, that forbids landlords to rent out apartments to brothels.” While Ottar has helped create legislation countering violence against women, the Norwegian government has taken a different approach towards the formation of new laws. When the Norwegian government introduces a new law, it asks citizens for feedback. According to Korsvik (2011), “in Norway, when the government proposes new laws, the procedure is to send the proposals to relevant organizations and municipalities for them to give their opinion” (p. 138). In the US and Costa Rica supporters must petition, lobby, and advocate for new laws or conversely against reformation. Norwegian “women’s organizations are invited to comment on ‘women’s issues’, i.e., family or sexuality related matters” (Korsvik, 2011, p. 138) to strengthen new laws. Recent reforms to the ‘daddy quota’ were sent to 100 organizations and the government received 180 feedback responses demonstrating citizen’ involvement in the legislative process. The Norwegian government is interested in citizens’ and experts’ opinions in the making of their country.

⁴ All names changed to protect identity of participant.
Ottar works with a member of Parliament twice a year and regularly participates in demonstrations including the International Day of No Violence Against Women on November 25. Mostly volunteer based, the social movement’s primary goal is to advocate against violence and to work towards a more egalitarian society, as Norwegians believe that there still is much to be accomplished in this regard as violence against women can manifest in multiple forms and appears in female genital cutting, pornography, and prostitution within Norway.

Providing lectures is commonplace for Ottar, but they do not work in conjunction with universities as seen in Costa Rica and the US. Educational literature for local newspapers, social media platforms, and other forms of media are measures to inform the public. The emphasis is not on the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault, which seem to be passé, but rather on countering pornography, prostitution, and female genital cutting. In Norway, women’s organizations have their demands met by the government, such is the case when women’s groups advocated for mandatory paid paternity leave (Korsvik, 2011). The so called “Daddy quota” is now part of the social welfare system of Norway providing men with ten weeks paid time with their children. Resolving these issues allows women’s organizations to move on to other pertinent issues in the country. Having heard the people’s concerns, the government progresses toward alleviating all human right injustices. The influence of women’s organizations is clear in Norway as policy changes and laws are formed to protect citizens after protests and advocacy occur.
Limitations

Ottar is only one organization in Norway with proven results at influencing legislation. This thesis did not provide an exhaustive list of all women’s organizations in Norway. Obtaining interviews proved difficult due to the summer holidays.

Translation was not possible without a translator, since I do not speak Norwegian. Luckily, most of the students at the International Summer School were language students and I utilized their skills of translation for reading the laws criminalizing domestic violence.

Furthermore, the academic research pertaining to Norway on domestic violence is lacking and I had already read much of it before I traveled. While this lack of information suggests an international connection between Norway and the US, the lack of data was an obstacle in analyzing the issue of domestic violence. The prevalence of intimate partner violence has decreased, resulting in the illumination of other forms of violence which the government and Ottar have begun to counter.

Summary

I hypothesized that Norway would 1) have a strong women’s movement that worked toward policy reformation, 2) continue a dialogue on violence against women, and 3) support shelters which would allow victims to leave violent situations. These hypotheses were confirmed through the academic and field research.

Several strong women’s organizations exist within the country, including the Feminist Group Ottar, The Women’s Front (Sainsbury, 2001; Korsvik, 2011), Forum for Women & Development (Fokus), The Foundation Stop the Discrimination, and The Norwegian Housewives’ Association (Korsvik, 2011), but only one was available for interviews at the time.
of my field research. Formulating a culture of gender equality in Norway has been the primary goal of each of these organizations, but the means to achieve this goal has varied greatly. Violence against women as a form of inequality is recognized by non-government and government organizations alike as Norway continues to evolve.

The issue of violence against women is evident as pornography, prostitution, and female genital cutting are at the forefront of the dialogue, supporting my second hypothesis. A continuation of gender equality discourse now examines modern issues that Norway faces; statistics affirm that only a small population is affected by domestic violence.

