

# Civil Courage 2.0

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## Civil Courage 2.0

Civil courage of adolescents dealing with perceived violence on the internet

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## Problem Statement

Adolescents: victims and observers of digital violence – online bystanders

e.g. cyber bullying, hate speech, insults, extortion, confrontation with pornographic or shocking videos, online stalking, slander, threats of violence or killing, etc.

„Someone had tried to wear down a friend via mobile phone / internet“: 42% female and 33% male adolescents (aged 12-19 years, JIM 2017)

Online bystanders: high potential for de-escalation of conflicts -

 **But online civil courage is no subject of importance to young people**



## Objective and Research Question

What promotes / inhibits juvenile online bystanders' morally courageous interventions on the internet?

➔ Development of training concepts, information and teaching materials in order to support online civil courage

### Project partners:

- University College of Teacher Education, KPH Vienna/Krems (KPH)
- Austrian Institute for Applied Telecommunications (OIAT)
- Mauthausen Committee Austria (MKÖ)
- Department of Crime Prevention and Victim Support / Criminal Intelligence Service Austria, Federal Ministry of the Interior

## Research Design

Qualitative interviews and group discussions: April - October 2017

17 individual expert interviews

19 group discussions with 142 adolescents, aged 14 to 19

Quantitative vignette study: January - April 2018

Vignette experiment and computer-assisted online survey

1,872 students aged 14 to 19, representative sample for Vienna

Development of supportive measures: July 2018 - February 2019

elaboration of training concepts / information offers / teaching materials in cooperation with project partners

## Selected qualitative results

Contextual uncertainties: difficulties in judging online situations

What is a norm violation on the internet?

When is help needed or desired? Asking for help is "miserable".

Strategy: „Don't take it serious“

Online bystanders attribute self-responsibility to the victim.

The internet is a "dangerous" place.

Victims have the same / more options for action as online bystanders (e.g., blocking, reporting)

Taking responsibility is strongly related to the offline world.

Friends prefer offline instead of online interventions.

Similarity as a major issue (victim experiences, group affiliation, religion, physical proximity/distance)

## Quantitative vignette study: What are vignettes?

Descriptions, stories, scenarios which are systematically varied.

Does the change of vignette elements (e.g. characteristics of victim/offender) influence how respondents perceive and assess a vignette?

➔ Aim: reconstruction of assesement models

Vignette study: vignette experiment & online questionnaire



## Experimental Vignette Design

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| I. type of online attack (3)  | insult / nude video / fake account                 |
| II. relation to victim (3)    | online friend / online acquaintance / barely known |
| III. relation to offender (2) | online acquaintance / unknown                      |
| IV. physical proximity (2)    | same school / another school further away          |
| V. popularity victim (2)      | many followers / few followers                     |
| VI. popularity offender (2)   | many followers / few followers                     |
| VII. other bystanders (3)     | support victim / support offender / do not react   |
| VIII. behavior victim (3)     | personally affected / counters / does not react    |



vignette population:  $3 \times 3 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 3 \times 3 = 1,296$  vignettes  
systematic partitioning into 216 sets à 6 vignettes

