

Enacting Equality for Women

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Global rights revolution for women

- Autonomous feminist movements and transnational feminist networks → VAW legislation (Htun and Weldon, 2012)
- Feminist street protests → abortion law in Latin America (Encarnación, 2022)
- Political institutionalization of religious authority thwarted reform of discriminatory family law (Htun and Weldon, 2015; Htun, 2003b)
- Fertility declines in Europe and East Asia → elite support for work-life balance policies (Rosenbluth, 2006)
- CEDAW created *process* to hold governments accountable for their commitments to equality (Baldez, 2014)
- Post- conflict context let feminist groups influence rights-related policy (Tripp, 2015)

We can't assume that laws change society

- Weak and unstable institutions across the Global South (Brinks, Levitsky, and Murillo, 2020)
- Social behavior not aligned with the law even in advanced democracies, especially on civil rights (Edelman, 2016)
- Large law-practice gaps due to resistance from above and below

Laws that work use money, coercion, or norms to compel behavioral change by individual or collective actors

Story 1 Daddy leave in Norway
changed gender roles in
parenting

Money—financial incentives can move individual behavior in supportive contexts

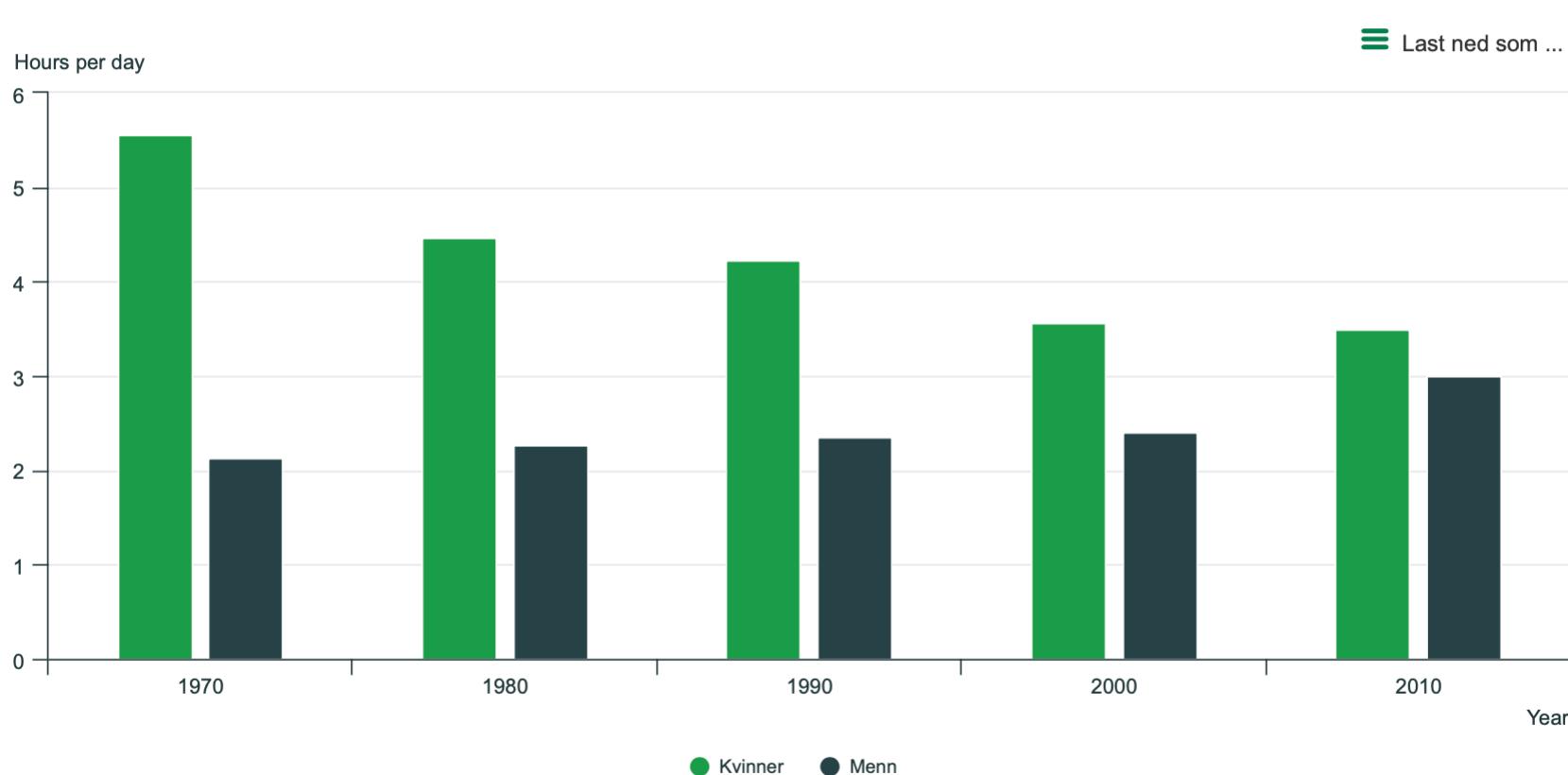
Norway

- 1986 masculinity commission endorsed gender role change
- 1993 = "daddy quota": use-it-or-lose-it parental leave
- Before daddy quota:
 - < 3% of men took leave
 - 25% in the month after the law was changed
 - 60% in 2006 (Cools et al. 2015)
 - 71% in 2018
- → more equal gender division of household labor and better child well being (Cools et al., 2015; Kotsadam and Finseraas, 2011; Kotsadam and Finseraas 2013)

Time spent on unpaid household and care work (5.4.1)

Show as chart

Show as table

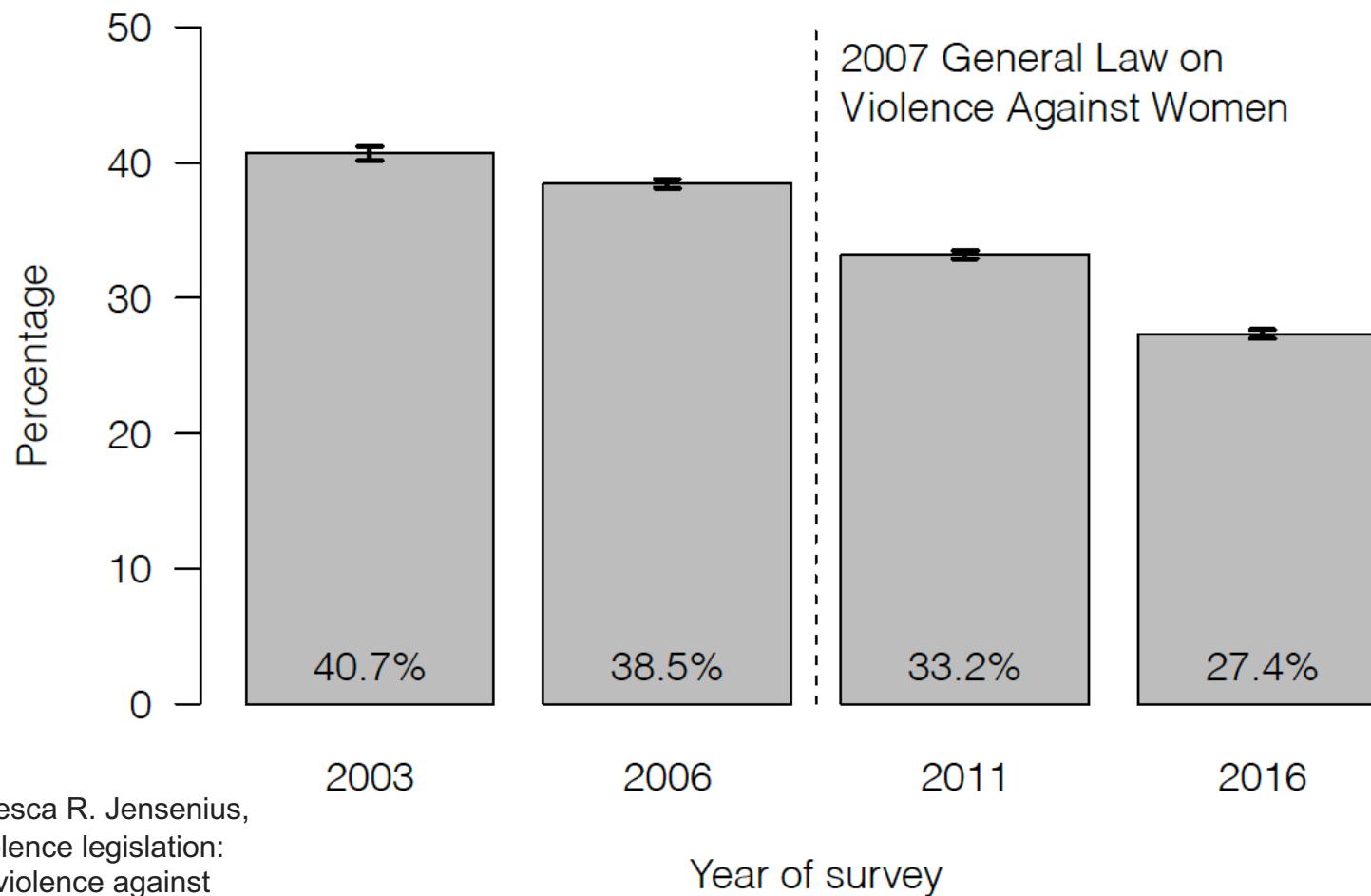


Source: Time use survey, Statistics Norway

Story 2 Expressive power of 2nd generation anti-violence laws changed abuse rates, attitudes, and reporting in Mexico