My third hypothesis that was also supported existing shelters aid victims. However, no data corroborates this assertion; this conclusion is based on the extensive services provided by the shelter encompassing all victims. The Krisensentersekretariatet does not keep statistics stating how many victims leave violent situations, indicating the need for long term data collection tracking clients. Promoting a life free of domestic violence is a goal of the Norwegian Ministry of Justice and the Police effects include prevention, education, research, assistance for victims, and justice. Due to the dialogue about women’s issues, an operative plan is emerging to counter other forms of violence such as pornography, prostitution, and female genital cutting (Langvasbråten, 2008). Further research to identify the prevalence and measures taken to counter these issues would aid in the dialogue of Norway’s continued commitment to human rights and equality for women.
Chapter 4: Conclusions

Introduction

In this thesis, I have worked to initiate a comprehensive dialogue and understanding about the ways two diverse countries work both at a governmental level and through smaller social movements to counter violence. Costa Rica and Norway operate under two very different governmental systems and have correspondingly varied approaches to counter violence. Both democratic countries, they differ in governmental assistance for victims suffering gender-based violence. This concluding chapter aims to summarize the differences between the two countries’ responses to gender-based violence, to compare those responses to similar activities in the US, and to present the overall conclusions. I will also discuss the limitations of the study and probe my personal reflections on the experience.

Summary: Costa Rica

Costa Rica adheres to the essentialist argument that men and women are different. Government and non-government organizations reflect this categorization. Performing separate roles in society, men are perpetrators and breadwinners inhabiting the public sphere and women are victims and caretakers in the private sphere. Instituto WEM, a non-government organization that receives government funding, provides services for men as perpetrators seeking to reconstruct and alleviate problems associated with the rigid standards of masculinity. Serving women, the government established program PLANOVl assists victims of gender-based violence and promotes a life free of violence as a human right. The non-government organizations examined in this thesis, Cenderos and Red de Mujeres Rurales, protect migrant and rural
women’s rights respectively. This separation of men and women in non-government and government organizations is evidence that the genders reside in different realms. This polarization of the two genders prevents equality from rooting in the culture and contributes to gender-based violence.

Labor, in regards to gender, is not evenly distributed in Costa Rica, but separates along traditional lines with women as reproducers and men as producers. Reducing pressures on both genders of the drastic split of labor through social benefits would allow for more continuity and equality to exist within the home. No state-run day care services exist and short school days prevent women from gainful employment providing economic independence from spouses or partners; however, Costa Rican families do not adhere to the nuclear family model, but are more often extended with three generations residing in one home or adjacent homes.

Additionally, providing social benefits for women to gain economic independence is not a focus in Costa Rica. Women’s right to work, as seen in Scandinavia, is not recognized as women are confined to the role of caretaker which is held in high esteem. Traditional views of the valor of motherhood and marriage prohibit women from economic independence and acceptance of relationships with violence due to the merit of love. The absence of government policies that encourage women to work, including day care, consistent school days, and paternal leave also prohibits women from pursuing careers and work outside of the home. As a result, men must then provide the entirety of household income, thereby constructing rigid standards of masculinity in conjunction with breadwinning. This separation of the genders is reflected not only in the distribution of labor, but also within the organizations formulated to counter domestic violence.
Instituto WEM provides support groups for men as perpetrators, and CEFEMINA conducts coffee talks and health workshops to empower women as victims. Keeping separate realms—women as victims inhabiting the private sphere and men as perpetrators residing in the public sphere—perpetuates the lack of unity and equality for all. No dialogue exists addressing violence in gay partnerships or women as perpetrators and men as victims. Instituto WEM, CEFEMINA, Red de Mujeres Rurales, and Cenderos acknowledge that traditional gender roles often sustain gender-based violence. Providing services to establish new gender roles for women is part of their preventive measures. Instituto WEM recognizes the rigid lines of masculinity and the problems that arise for men, especially relationship issues with spouses and children resulting in violence. All three women’s organizations agree that economic independence for women is a necessary measure resulting in the continued encouragement for women to become entrepreneurs.