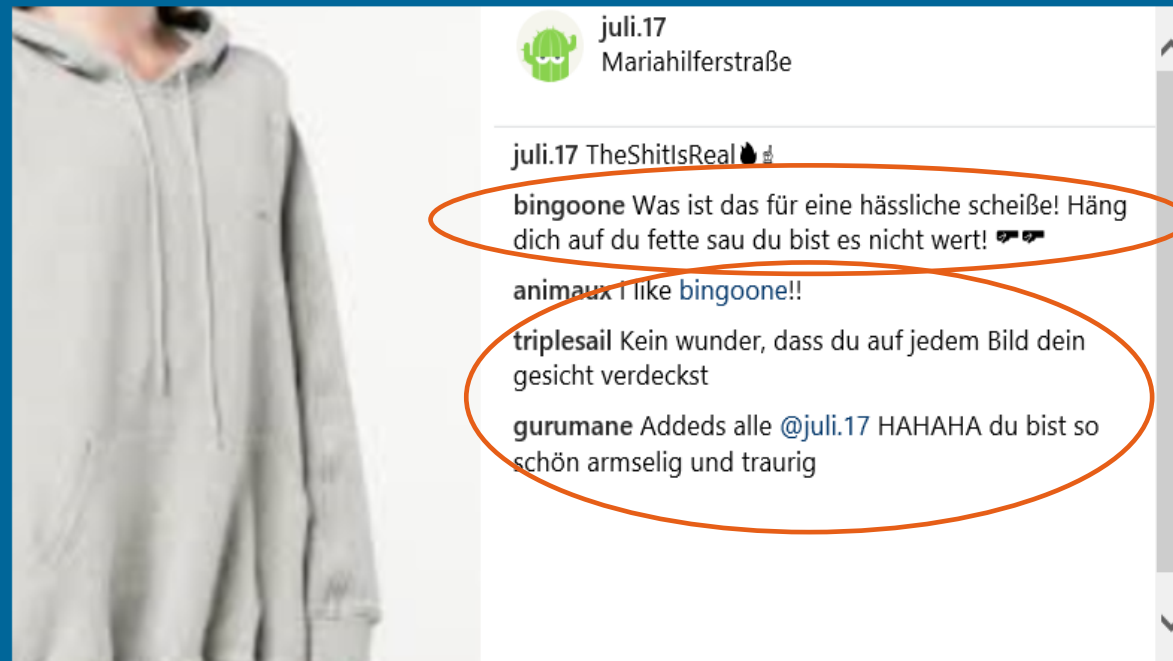


## Vignette: insult on Instagram

Du bist auf einem öffentlichen Instagram Account, wo jemand in deinem Alter unter **juli.17** Bilder von sich und seinem Outfit gepostet hat:  
Stell dir vor, ...

