Forced Coexistence during Lockdown and Intimate Partner Violence

1. Motivation and Objectives

According to the United Nations, women face the greatest danger in their own homes (UNODC, 2018). As the spread of Covid-19 is taking place, people around the world are being told to stay at home for their safety and everyone else's. But for victims of intimate partner violence being home may not be a safe option. Early evidence from most affected countries suggest that intimate partner violence could have increased during the current pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). For example, the number of calls to the free-of-charge phone number specifically created to deal with issues of gender violence, increased 18 percent in the first fortnight of March, just when the lockdown started in Spain.

The aim of is project is to understand the mechanisms through which a pandemic affects the incidence and reporting of intimate partner violence. In particular, we seek to isolate the impact of forced coexistence (lockdown) from other factors such as economic stress. Despite increasing public awareness, intimate partner violence against women is still a global public health problem and human rights violation with high economic and social costs[1]. 35 percent of women around the world have experienced some type of intimate partner violence and 38 percent of all murders of women globally were committed by their intimate partners[2]. Understanding the mechanisms through which intimate partner violence responds to the current pandemic is key in the design of any response addressing violence against women.

A lockdown could either bolster or curtail intimate partner violence and its reporting. On one hand, the stress created by forced coexistence may fuel an increase of violence against women, further spurred by the economic uncertainty created by the pandemic. On the other hand, it is also possible that offenders reduce the level of violence if they perceive that there is a higher probability of being caught and their crime reported by other family members or neighbours, who spend more time in or next to the offender's home during lockdown. Regarding the likelihood of reporting, a lockdown might inhibit women from coming forward if they, justifiably or not, perceive a lack of access to support services in the health, police and justice sector during the lockdown. In that case, we would expect covid-19 to result in lower reporting. However, the number of cases reported might increase if the level of violence has increased and victims continue to have access to the police and specialized courts. In sum, whether the lockdown increases or decreases intimate partner violence and its reporting remains an empirical question.

This project will provide empirical evidence on the mechanisms through which a lockdown affects domestic violence. We focus on the Spanish lockdown for several reasons. First, Spain is the European country with the strictest lockdown restrictions[3]. Second, the lockdown measures came largely by surprise and before the economic effects of the pandemic were felt. This is important to isolate the effect of the lockdown from other causes. Third, the lockdown lifts are taking place gradually and at different speeds across local areas, which gives rise to useful cross area-cross time variation in lockdown intensity[4]. Finally, in a country where the intimate partner is responsible for

[1] The direct costs of intimate partner violence against women alone exceeded an estimated $3.6 trillion (2014 U.S. dollars) in the U.S. and 226 billion euros annually in the European Union (Florence et al., 2018; Jourová, 2016)

[2] http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/violence/9789241564625/en/

[3] Compared to Italy, the other European country with extreme lockdown measures, Spaniards were not allowed to exercise outdoors or for to go a walk during seven weeks. In addition, only one person per household was allowed to go out for shopping.

[4] For the purpose of deconfinement in Spain, a local area can be a region (17 regions), a province (Spain has 52 provinces) or an area defined for health purposes which is smaller than a province.

approximately half of all murders of women[5], understanding how VAW responds to covid-19 is crucial in order to develop any response to mitigate their impact and reduce its long-run effects on women and children.

2. Data and Research Design

Data: We will combine two types of data in our analysis: (1) Data on crime reporting and intimate partner violence and (2) Covid-19 expansion and lockdown data across Spanish provinces and across time.

Data on crime reporting and intimate partner violence: We will gather this data from 3 different sources: (1) official records on crime reporting, (2) official records on intimate partner homicides, and (3) data from an online survey on the prevalence of intimate partner violence during the lockdown.

The Spanish Comprehensive Monitoring System in Cases of Gender Violence (VioGen System) provides monthly and local information about all the intimate partner violence cases reported to the police and intimate partner homicides (IPH)[6]. The main limitation of this dataset is that only crimes reported to the police are included; it is well-known that domestic violence suffers from an important misreporting problem (Frieze & Browne, 1989; Rhodes et al., 2011).[7] Although, IPH could address this problem (IPH is unlikely to suffer from misreporting), it only measures cases of extreme violence. [8]

Ad-hoc survey on the incidence of intimate partner violence and Covid-19 (SIPV-Covid)

To overcome the limitations of the police reports and homicides data, we plan to conduct a representative online survey on the prevalence of intimate partner violence during the lockdown. Data generated by this survey will allow us to analyse if the observed decrease(increase) in crime reporting following the coronavirus outbreak was the result of changes in victims' reporting or, rather, the incidence of intimate partner violence.