Changing the construction of gender roles and promoting equality as a means to better the lives of all women is not part of the dialogue within government; however, PLANOVI’s plan to counter domestic violence supports victims’ economic development after seeking services. Promoting women’s participation in the labor market would reduce the reliance on a spouse or partner and aid in breaking the cycle of violence. The Costa Rican government supports and funds Instituto WEM’s efforts to reconstruct masculinity, but these services only reach men who acknowledge violent tendencies or those that are court ordered to attend the group meetings. Performing both gender roles, breadwinner and caretaker, has not been a cultural movement in Costa Rica and the genders remain segregated.
Other preventive measures are yet in their infancy. A media campaign to educate the general public was launched in 2010 (United States Department of State, 2011), but there is no indication of the effect of this campaign as of yet. Educational programs about gender equality do not exist for school age children which would influence the next generation to participate in both the private and public sphere. Establishing gender equality is a slow process and is not clearly evident in the overall structure of Costa Rica. This social stratification and lack of equality is likely linked to the prevalence of gender-based violence.

The segregation of the genders allows for critical analysis of inequalities and injustices faced by Costa Rican women. INAMU’s continued collection of gender-based violence illuminates the issues faced by women, providing researchers with the ability to follow trends in gender-based violence. Using a feminist lens to examine data is useful, but alleviating violence must come through a unification of the genders to realize universal human rights. Statistics indicate that 58% of women have experienced violence in their lifetimes (Durán, 2007), but in 2010 only 12,510 cases of domestic violence were opened, 393 of those cases were tried, and 196 perpetrators were sentenced (United States Department of State, 2011), demonstrating a lack of justice within the Costa Rican legal system. According to Sagot (2010), “only 4 percent of women who reported an act of violence at the hands of their intimate partner succeed in having the perpetrator convicted” (p. 230). Despite the government program, PLANOVÍ’s commitment “to the promotion of human rights” and the right to live free of violence is not a reality for millions of women in Costa Rica. Further development of government measures to educate, prevent, and counter gender-based violence would help men and women understand their rights.
Summary: Norway

Equality of the genders is demonstrated in the ability of men and women to perform both reproductive and productive roles and work inside and outside of the home. Due to feminist advocacy before state formation, the Norwegian government supports this equal performance with state benefits for the combined role of breadwinner and caretaker. These social benefits eliminate traditional segregation of labor and allow both men and women to participate in the private and public spheres.

This cultural framing of gender equality is evident in the low number of violent incidents, particularly domestic violence. Only 13.9% of Norwegian women have experienced physical intimate partner violence in their lifetimes (UN Women, 2012) and this data correlates to the low amount of general violence in the country. In a survey of Norwegians aged 16-67+, Statistics Norway (2013) found that general violence is more likely to be experienced by males 16-24 year olds occurring in 7% of this demographic. These violent encounters most frequently occur in public (45%) or within the home (25%). The female demographic with the most violence was also 16-24 year olds at 4.1%, with violence most likely to occur at work or school (50%) or at home (35%). The percentage of Norwegians who experienced any form of violence was less than 2.5% and only 1.5% experienced violence that left a mark or injury. It is no wonder then, with such a lack of general violence in the population, that Norwegian women’s movements now focus on other issues.

The women’s movements, such as Ottar, first advocated for state funded shelters which were established in the late 1970s and recently included both genders. Ottar has now progressed to other issues such as eliminating pornography, prostitution, and female genital cutting. Perhaps
because rates are already quite low, examining domestic violence does not seem to be a priority in Norway and data is limited as stated in Chapter 3; furthermore, the data are not categorized by demographics making analysis through a gendered lens difficult. A comprehensive examination of domestic violence, as seen in Costa Rica, has not been initiated by researchers in some years to survey prevalence nationally, thereby ignoring the needs of certain populations that may need more preventive measures such as immigrants or minority women.

Continued promotion of equality by the Norwegian government allows for both genders to better realize a life free of violence. Several cultural factors contribute to equality, including late state formation, a strong feminist movement at the time of formation, a social welfare government, a quota system for women’s inclusion in the workforce and legislature, and geographic proximity to other peaceful nations. Norwegians believe that there is still much to be accomplished in regards to gender equality. However, Norway was named “the most gender equal country in the world” (Korsvik, 2011, p. 135) in 2008. Advancing gender equality, Norway continues to provide social benefits for men and women to live a life where human rights are a reality.