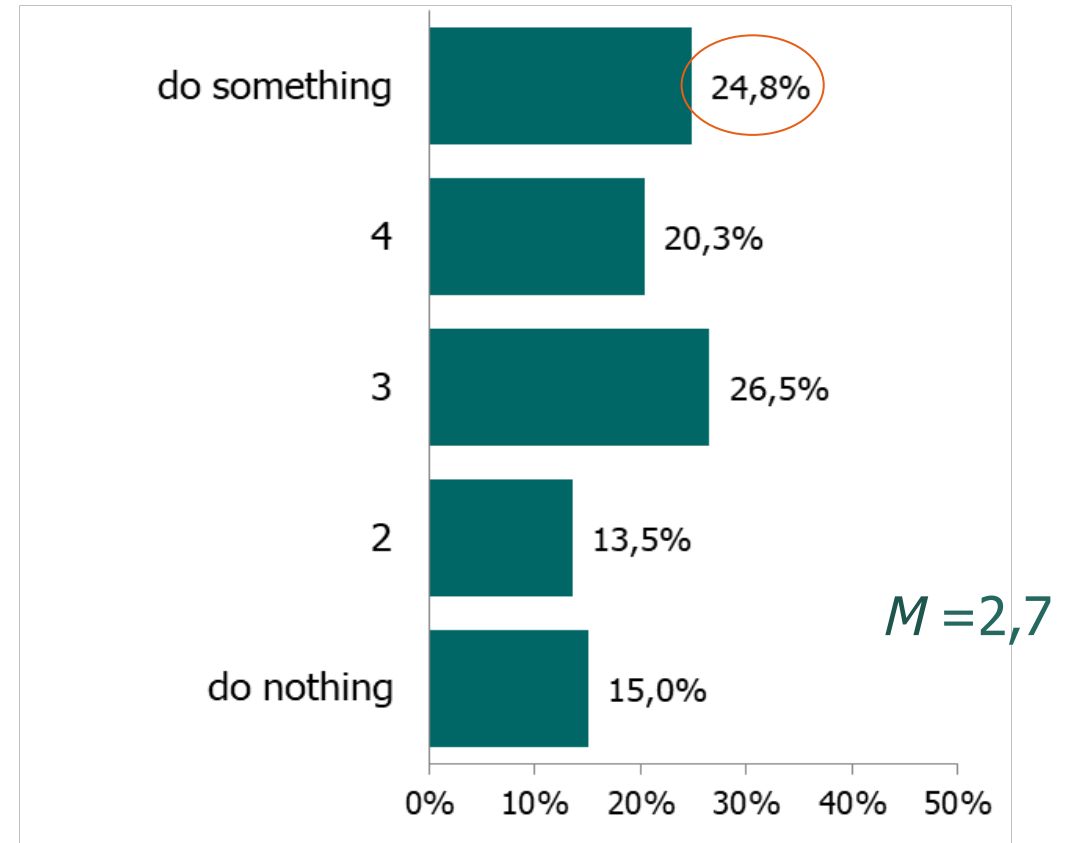
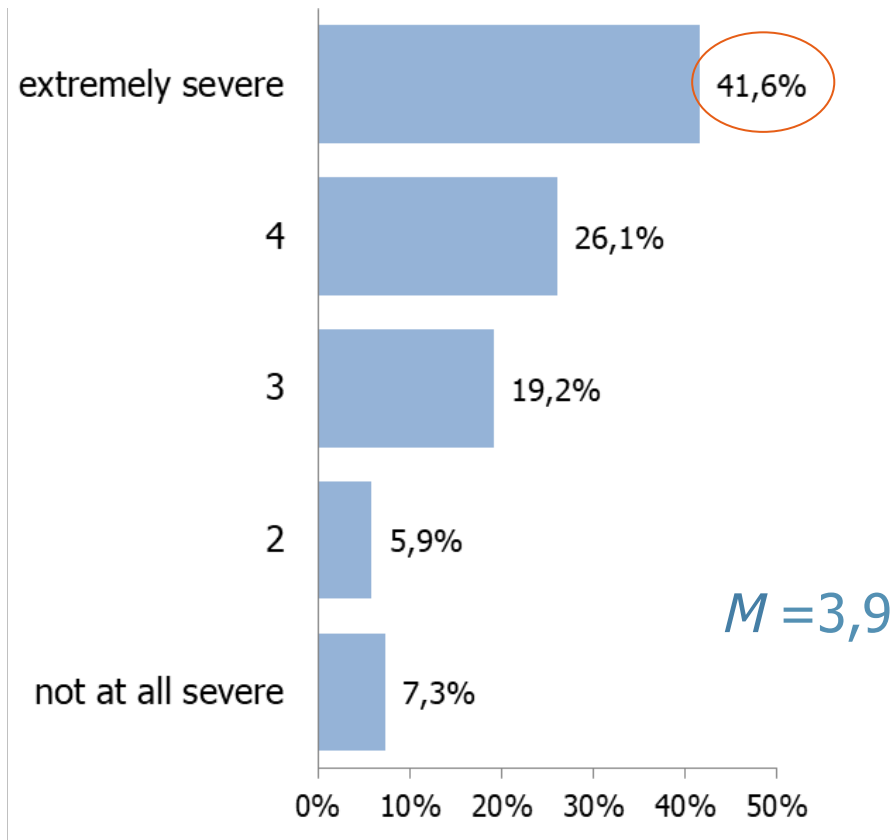
- Du kennst **juli.17** nicht besonders gut, ihr habt online ab und zu Kontakt und teilt Inhalte.
- **juli.17** geht in deine Schule, daher seht ihr euch zumindest ab und zu.
- **juli.17** hat sehr viele Follower und Abonnenten.

In den Kommentaren zu einem Bild liest du:



Du kennst **bingoone** von Online-Kontakten, weißt aber kaum etwas über **bingoone**.  
Merkst aber, dass **bingoone** nur wenige Follower und Abonnenten hat.