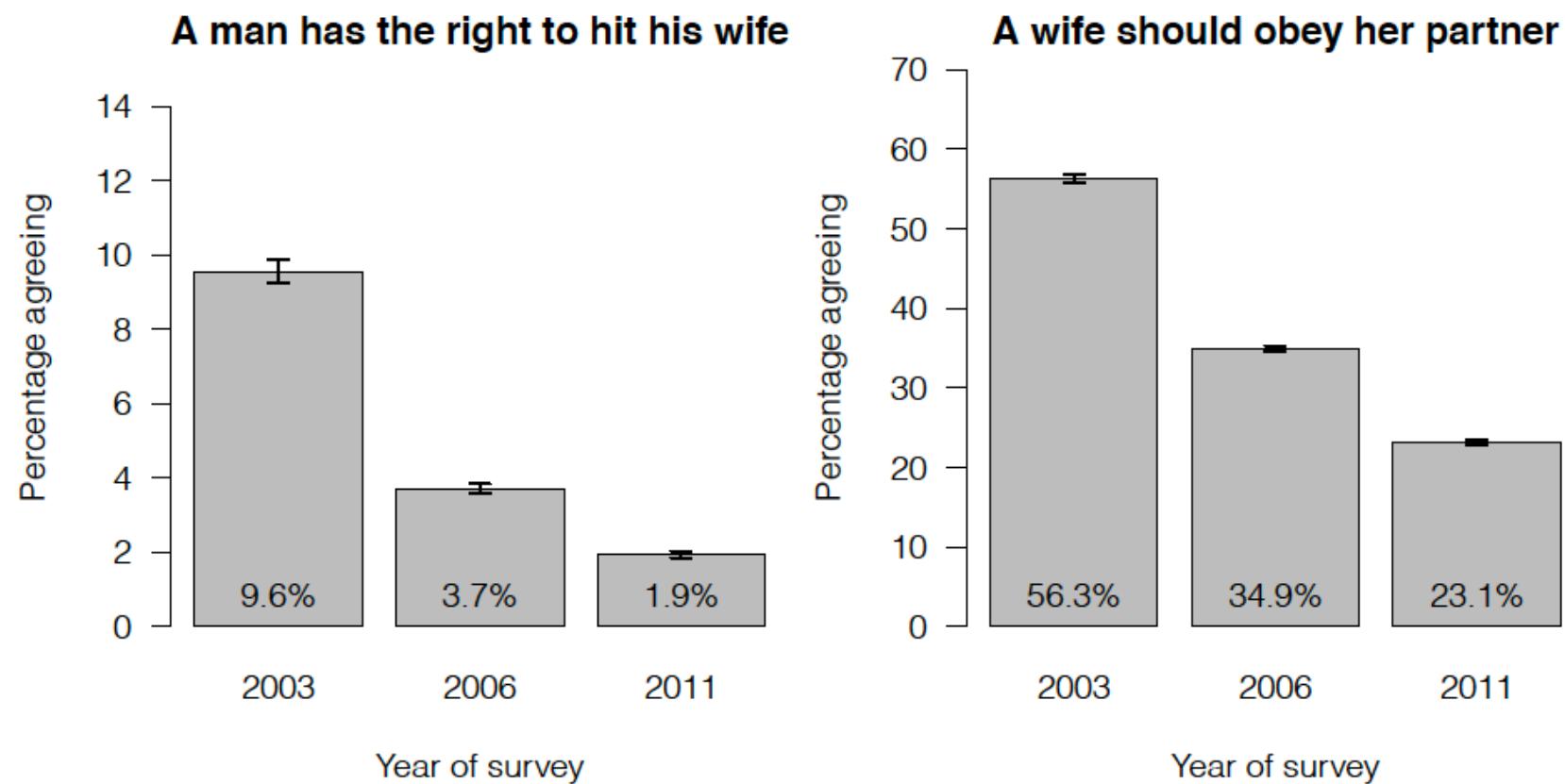
Expressive laws can change norms with help from societal actors such as mobilized feminist movements