While the Nordic model promotes equality and assuages violence, critics claim that it denies difference and normalizes the male performance of gender expression. Longva (2003) notes that the Norwegian model is “a process in which promoting gender equality consists primarily in presenting the male model of performance as a universal one that women are expected to strive after” (p. 159). Feminist theorists have advocated for women’s inclusion into the public sphere in order to eliminate dependence on men thereby reducing violence; however, this adaptation to the opposing sphere must also apply to men. According to Tong (2009)
“unless women’s assimilation into the public world is coupled with the simultaneous assimilation of men into the private world, women will always have to work harder than men” (p. 30) to balance private and public life. Norway’s social benefits assure this assimilation for both genders so that women’s liberation can also be men’s liberation (Tong, 2009, p. 31). Norway has liberated both genders from the binary of gender performance, where women solely perform reproductive actions and men productive, and assuaged violence in all relationships.

Discussion

Comparing these two mostly peaceful countries, Costa Rica ranks 42nd and Norway 10th out of 162 countries due to government structure, the acceptance of human rights, a sound business environment, and low levels of corruption (Institute for Economics & Peace, 2014), two very different responses to gender-based violence emerge. Costa Rica, a former colony with a historically diverse population, continues to progress towards equality; however, equality is not a governmental foundation in the same way as it is in Norway where the value is emphasized. Social stratification along ethnic, national, socioeconomic status, and gender lines does not unify the country. Despite this lack of governmental structure, this segregation allows for analysis through a feminist lens. Research is easier when difference is identified, but eradicating violence under a difference model is improbable. Statistics may be easier to locate, but government programs that provide relief to victims are unknown to the general public. Unlike the Norwegian model with obscure statistics and readily available resources, the Costa Rica system provides ample data with scarce resources. High levels of violence and low levels of justice in cases of domestic violence show a need for Costa Rica to better address this societal issue.
Norway, a historically homogenous population, unifies statistics and does not delineate demographics largely because difference is not a cultural focus. Wishing to eliminate difference in order to promote equality, Norway supports citizens through social benefits. Examining statistics may be difficult in this context, but equality is indeed a reality with high employment rates for women (Hutchinson & Weeks, 2004), even distribution of paid and unpaid labor (Korsvik, 2011), promotion of human rights including gay rights, universal health care, and paid paternal leave (Borchorst, 2008).

Norway’s approach to equality appears to alleviate violence more effectively. Costa Rican efforts to diminish violence continue to evolve, but without an encompassing educational program or widespread knowledge of government services, high reports of domestic violence will likely continue. Without a strong grassroots movement advocating for change in government policies, prevention and relief efforts may stagnate. Costa Rica does not have the same history of women’s movements as Norway, nor the same reactions leading to different responses to gender-based violence.

The benefit of cross cultural research is the potential for implementing new ideas into one’s home country. The United States, while also democratic like Costa Rica and Norway, does not have overarching social welfare benefits due to the cultural insistence on personal independence. Gender-based violence has largely been addressed by non-profit organizations that shelter women, engage in outreach services, and advocate for policy change. The shelter system in the United States is funded mostly by small grants and donations. Burgeoned by lack of funds and inadequate facilities, shelters are often filled to capacity, falling into disrepair, or understaffed. Shelters persist to aid women find temporary relief from abusive partners. In the
United States temporary housing is usually only provided for three or four days consecutively. Other services may include providing assistance in filling out restraining order forms, accompanying women to court, teaching job search skills, and offering housing referrals. These actions by non-government organizations are necessary to assist victims to live a life free of violence.

The United States could implement a nationwide shelter system funded by the government as Norway has done, but it is likely that a strong feminist movement would have to advocate for its creation to a responsive government for many years. However, dialogue concerning gender-based violence has been circulating due to the recent National Football League scandals which now illuminates the prevalence of violence. Indeed, 31.5% of women experience intimate partner violence in their lifetime in the United States (Breiding et al., 2014). President Obama’s televised announcement advocating for the elimination of violence against women was a triumph for feminists who have been proclaiming the same message for decades.