## Interventions are unlikely even if online attacks are perceived as severe.



## Reconstructed Assessment Model: What makes it worse?

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| I. <b>type of online attack (3)</b> | insult / <b>nude video</b> / fake account                 |
| II. relation to victim (3)          | <b>online friend</b> / online acquaintance / barely known |
| III. relation to offender (2)       | online acquaintance / <b>unknown</b>                      |
| IV. physical proximity (2)          | same school / another school further away                 |
| V. popularity victim (2)            | many followers / <b>few followers</b>                     |
| VI. popularity offender (2)         | <b>many followers</b> / few followers                     |
| VII. other bystanders (3)           | support victim / <b>support offender</b> / do not react   |
| VIII. behavior victim (3)           | <b>personally affected</b> / counters / does not react    |

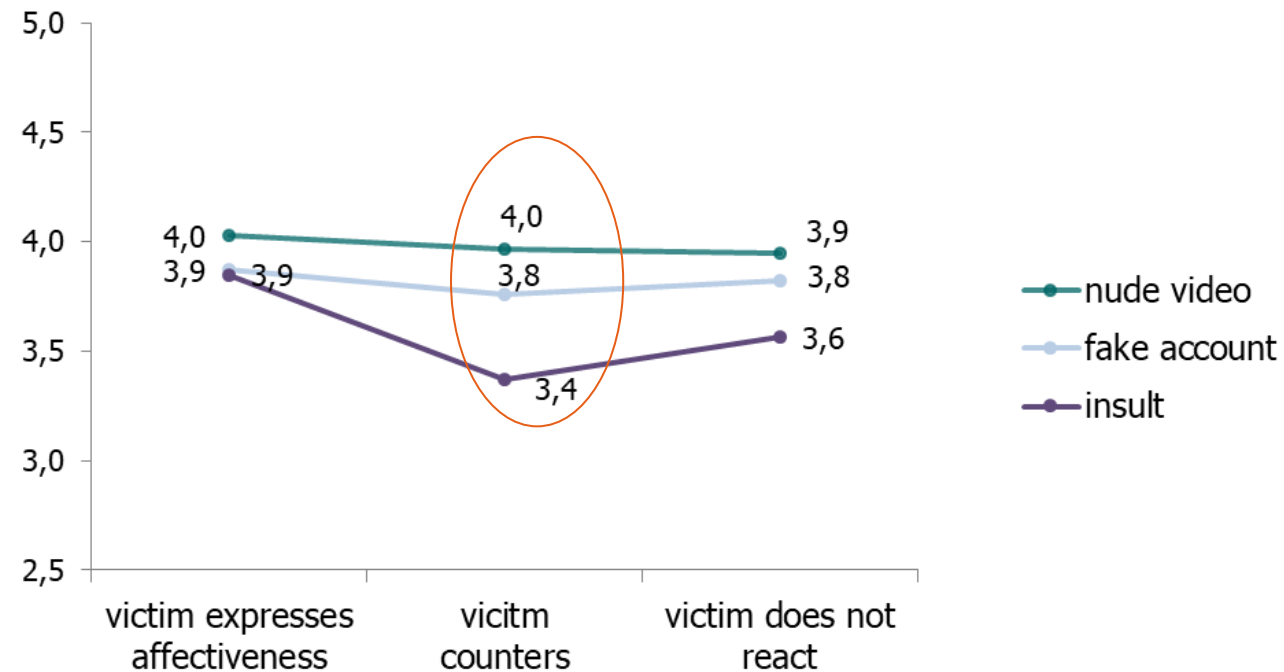
gender: worse for female adolescents

education: worse for respondents with higher levels of education

previous experiences: worse for respondents with few own perpetrator experiences and few confrontation with pornographic/violent content