The last Survey on Violence Against Women in Spain was conducted in 2019. We propose to apply a similar questionnaire as in that last survey. The SIPV-Covid will be representative of all adult women living with a partner in Spain (older than 16). Following the previous literature on this subject, we will gather data on two main measures of non-extreme intimate partner violence, which then will be used as the dependent variables in our empirical analysis. The first is a measure of self-reported abuse and will be based on the interviewee's perception of having been victim of abuse from her intimate partner. The second measure is called "technical abuse", since it is based on a series of questions referred to behaviours or situations which are considered by experts as strong indicators of mistreatment. We will use the set of questions related to the same behaviours or situations as in the last Survey on Violence Against Women in Spain. In the survey, we will

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[5] 51,9 percent of all murders of women were committed by their partner, http://estadisticasviolenciagenero.igualdad.mpr.gob.es/

[6] This data allows us to identify the relationship between the victim and the offender (whether the victim was a current or former spouse of the offender), whether the victim reported the case to the police and the country of origin of the victim and offender.

[7] Only a share of intimate partner violence victims seek help in emergency room departments (Frieze *et al.* 1989). Using U.S. data over a four-year period, Rhodes *et al.* (2011) documents that less than 80 percent of female victims of intimate partner violence visit emergency departments, and 72 percent are not identified as victims of abuse.

8 We will also gather monthly data on the number of emergency calls to the free-of-charge phone number for domestic violence issues. However, this data has an important limitation since it contains calls about child custody issues and domestic violence.

explicitly ask whether any of those situations has occurred in the past 12 months and whether the periodicity and intensity of that situation or behaviour has been affected by the lockdown. The data will be collected in June 2020. We will make the survey public available for research purposes at the end of the project (May 31,2021).

Covid-19 and lockdown data: We plan to combine the information provided by the Google Mobility Reports with Goggle Trends data documenting the use of Google Maps across the different provinces and time in Spain. We will combine this information with other indicators or proxies of the intensity of the lockdown, such as differences across provinces and time in the rules that govern the process of unlock, and NO2 and other pollutants emissions data.

Research Design : To identify the effects of the lockdown on intimate partner violence, we will rely on difference in difference and event study approaches. We will exploit the temporal and geographic variation across provinces in the exposure to the mandatory lockdown and the gradual reopening. Our outcomes of interest will include, but not be limited to: (a) crime reported, (b) intimate partner homicide rates and (c) non-extreme intimate partner violence. A first assumption for the validity of our estimates is that while not random, the intensity of the lockdown should not be driven by area-specific characteristics correlated to ongoing changes in intimate partner violence. We will test whether that is the case by examining if the prevalence of specific changes on intimate partner violence prior to the adoption of the mandatory lockdown were significant determinants of the timing of mandatory lockdown exposure. Second, key to the validity of a difference-in-differences approach is the assumption of parallel trends in the dependent variable across treated vs. control provinces. To assess the validity of this assumption, we will check for pre-existing diverging trends, as well as for any anticipation effects, using an event-study framework. Since this study will use a panel difference-in-difference design, we will incorporate the robustness checks recently suggested in the literature; for instance, the Goodman-Bacon test for contexts where treatment timing and intensity varies across treated units (Goodman-Bacon, 2019).

Finally, in all our analyses we will control for socio-economic variables that may be correlated with the expansion of the pandemic and the lockdown effects. For this purpose, we will collect data on the effects of the pandemic on the economy and labour markets of the different Spanish provinces and across time.

References

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Budget Request from NBER

Principal Investigator: Esther Arenas-Arroyo
Project Title: Forced Coexistence during Lockdown and Intimate Partner Violence
Project Date Start: 1st June 2020
Project Date End: 31st May 2020

The project will take 12 months to complete. We will work on the survey on the first two months and work on the data, preliminary analyses and initial manuscript drafts during the following 8 months. Final refinements and manuscripts drafts will be submitted during the last 2 months. We expect to produce at least one publication in top economics journals and to publicize our findings through academic associations and institutions we are members of.

The estimated cost will be of $18,652.37. The budget reflect the cost associated with the necessity of conducting a survey that allows us to measure the prevalence of intimate partner violence during the lockdown. We plan to conduct a representative survey of 5,000 online interviews. The survey would be conducted by 40db.