Education and advocacy by political leaders will aid in the cultural shift as seen in Norway, but insistence on the equality of the genders needs to be implemented as well. Separation and devaluation of one gender will not allow for the realization of human rights for all citizens as seen in Costa Rica. Penalization and intolerance of violent behaviors must apply to every individual in society in order to eliminate violence. Special treatment cannot be given to celebrities, athletes, or other authority figures. Further insistence on equality for all persons, in the United States a historically diverse population, will actualize human rights including the right to a life free of violence.
Summary

In this thesis, several of my hypotheses were supported through primary and secondary research. My hypothesis that Norway would have a strong women’s movement that works to reform policy was supported through my interview with Ottar and the literary evidence of other women’s organizations (Korsvik, 2011; Sainsbury, 2001). Norwegian government formulation paralleled the existence of strong feminist movements, the demands of these movements were met by the newly formed government providing women with human rights including the right to live a life free of violence. A continued dialogue on how to integrate this human right is evident in the continued dialogue concerning violence at the government and grassroots level.

Supporting my second hypothesis, the dialogue surrounding violence against women has moved from domestic violence to pornography, prostitution, and female genital cutting due to the fact that the Norwegian government has responded effectively to the need for domestic violence prevention, treatment, and education. This response was due to demands by women’s movements for a crisis hotline, shelters, and prevention measures; however, Norway’s unique system of asking for citizens’ feedback during law reformation (Korsvik, 2011) also aids in this process.

Three out of my five hypotheses were not fully supported by my field research. While Norway does have a widespread network of domestic violence shelters that provide services for victims of violent home environments, no evidence supports the success rate of victims who leave their partners. During my observation, the Oslo Krisensentersekretariatet asserted that most clients do not return to violent situations, but no evidence could be found to support or refute this claim. The existence of shelters and their outreach measures allows victims to find
support and resources to transition to a life free of violence, but success rates are unknown. This lack of data concerning the success of shelters is also reflected in the lack of data concerning prevalence in Norway, but the rate of violence is low and the government continues to advance efforts to alleviate other forms of violence.

My field research in Costa Rica did not support my hypotheses for Costa Rica. I hypothesized that women’s organizations would be well equipped to service victims of violence; however, non-government organizations found the shelter model ineffective in Costa Rica and it was abandoned (Carcedo, 1997). My hypothesis which stated that there would be several shelters was not supported. My hypothesis which states that information for relief from violence would be difficult to find was supported because technology is so limited and most aid is found through word of mouth and referrals.

**Conclusion**

The reduction of gender-based violence results from several factors: a prominent grassroots women’s movement advocating for services for victims, a responsive government, educational programs to produce cultural change, and funds to support and maintain these measures. Continuous data collection is important to examine the needs of the population and trends in violence, but research cannot be the only means to counter violence.

In comparing Costa Rica and Norway, Norway appears to have a better system for countering gender-based violence. The Norwegian government continuously responds to activism. The Norwegian model presents exemplar solutions to a global problem; however, a foundation of equality for all citizens aids in countering gender-based violence. Without establishing equality of the genders first, other countries may not as effectively initiate the same
government assistance for victims of violence. As seen in Costa Rica, the US shelter model proved ineffectual due to the expense of operating these facilities and a lack of female empowerment. Future research should look critically at gender equality in conjunction with global prevalence of gender-based violence.
References


Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.


Appendix A

ENTREVISTA

Questions for Administrators

Preguntas para administradoras

1. What is the objective of the organization?
   · ¿Cuál es el objetivo de la organización?

2. What is your role in the community?
   · ¿Cuál es su rol en la comunidad?

   · Cómo ayuda su organización a las víctimas de violencia de género? ¿Da el albergue? ¿Da ayuda económica? ¿Les ayuda a llenar las formularios legales? ¿Les enseña sobre lo que es una relación sana?

   · ¿Cómo trata contrarrestar y prevenir la violencia? ¿Da charlas educativas para los hombres y las mujeres en sus lugares de trabajo y en las universidades? ¿Protestas?
¿Cuentan con literatura educativa? ¿Están en las redes sociales? ¿Hacen peticiones?