## Assessment of online attacks depends on the victim's behavior (for specific types of attacks)

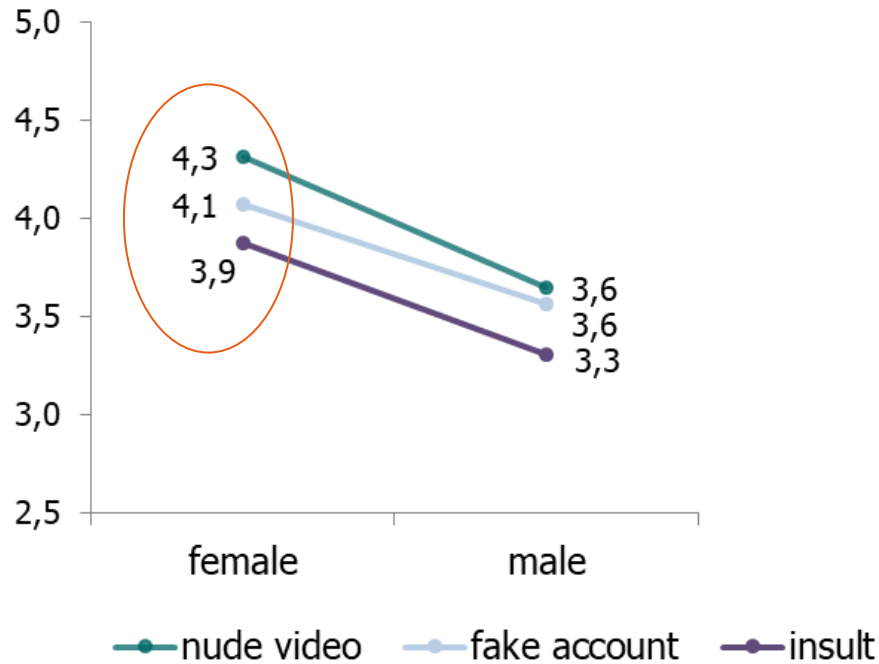
estimated marginal means: scale: 1 = not at all severe to 5 = extremely severe



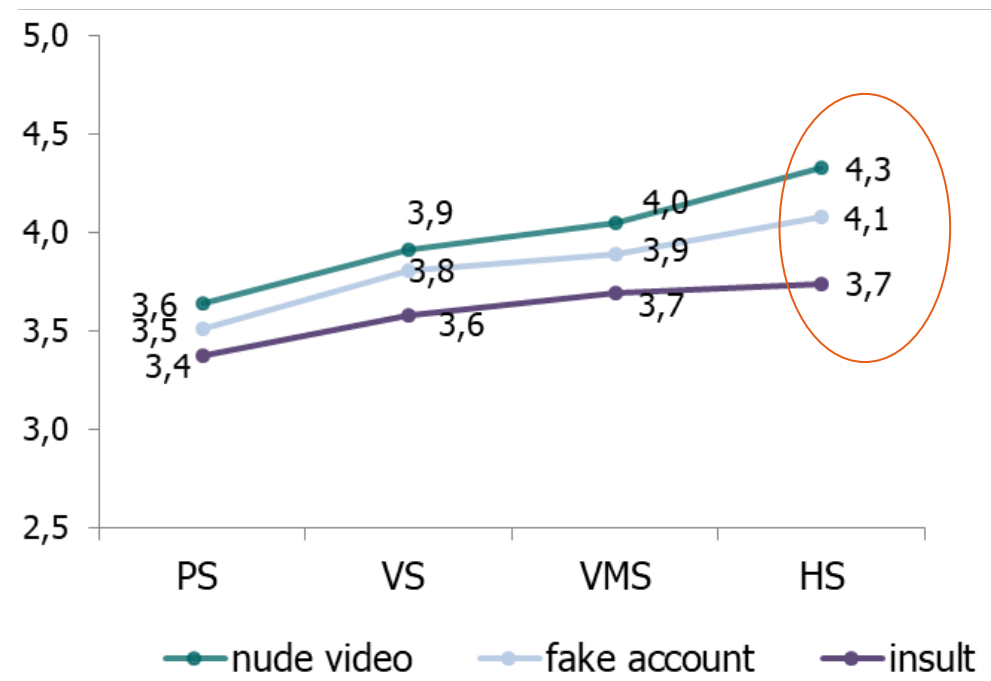
# Differentiation among types of online attacks

