

Gender and Well-Being in the Czech Republic¹

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American women are stressed by network events and men by economic events outside the home, with women internalizing distress symptoms and men externalizing them. This gender pattern of stress-distress in the United States was tested in the 1990-1991 Czech Republic with a two-wave panel based on 294 households, 90% of which are Czech. This analysis is restricted to the 192 respondents who completed questionnaires in the second wave, 1991. The country was in the shock phase of its transition from state socialism to democracy and a market economy, and people were experiencing economic hardship and uncertainty. Czech women and men reported similar exposure to economic and network stress and were similar in their vulnerability to stress (mastery and social support) as well. Women reported higher levels of internalized distress symptoms (depression, anxiety, and somatization) than men, but there were no significant gender differences in externalized symptoms (hostility). The effects of economic and network stress on the distress symptoms were the same for women and men. Mastery buffered the relationship between economic stress and somatization and hostility, but social support was not a buffer between the stressors and distress, and these were true for both men and women. Interpretations of the results rest on the convergence of gender roles in the Czech Republic since 1948, which exposed Czech women and men equally to the shock phase of the post-communist transformation.

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Gender and Stress

American women report stress more from their social networks and men more from economic problems, and women's distress is connected more to problems with family and friends and men's to jobs and finances (Conger et al. 1993; Kessler and McLeod 1984; Thoits 1987). Gender differences in reporting and reacting to network events account for 50% of the gender difference in distress levels, implying that American women experience a "high cost of caring", for others if not for themselves (Wethington, McLeod and Kessler 1987). The implication is that stress follows from historical gender roles, making a living outside the home or being a homemaker.

Were Czech women and men in 1990-1991, when facing a post-communist transformation, like American women and men in their experience of stress? Specifically, did Czech women report more network and men more economic stress? Some research suggests that the American gender pattern of stress will be found in other countries (Weissman and Klerman 1977). Other research suggests that the American pattern will not be necessarily found outside the United States (Ananth 1978; Angel and Thoits 1987; Leighton, Lambo, Hughes, Leighton, Murphy and Macklin 1963; Orley and Wing 1979). Findings dissimilar to those in the United States tend to be from non-European countries, e.g., India and those in Africa, the implication being that results from a European country like the Czech Republic will be similar to the American pattern.

The former Czechoslovakia (the Czech and Slovak Republics since 1993) was in the shock phase of its post-communist transformation in 1990-91, at the time these panel data were collected. The economy was in serious trouble, prices were rising well past wage inflation, and unemployment levels not seen in Europe since the Great Depression were expected (Pechacova and Hraba 1991). Over 80 percent of a national sample believed in 1990 their personal circumstances would deteriorate over the next two years, over 80 percent found it necessary to cut household and personal expenses, over 65 percent reported problems in getting desired food, and 60 percent said they could not afford good clothing (Institute of Sociology, Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, 1990). By the end of 1990, the currency was devalued 55%, and the Czechoslovak state also instituted privatization and restitution of private property. Real incomes dropped by a third in 1991 and people cut their food purchases by 10 to 20% and their expenditures for services by 25% (Musil 1992). People were making-do by using past savings and seeking financial help from friends and family; by working more hours, if possible; and by curtailing expenditures such as taking vacations, switching from private cars to public transportation, and even buying cheaper food. Such an economic downturn may affect all people, Czech

women and men alike, suggesting that the genders faced the same economic stressors in 1990-91.

Furthermore, because of gender role convergence during socialism Czech women in 1990 were exposed as much as men to economic events outside the home. Women were employed in large numbers between 1948 and 1989, when they like men were required to work outside the home. (65% of adult women and 84% of adult men were employed in 1989 and 54% of Czech women and 73% of the men are employed in 1995.) Their employment was mandated by law, being unemployed without official exemption (e.g., maternal leave and retirement) was a punishable crime, and done out of economic necessity since the socialist suppression of the wage structure meant two incomes were needed in most households (Paukert 1993). The socialist emancipation of women was for them to be employed full-time and participate in party politics, not to be homemakers. Czech women had in this period the highest employment rate of women in Europe and, thus, entered the transformation much like men, fully exposed in the labor market to economic troubles.