Budget Categories			**Exchange Rate**	**Total Request from NBER**
Survey Firm				
Data Collection Firm (40Db)	5,000 interviews	17,200 €	$1,08[1]	$18,652.37
Total Request from NBER				**$18,652.37**

[1] 8th of May 2020 Official Exchange Rate

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Current and Previous Academic Positions

September 2019-present	**Assistant Professor**, Department of Economics, Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU)
April 2017-August 2019	**Post-Doctoral Researcher,** Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) University of Oxford
January 2017-April 2017	**Teaching Associate**, Queen Mary University of London,
October 2016-January 2017	**Teaching Fellow**, SOAS, University of London
June 2014-June 2016	**Research Assistant,** at the Centre for Economic Performance London School Of Economics (LSE)
May 2013-May 2014	**Research Assistant,** Queen Mary University of London
September 2008-September 2009	**Research Assistant,** Department of Economics, Universidad de Córdoba (ETEA)

Further Academics Affiliations

February 2019-present	**Research Affiliate**, IZA- Institute of Labor Economics
September 2019-present	**Research Affiliate**, Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) University of Oxford

Education

September 2013-November 2017	PhD, Queen Mary, University of London
September 2011- September 2012	Graduate Studies in Economics, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
September 2009- September 2011	M.A. in Economic Analysis, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
September 2003- June 2008	B.A. in Business Administration, Universidad de Córdoba (ETEA), Summa Cum Laude (with Distinction)

Research Interests

Applied Microeconometrics with focus on Migration, Labor, Family, and Education

Research: Publications and Working Papers

Publications in Peer-Reviewed Journals

Labor Market Impacts of Granting Access to Driving Licenses to Undocumented Immigrants, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes and Almudena Sevilla, **Labour Economics** vol.63, 2020

Immigration Enforcement and Children's Living Arrangements, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes. **Journal of Policy Analysis and Management**, vol. 38, No. 1, 11-40 (2019)

Split Families and the Future of Children: Immigration Enforcement and Foster Care Placements, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes. **American Ecoconomic Association Papers and Proceedings**, vol.108, May 2018. pp.368-72.

– Media Covered in Honolulu Star-Advertiser

Interior Immigration Enforcement and Childhood Poverty in the United States, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes and Almudena Sevilla. **Journal of Public Economics**, Vol. 158, February 2018, Pages 63-78.

A macro-economic model to forecast remittances based on Monte-Carlo simulation and artificial intelligence, with Carlos García-Alonso and Gabriel Pérez-Alcalá **Expert Systems with Applications** Volume 39, Issue 9, Pages 7929-7937, 2012

Working Papers

Is Immigration Enforcement Shaping Immigrant Marriage Patterns?, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes and Chunbei Wang (**R&R Journal of Public Economics**)

Police Trust and Domestic Violence: Evidence from Immigration Policies, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes

– Media Covered in Brookings, Real Clear Markets

U.S. Immigration Policy and Immigrant Fertility, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes

Research in Progress

The Impact of Unconditional Police Reporting on Domestic Violence

Mass Migration and Gender Equality, with Martín Fernández Sánchez

Chapters in Refereed Books

Understanding the Consequences of Heightened Immigration Enforcement. with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes, *In The Human and Economic Implications of Twenty-First Century Immigration Policy*, Susan Pozo, ed. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, pp. 107-140.

On the Piecemeal Approach to Immigration Enforcement: Evidence from the United States, with Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes. *Refugees and Economic Migrants: Facts, policies and challenges* edited by Francesco Fasani, Queens Mary University of London, CEPR Press.October 2016. Available online at: http://voxeu.org/content/refugees-and-economic-migrants-facts-policies-and-challenges

Others Publications

Immigration and Unemployment Benefits: Evidence from Germany, with Osea Giuntella and Carlos Vargas-Silva, July 2019, REMINDER-project

Minimum Wages, Earnings and Mobility in the EU, with Cinzia Rienzo and Carlos Vargas-Silva, September 2019, REMINDER-project

Large Scale Knowledge-Based Simulation Models: An Approximation to the North-South Remittances Model. With Carlos García Alonso and Gabriel Pérez Alcalá. *Proceeding of the 2009 Winter Simulation Conference* M. D. Rossetti, R. R. Hill, B. Johansson, A. Dunkin and R. G. Ingalls, eds. 3077-3087, 2009

Fellowships, Scholarships and Honours

Early Career Research grant program, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, March 2018

Royal Economic Society Conference Grant, 2016

Best poster award at the PAA meetings, Washington, 2016.

Royal Economic Society Easter Training School Grant, April 2016

Queen Mary Postgraduate Research Fund Award, November 2015

Queen Mary Principal's research studentship, October 2013-September 2016

Graduate Program Scholarship, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, 2009-2012

Summa cum laude, B.A. in Business Administration, awarded by Universidad de Córdoba, 2008

Prize to the Best Student obtaining the degree in Economics/Business Administration in the Andalusia Community, awarded by Andalusia Government 2008

Prize to the Excellence Academic Achievement, awarded by Universidad de Córdoba, (ETEA), 2003–2008

Grants

REMINDER: Horizon 2020-Researcher, 2017-2019 (PI: Carlos Vargas-Silva), Funder: European Commision

MIGNEX: Horizon 2020-Researcher, 2018-2023 (PI:Jorgen Carling). Funder: European Commision

John Fell Fund, 2018-2020, Funder: University of Oxford