¿Ayuda en la proceso de legislación? (impulsan aprobación de leyes)

5. How does your work affect public policy?
   · ¿Cómo afecta su trabajo la legislación pública existente?

6. Do you work closely with legislators?
   · ¿Trabaja usted en conjunto con los políticos (diputados)?

7. Does a representative regularly support your efforts? How regularly? Once a week, once a month, twice a year, once a year, once every five years?
   · ¿Los políticos apoyan y le dan soporte a sus esfuerzos? ¿Conquée frecuencia? ¿Una vez a la semana, cada mes, cada seis meses, una vez al año o una vez cada cinco años?

8. Do you have support from local universities, colleges and schools? How many and which ones?
   · ¿Tienen ustedes apoyo de las universidades, los colegios y las escuelas de Costa Rica? ¿Cuántas y cuáles?

9. Do you give presentations in schools or the workplace? How often? Once a week, once a month, twice a year, once a year, once every five years?
   · ¿Da conferencias en colegios, universidades o en lugares de trabajo? ¿Conquée frecuencia? ¿Una vez a la semana, cada mes, cada seis meses, una vez al año o cada cinco años?

· ¿Cómo encuentran su organización? ¿Por medio de folletos? ¿Por medio de la televisión?
  ¿Por el internet? ¿Por otros medio o por anuncio o rótulos?

11. How many volunteers or employees do you have?
· ¿Cuántas(os) voluntarias(os) o colaboradoras(es) tiene su organización?

12. Do you participate in or mobilize protests?
· ¿Su organización participa y moviliza personas para realizar la protestas y apoyarlas?

13. What impact do you think your organization makes on legislation and public policy?
· ¿Cuáles son los impactos que genera su organización en la legislación y en la política pública?

14. Do you petition or send letters to individuals in legislation to reform or create laws?
· ¿Hacen las peticiones o envían cartas a algunos diputados para crear o reformar leyes?

15. If so, how do you circulate petitions? At events? On the street? Door to door? Through email or social media?
· ¿Cómo hace circular las peticiones y cómo hace para que las personas las firmen? En eventos? En la calle? Puerta a puertas? Por correo electrónico o por medios sociales?

16. Which of these methods do you find most effective when it comes to effecting policy?
· ¿Cuál de estos métodos le resultan más eficaces a la hora de hacer efectiva la política?

17. Is there a specific law or laws that your organization has had a hand in creating?
· ¿Hay alguna ley o leyes que su organización haya ayudado a crear?

18. What do you think is the ultimate technique that would end or decrease gender-based violence?
· ¿En su opinión, Cuál técnica es la mejor para terminar con la violencia de género?
Appendix B

Interview

Questions for Administrators

1. What is the objective of the organization?

2. How many volunteers or employees do you have?


6. Does a representative regularly support your efforts? How regularly? Once a week, once a month, twice a year, once a year, once every five years?

7. Is there a specific law or laws that your organization has had a hand in creating?

8. Do you have support from local universities, colleges and schools? How many and which ones?

9. Do you participate in or mobilize protests?

10. What do you think is the ultimate technique that would end or decrease gender-based violence?
Appendix C

Contrarrestar Violencia de las Mujeres con Activismo en Todo el Mundo

Yo pido usted para ayudar con mi proyecto sobre eficacia de activismo de la violencia de las mujeres y la relación de activismo con legislación. Por favor lea este papel con cuidado y pida las preguntas usted tiene antes de acordando a entrevista.

Que este proyecto es sobre: El objeto de esta investigación es aprender cómo activismo de la violencia de las mujeres efectivo el cambio en los leyes en Costa Rica y India. Para participar, usted debe trabajar en una organización por las mujeres (para un año) o participa en un grupo activismo.

Que se preguntaré hacer: Si usted acuerda estar en esta investigación, yo pregunto unas preguntas para una entrevista. La entrevista tiene preguntas sobre su parte en la organización, como los leyes cambia porque su trabaja, como su organización funciona, y los tipos de activismo la organización usa. La entrevista estámáss o menos 30 minutos completar.

Los riesgos y los beneficios: Los riesgos son asociados con esta investigación son los malestares psicológico. Los beneficios son que su voz será el parte del diálogo sobre las mujeres y violencia.
La Compensación: No hay compensación para su participación en este investigacion.