Czech women experienced gender stratification in the labor force during socialism. They received lower pay than men, and were overrepresented in the services and underrepresented in top positions in government and state enterprises (Paukert 1993; Vecernik 1989, 1990a and b, 1992). Women's wages are now 70% of men's in the Czech Republic in all sectors and 64% in administration and management, the very jobs in which Czech women have become more concentrated since the reforms. During the reforms, Czech as well as Slovak women have reported more unemployment, economic strain as well as feelings of economic insecurity than men, although these gender differences remained stable rather than grew between 1990 and 1993 (Hraba, McCutcheon and Vecernik 1995). This could mean that Czech women were even more exposed to economic stress in 1990 than men.

During socialism, Czech women and men shared economic/political roles, both worked full-time and lived with an ideology that expected public participation at the expense of a private life. Both experienced state control over their lives, not only in production but also in the socialist restraint on consumption as well as political expression. Women endured role overload for decades by working full-time (and long hours) and doing household duties without the labor-saving appliances and shopping conveniences known to Americans. Both Czech women and men then experienced the shock phase of the post-communist reforms as labor-force participants; both faced an uncertain and risky future in 1990-91. They both had economic worries, with women reporting even more economic uncertainty than men (Hraba, McCutcheon and Vecernik 1995). This could mean that Czech

women and men in 1990 reported the same stressors, economic as well as network events, unlike the American gender pattern.

Gender roles in Czechoslovakia were different than those in America in other ways. Women in post-communist Europe have little history with feminism, tended to see men and women joined in their opposition to the socialist state, and have been more communal than individualistic in identity and values (Marodý 1993). Czech women did experience gender emancipation during socialism as an official ideology, but it was a top-down ideology imposed on them, hardly identical to experiences of American women (Matynia 1994). By the same token, Czech women faced a stratified labor market, which they share with American women, but this could have exposed them even more to the economic downturn with the reforms.

Gender and Distress

American women have different distress symptoms than do men and more frequently utilize health care services for these symptoms (e.g., Aneshensel 1992; Aneshensel, Frerichs and Clark 1981; Belle 1980; Cleary, Mechanic and Greenley 1982; Conger, Lorenz, Elder, Simons, and Ge 1993; McLanahan and Glass 1985; Marcus and Siegel 1982; Pearlin and Lieberman 1978; Russo 1990). Women are more likely to report and be diagnosed as depressive, anxious, phobic, obsessive-compulsive, and having somatic symptoms; men are more likely to manifest anti-social behavior, including hostility, and alcohol and illegal drug abuse (Aneshensel, Rutter and Lachenbruch 1991; Cleary 1987; Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend 1969, 1974 and 1976; Goldman and Ravid 1980; Hammen 1982; Leland 1982; Lennon 1987; Lorenz, Conger, Montague, and Wickrama 1993; Newmann 1984). In short, there is a *gender difference in distress*, with women internalizing stress (e.g., depression, anxiety and somatization) and men externalizing it (e.g., hostility). If this is a cross-national gender difference, then we would expect Czech women to report more depression, anxiety, and somatization, while Czech men report more hostility.

Gender and Stress-Distress

Not only do American women and men report different stressors and distress symptoms, but also the connections between stress and distress are different for the genders (e.g., Conger et al. 1993; Kessler and McLeod 1984). Women's internal distress symptoms are more connected to network stress and men's external symptoms to economic stress. There are many explanations for these gender differences. First, because women and men

have played different roles in American society, they have been exposed to different stressors and manifest different types and amounts of distress. Women have been exposed to more social network stressors and men to negative financial and job events (Aneshensel 1992; Pearlin 1989; Conger et al. 1993; Verbrugge 1985). This differential exposure to stress in the United States is thought to be due to either social differentiation or gender stratification (Aneshensel 1992; Mirowsky and Ross 1989). Both these versions share the perspective that because of historical gender role differences there are *gender differences in the exposure to stress or gender differences in acquired risks*.

A second explanation for gender differences in reported stress is *gender differences in the perception of stressors*. The perception of stress is appraising one's circumstances as stressful. Without appraisal there is no stress; in the words of Lazarus and Folkman (1984:19) "Psychological stress is a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being." In the United States, women are more likely to appraise their circumstances as stressful, or appraise different circumstances as more stressful compared to men and, thus, report different and more distress symptoms (Coyne and Downey 1991; Pearlin 1989; Verbrugge 1985).

The above explanations appear to be rooted in traditional gender roles in the United States, with women at home and men at work outside the home. Gender roles in Czech society have been different than those in the United States. Czech women have been working along with men outside the home in large numbers since the Second World War, a socialist policy interrupted only by extending maternal leaves to increase birth rates. Since the post-communist reforms Czech women and men have faced virtually the same negative economic events, with women experiencing even more economic insecurity. Thus, Czech women and men in 1990-91 might both report economic stress from the transformation and this is connected to distress for both genders, unlike the American gender pattern.