Figure 1: Percentage of women saying they experienced domestic abuse in the previous year (95% confidence intervals at the top of each bar)



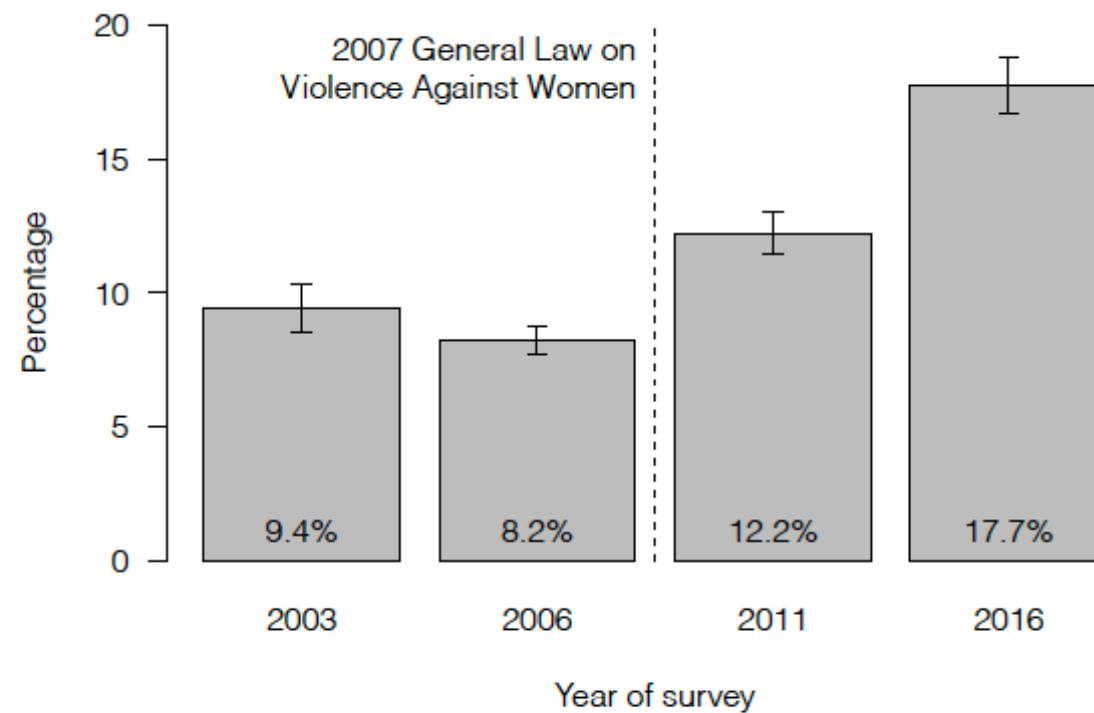
Change in attitudes conducive to domestic abuse?

Figure 4: Attitudes towards male control changing over time, ENDIREH 2003, 2006, 2011 (95% confidence intervals at the top of each bar)



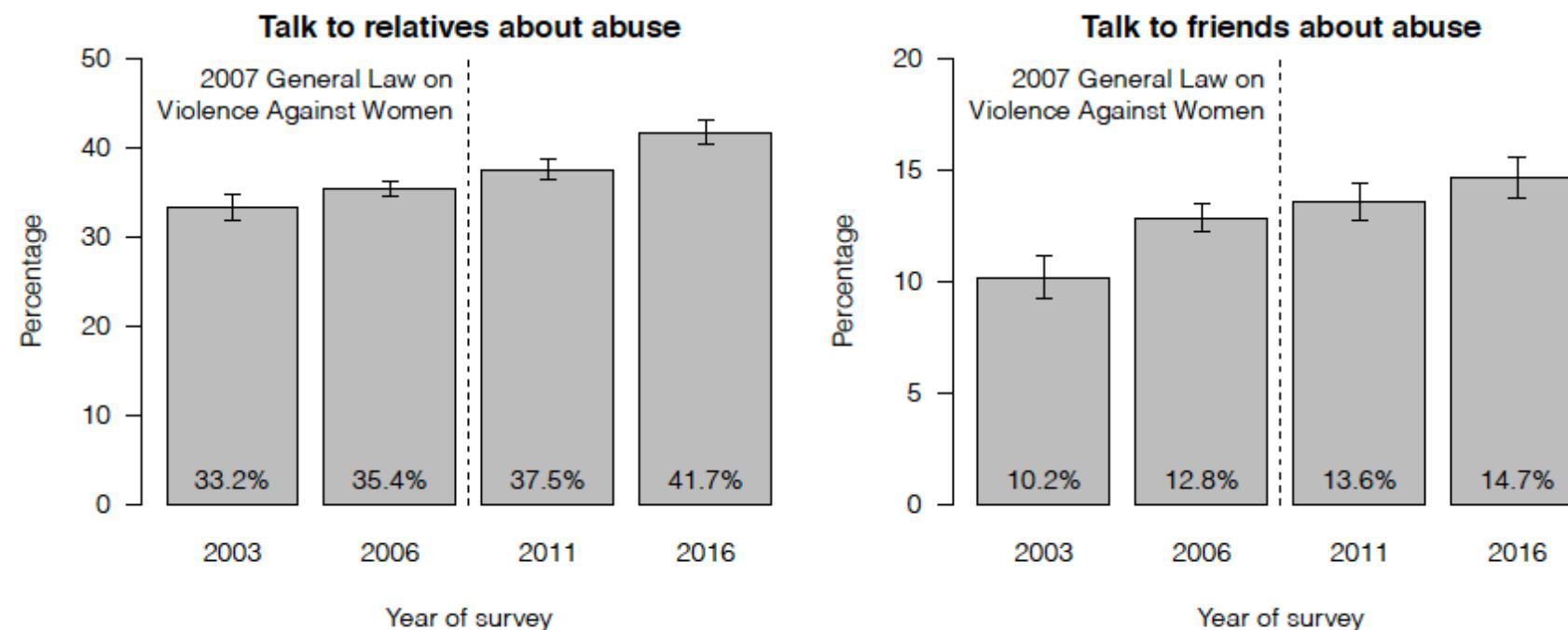
More women reporting to authorities?