Sus respuestas son confidenciales. Las formas para esta investigación son privadas. En mi tesis, no será ninguna información que podrá identificar su o un otro participante. Las formas estará en un archivo cerrado y solamente la investigadora tendrá acceso.

Su participación está voluntario: Su participación en esta investigación está totalmente voluntario. No es necesario responder a ninguna pregunta. Puede omitir una respuesta. Si no decide terminar su entrevista o omite una respuesta, no pasa nada negativo. Si decide participar, puede terminar a cualquier tiempo.

Si tiene preguntas: Esta investigación hecha por Alanna Reid, una estudiante de postgrado de la Universidad de Valparaiso bajo la supervisión de David Rowland. Por favor pide sus preguntas ahora. Si tendrá preguntas después, contactará Alanna Reid a alanna.reid@valpo.edu (+1-307-760-1774) o David Rowland a david.rowland@valpo.edu (+1-219-464-5313). Si tiene preguntas sobre sus derechos en esta investigación conacitará The Institutional Review Board (IRB) a valpoirb@valpo.edu.

Usted dará una copia de esta forma para sus registros.

La declaración del consentimiento: Yo leí la información anterior y usted contestó a mis preguntas. Yo le doy el consentimiento a participar en esta investigación.
Su Firma___________________________________ Fecha________________________

Su nombre (en prenta)

____________________________________________________________

La firma de la investigadora __________________________ Fecha_____________________

El nombre de la investigadora______________________________

Fecha_____________________

Este forma estará con la investigadora por tres años después del fin del proyecto

y fue aprobado por el IRB en [fecha].
Appendix D

Countering gender-based Violence with Activism Throughout the Globe

Alanna Reid

You are being asked to take part in a research project that measures the effectiveness of activism against gender-based violence and its relationship with legislation. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

What the study is about: The purpose of this study is to learn how activism against gender-based violence affects the changing of laws in Costa Rica and Norway. You must have participated in a protest, work for a non government organization or otherwise participate in a form of protest that appeals to legislation to make changes in the local laws.

What I will ask you to do: If you agree to be in this study, I will conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about your role in the protest process, how have laws changed because of your work, how the organization you work or volunteer for runs, and what sorts of activism techniques do you use to combat violence. The interview will take about 30 minutes to complete.

Risks and benefits: The risks associated with this study may cause slight psychological discomfort due to the nature of the questions as they may be sensitive in nature.
The benefit is that your voice will contribute to the dialogue of ending gender-based violence.

**Compensation:** There is no compensation given for participation in this study.

**Your answers will be confidential.** The records of this study will be kept private. In my thesis, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you or any other participant. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to the records.

**Taking part is voluntary:** Taking part in this study is entirely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not negatively affect you. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

**If you have questions:** This study is being conducted by Alanna Reid, a graduate student at Valparaiso University under the supervision of David Rowland. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Alanna Reid at alanna.reid@valpo.edu or at +1-307-760-1774. You may also contact David Rowland at david.rowland@valpo.edu or +1-219-464-5313. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject in this study, you may contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at valpoirb@valpo.edu.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.
**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature ___________________________ Date ______________________

Your Name (printed) ______________________________________________________

Your Signature ___________________________ Date ______________________

Signature of person obtaining consent ___________________________ Date

__________________________

Printed name of person obtaining consent ___________________________ Date

__________________________

*This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study and was approved by the NSD on July 4, 2014 and the IRB on July 11, 2014.*
Appendix E

Personal Reflection: My Path

Countering gender-based violence has been a passion of mine due to an internship at the Wyoming Women’s Foundation my junior year of college. Several rapes were reported on the University of Wyoming campus and I researched local organizations treating victims hoping to find opportunities for funding. I received a grant to continue my research for the Foundation, I followed cases, organizations, and the dialogue that surrounded the issue for the next few years discovering an enormous lack of services, education, and prevention.

This initial research and internship greatly informed my graduate research and thesis. Through writing my thesis and my coursework, I became aware of the importance of politics and the need for research to inform policy changes at local, state, communal, tribal, and national levels. These prior experiences influenced my research topic, but Valparaiso University presented the outlet to further my knowledge on the issue as a global problem.