A third explanation is there are *gender differences in buffers/mediators to stress* (Aneshensel 1992; Conger, et al. 1993; Coyne and Downey 1991; Cronkite and Moos 1984; Mirowsky and Ross 1989; Pearlin 1989). Certain personal states are thought to be resources that can buffer a person from the full impact of stress and, thus, reduce distress symptoms. The lack of these resources amounts to a vulnerability. Good physical health, a sense of mastery, self-esteem, and proactive coping strategies are examples of buffers (cf., Aneshensel 1992; Coyne and Downey 1991; Lin and Ensel 1989; Piliusuk, Montgomery, Parks, and Acredolo 1993). Other resources with which to better cope with stress are social, such as socioeconomic

status, financial wherewithal, and social support (e.g., Cohen and Wills 1985; Coyne and Downey 1991; Cronkite and Moos 1984; Elder 1974; Kasl and Cobb 1979; Lin, Dean and Ensel 1986; Little 1976; Pilisuk et al. 1993; Reifman, Biernat and Lang 1991). Once vulnerability and exposure are controlled, by implication, gender differences in stress-distress will decline (Bird and Fremont 1991; Hammen 1982; Haug and Folmar 1986; McLanahan and Glass 1985; Verbrugge 1985).

The simple version of the differential buffering hypothesis is that women have fewer of these resources and, thus, show more distress (Kessler and McLeod 1984; Thoits 1987). This will be tested in the fourth hypothesis (below) by comparing women and men on levels of mastery and the relation of the latter two to distress symptoms. A more complex version is that differential vulnerability depends on the stressor and/or buffer (Conger et al. 1993; Wethington, McLeod and Kessler 1987). Mastery is a personal resource with which to initiate constructive efforts to solve both job and money problems. Social support within one's network seems to be an obvious interpersonal resource with which to offset problems arising from the same circle of family and friends. If true, we expect social support to reduce distress from network stress and mastery to reduce distress from economic stress. We will test for this in the correspondence hypothesis (below).

Hypotheses

If gender patterns of stress-distress found the United States were also true in the 1990-1991 Czech Republic, then we should expect the following.

1. *Gender differences in stress:* Czech women and men are different in their exposure to stressful economic and network events like the American gender pattern. However, there is good reason to expect that Czech women and men were exposed in 1990 to the same stressors, economic as well as network, because of the convergence of gender roles during and since socialism.
2. *Gender differences in distress:* Czech women report more symptoms of depression, anxiety and somatization, and men report more hostility (internalization v. externalization) similar to the American gender pattern.
3. *Gender differences in stress-distress.* Czech women and men are different in the connections between source of stress and distress symptoms. Women report a connection between network stress and internalized distress symptoms and men report one between economic stress and externalized distress.

4. *Gender differences in vulnerability to stress.* Czech women and men report different levels of mastery and social support and the latter two will reduce distress more for men than women.
5. *Correspondence hypothesis.* Distress due to network events is reduced more by social support and distress due to economic events by mastery and this is true for both genders.

METHODS

Panel

294 households in the Czech Republic were randomly selected from a 4,000 household sampling frame after being stratified by occupation and size of place of residence. Questionnaires were distributed in October, 1990, with the instruction to mail completed questionnaires to the Agriculture University of Prague, at which time respondents received a stipend. Two-hundred thirty-four usable questionnaires were returned in the first wave. These 234 respondents were contacted again in the Fall of 1991, the second wave, and 192 usable questionnaires were returned. These 192 respondents are the basis to this analysis. Sixty-one respondents are male, and 131 are female. They ranged in age from 19 to 64 years old, with a mean age of 40.5 at the time of second survey in October, 1991.

Measures

Distress in 1991. The four distress measures are parts of Derogatis' (1983) SCL-90 symptomology checklist. *Depressive symptoms* in 1991 were assessed using 13 items such as loss of sexual interest, crying easily, low energy levels, thoughts of suicide, feeling blue and worried, hopelessness and worthlessness, etc., with response categories ranging from not at all (0) to extremely (4). The sum scale alpha (α) is .87. The *hostility* measure in 1991 consisted of six items, asking about feeling easily irritated, getting into frequent arguments, having temper outbursts, having the urge to harm someone or something, etc. Responses to each item ranged from 0 (not at all) to 4 (extremely), and the sum scale alpha is .77.