estimated marginal means: scale: 1 = not at all severe to 5 = extremely severe

## Gender



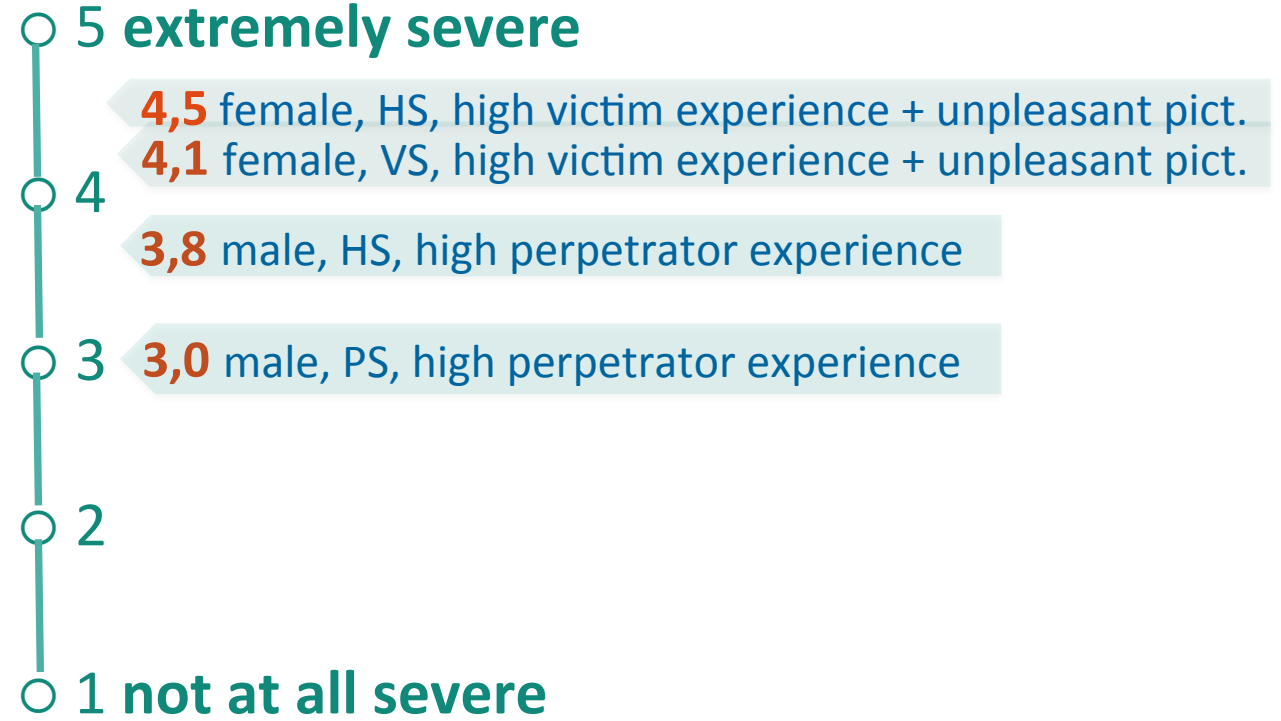
## Education



## Modelbased simulation: How is this vignette rated?

- nude video / Snapchat
- victim barely known
- victim further away
- offender online acquaintance
- victim has many followers
- offender has few followers
- others support victim
- victim counters

I think that's...



## How does the rating change when the type of online attack changes?

- heavy insult / Snapchat
- victim barely known
- victim further away
- offender online acquaintance
- victim has many followers
- offender has few followers
- others support victim
- victim counters

I think that's...

○ 5 extremely severe

○ 4

3,6 female, HS, high victim experience + unpleasant pict.

3,4 female, VS, high victim experience + unpleasant pict.