My initial focus was sexual assault, a problem which I attempted to amalgamate with my love for India, especially due to the Delhi Rape Crisis. Valparaiso University helped me broaden my interests. As this Master’s program required a semester abroad at one of the university study abroad centers, I was invited to choose from four countries that I had never considered visiting before: Germany, England, China, or Costa Rica. I chose Costa Rica, because many of my undergraduate colleagues had studied abroad in Costa Rica and loved it. Since I had some rudimentary Spanish skills, I decided to take up the challenge and effectively expanded my interests that had been limited to the Asian countries, particularly India and Southeast Asia.
Costa Rica shaped me in a way that I could not have expected. I traveled along with four undergraduates to San José, Costa Rica. We all seemed to be of different backgrounds and at first glance I was not sure if we would all be friends. Perhaps at that time I did not even consider the idea that all of us would become friends. Initially impartial to the idea of Costa Rica and my fellow students, I quickly came to love the country, my experiences there, and those around me. I felt engaged in a community with the other Valparaiso University students, the program director, and the students who lived with me at Universidad Bíblica Latinoamericana. I embraced the Latin culture and grew exponentially.

Costa Rican culture embraces the idea of relaxation and community as essential to one’s health. As an “American” (or more accurately a “United States-ian”), this originally bothered me, but then I realized how important it really was to relax and how everything would get done eventually. Sometimes tasks were out of my hands and I just had to deal with that. Perhaps deadlines would not be met, but the work would be completed and my world would not fall apart. I discovered that nothing productive would result in a sleepless night of worry over a project. Costa Ricans would simply tell me “tranquila” or calm down. This experience left me questioning my own cultural background. Do Americans really need to hurry so much? Why is there a lack of emphasis on relaxation, time off, and enjoyment in our culture? Does anyone acknowledge the detriment that stress and hurrying do to our health? I returned enriched by the Latin lifestyle, mindful of rituals that are important for mental health such as coffee breaks and quiet reflection.

Fluidity of time was not evident in Norway, events started on the minute and were concise. The stoicism of the culture was also something for me to adapt to in comparison to
open jovial Costa Ricans. Developing friendships was easy due to the programs at the International Summer School and the sheer number of students who arrived from all over the world. My equality minded friends met in a country where gender issues were given priority, something we strived for in our home countries of Russia, The Republic of Georgia, Romania, and the United States. I discovered a group of fellow students passionately interested in gender and LGBT politics, gender quotas, reproductive rights, gender-based violence, women and queer studies, and we thrived. The cultural climate of Norway acknowledged alternative lifestyles where women and men can inhabit mutual spaces and respect one another. Observing a government system that works for its constituents, I discovered a harmony between politics and reality. The environment of the ISS allowed me to recognize my interest in politics, especially concerning gender-based policies that would alleviate many modern concerns.

Both countries nourished my soul, I found the worth of free time in Costa Rica and remembered the importance of beauty in Norway. This additional free time allowed me to examine myself as a person and the space to exist as I always was inside, but never knew. Costa Rica’s landscape enchanted me and I never tired of seeing the lush green mountains on long bus rides or the surprise of a perfect purple banana blossom along my cul-de-sac. The close relationships I formed helped me overcome some of my personal obstacles there. I will forever be grateful to those that shared the journey with me, including the undergraduates I never suspected would be my friends.

The landscape of Norway is a strange reflection of my home state of Wyoming, but with much more water. It simultaneously comforted me and made me feel terrifically homesick. The constant outdoor adventure and the near perfect summer climate with warm days, cooler nights
and a lack of humidity reminded me of all the things that I once called home everyday. Living in this beautiful country prioritized my future goals which includes living in the mountains and being a part of a strong academic community. The friends that I made at the ISS were intellectual, political, philosophical and often queer. My friends pushed me and rekindled the notion that gender studies are important as there will always be an issue to advocate for in terms of equality.

Looking back now, the days and weeks have a remarkably clear sense of happiness. I have never felt so free, independent, strong, and connected to a community. My studies abroad are quickly becoming some of my most prized memories.