Figure 5: Percentage of women experiencing physical domestic abuse during the year preceding the survey saying they reported it to the authorities (95% confidence intervals at the top of each bar)



More women telling family and friends?

Figure 7: Percentage of women experiencing physical domestic abuse during the year preceding the survey saying they told relatives (left panel) and friends (right panel)



Findings summary

- Bundled effect of legal change, feminist mobilization, and legal coverage → decline in experiences of violence, decline in attitudes conducive to violence, rise in reporting rates, and widespread knowledge of the law
- These trends *are consistent with* emergence of new norms surrounding gender violence

Framework and case selection for Htun-Jensenius book on effects of women's rights laws

Mechanism	Money	Coercion	Norms
Target			
General population	Story 1 Parental leave: - Cross-national patterns - Daddy leave in Norway	Story 2 Abortion: - Cross-national patterns - Sex selective abortion in India	Story 3 VAW legislation: - Cross-national patterns - Expressive power of anti-violence legislation in Mexico
Collective actors	Story 4 - ???	Story 5 Sexual harassment: - Crossnational patterns - Title IX and US universities	Story 6 Work-life balance: - Crossnational patterns - <i>Karoshi</i> in Japan

The role of feminist movements

- Civic activism helped get progressive laws and policies adopted.
 - Most crucial in areas of violence, harassment, workplace equality, and reproductive rights
 - Other factors—religion-state relations, party ideology, union strength, fertility decline—mattered for other issues
- Civic activism furthers enforcement
 - raises awareness and increases costs of non-enforcement
- Social mobilization furthers implementation
 - provides information on gaps (studies, media)
 - builds knowledge of rights (education, consciousness-raising)
 - supplies resources to claim rights (legal assistance, social support)

Other sources

- Mala Htun, Francesca R. Jensenius, and Jami Nelson Nuñez, “[Gender Discriminatory Laws and Women’s Economic Agency](#),” *Social Politics* 26, Issue 2 (Summer 2019): 193–222.
- Mala Htun, Francesca R. Jensenius, and Liv Tønnessen, “[Introduction to Special Issue of Social Politics: Legal Regimes, Women’s Work, and Women’s Empowerment](#),” *Social Politics* 26, Issue 2 (Summer 2019): 189–192. Special issue co-edited by Htun, Jensenius, and Tønnessen.
- Mala Htun and S. Laurel Weldon, *The Logics of Gender Justice: State Action on Women’s Rights around the World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- Mala Htun, “[Women’s Equality and the Covid-19 Caregiving Crisis](#).” *Perspectives on Politics* 20:2 (2022): 635–645.
- Mala Htun and Francesca Jensenius, “[Fighting Violence Against Women: Laws, Norms, and Challenges Ahead](#),” *Daedalus* 149, 1 (2020): 144–159.
- Mala Htun, Francesca Jensenius, Justine Tinkler, Melanie Dominguez, and Carlos Contreras, “[Effects of Mandatory Sexual Misconduct Training at U.S. Universities](#).” *Socius*, 8 (2022).