○ 3

3,1 male, HS, high perpetrator experience

○ 2

2,5 male, PS, high perpetrator experience

○ 1 not at all severe

## Assessment Model: When are interventions likely?

- |       |                            |   |
|-------|----------------------------|---|
| I.    | type of online attack (3)  | insult / <b>nude video</b> / fake account                 |
| II.   | relation to victim (3)     | <b>online friend</b> / online acquaintance / barely known |
| III.  | relation to offender (2)   | online acquaintance / unknown                             |
| IV.   | physical proximity (2)     | <b>same school</b> / another school further away          |
| V.    | popularity victim (2)      | many followers / few followers                            |
| VI.   | popularity offender (2)    | <b>many followers</b> / few followers                     |
| VII.  | other bystanders (3)       | support victim / support offender / <b>do not react</b>   |
| VIII. | <b>behavior victim (3)</b> | <b>personally affected</b> / counters / does not react    |

gender: female respondents are more likely to intervene

education: : no significant effect

previous experiences: own victim experiences raise probability of intervention



## Would adolescents react in case of the situation displayed in the vignette?

- nude video / Snapchat
- victim barely known
- victim further away
- offender online acquaintance
- victim has many followers
- offender has few followers
- others support victim
- victim counters

I would ...

○ 5 **do nothing**

○ 4

○ 3

3,0 male, HS, high perpetrator experience  
2,9 male, PS, high perpetrator experience  
2,7 female, HS, high victim experience + unpleasant pict.  
2,5 female, VS, high victim experience + unpleasant pict.

○ 2

○ 1 **do something**

## Modified type of online attack – modified willingness to intervene?

- heavy insult / Instagram
- victim barely known
- victim further away
- offender online acquaintance
- victim has many followers
- offender has few followers
- others support victim
- victim counters

I would ...

○ 5 do nothing

○ 4

○ 3

○ 2

○ 1 do something

3,2 male PS, 3,2 male HS, high perpetrator experience

2,9 female, HS, high victim experience + unpleasant pict.

2,7 female, VS, high victim experience + unpleasant pict.

## Linkages between qualitative and quantitative findings

Online interventions are considered as ineffective.

Online options for action are perceived as restrictive, unemotional and powerless.

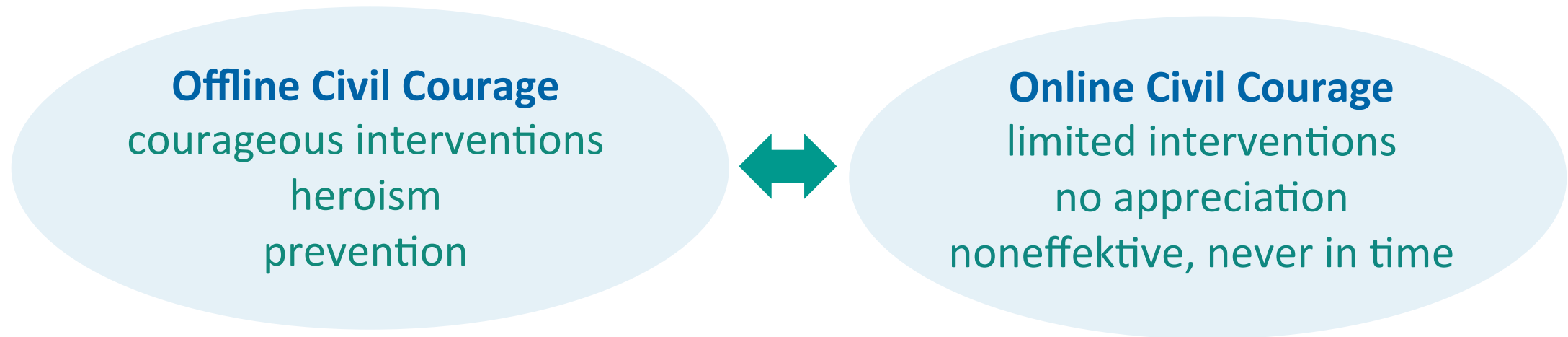
A mobilization of other online bystanders does not seem desirable.

Online interventions are subject to uncontrollable dynamics.

Respondents prefer 'invisible' and anonymous online interventions.

## Conclusions

General conceptional ideas of civil courage do not apply to online environments of young respondents.



**We need to rethink promotion and mediation of online civil courage**



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