The *anxiety* measure in 1991 was a summation of 10 items, asking about anxiety symptoms such as feeling shaky inside, trembling, feeling suddenly scared for no reason, being fearful, a racing heart, feeling tense or keyed up, having spells of terror or panic, feeling restless, feeling something bad will happen, and having thoughts of a frightening nature. Responses

to each item ranged from 0 to 4, and the sum scale alpha is .77. The *somatization* measure in 1991 is also part of the SCL-90. The somatization dimension was a summation of 12 items, asking about somatic symptoms such as headaches, faintness, pains in the heart or chest, pains in lower back, soreness of muscles, trouble getting breath, etc. Response categories to each item ranged from 0 to 4 and the sum scale alpha is .84.

Stress in 1990. Stressors are categorized into economic and network problems, and each has two dimensions. A measure of *job problems* in 1990 was obtained by asking respondents about job problems during the last 12 months. There are 5 items in this scale: changing jobs for a worse one, having trouble at work or with a boss, taking a cut in wages, being fired, and being unemployed for a long period of time to which respondents answered yes or no. Seventeen percent of the respondents reported job problems during 1990. *Financial problems* in 1990 were measured by asking respondents about financial problems in the past year. This is a five-item scale: suffering a financial loss, dipping heavily into family savings because of financial problems, selling any property to pay off debts, selling some property because of low profits, and quitting farming or business because of financial difficulties. Respondents answered yes or no to the questions and 15 percent reported financial problems during 1990. Both job and financial problems are summed into a single index of *economic stress*, which is a measure of the number of stressful economic events to which respondents were exposed.

Network events experienced during 1990 were obtained by providing respondents with a list of events they could have experienced and then asking them if each event happened to them during the past year (yes/no). Both immediate family and larger network events are brought into this study since American men and women are equally affected by negative nuclear-family events but women are more distressed than men by negative events in the larger network (Wethington, McLeod and Kessler 1987). *Negative friend events* included five items asking about friends moving away, breaking relations with a close friend, friends being injured, having friends with marital problems, and having friends who died. 31 percent of the respondents reported negative friend events. *Negative family events* included six items asking about conflict within households, spouses starting alcohol use, children involved with alcohol, children with problems achieving independence, children with unwanted pregnancies, and having a family pet die. 19 percent of the respondents reported negative family events in 1990. Negative family and friend events are summed into a single index of *network stress*, which is a measure of the number of stressful network events to which respondents were exposed. Measures of the two undesirable life

events, economic and network stress, are modifications of items originally developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967), modified by the Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1978), Rahe (1975), and Conger et al. (1993).

We lagged distress in 1991 a year after stress in 1990 for three reasons. First, to better establish the temporal connection between stressors as antecedent and distress as consequence, we placed stress in 1990 before distress in 1991. Furthermore, evidence for any connection between stress in one year followed by distress in the next year is a stronger test of the relationship between stress and distress. Finally, by asking about stress and distress in separate years, we reduced the chance of respondents reporting high distress because they also reported high stress on the same questionnaire.

Vulnerability in 1990. The measure of *social support* in 1990 was developed from Cohen and Hoberman's (1983) Interpersonal Social Evaluation List. The measure included perceptions of support from others, reports of tangible support from others, and a sense of belonging. Respondents were asked questions such as whether they have someone who can give them advice on how they are handling their problems, if they have someone who can help them make household repairs or take them to the doctor, and if they have someone with whom they can talk when feeling lonely. The scale consists of 40 summed items with four response categories each ($\alpha = .89$).

Developed by Pearlin, Lieberman, Menaghan and Mullan (1981), *mastery* measured respondents' internal control over their lives in 1990. *Mastery* is a seven-item sum scale, with questions such as there is really no way I can solve some of the problems, I feel that I am being pushed around, I have little control over the things that happen to me, I can do just about anything that I set my mind to, I feel helpless, what happens to me in the future mostly depends on me, and that is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life. The four response categories ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree ($\alpha = .69$).

RESULTS

Gender and Stress

Czech women and men were no different in reporting economic and network stress. The means on economic and network stress for men and women are not significantly different (Table I). There is no pattern of Czech women experiencing more stress from network events and men from economic events as there is in the United States (hypothesis 1).

Table I. Means and Standard Deviations of Distress (1991), Exposure to Stress (1990), and Vulnerability (1990) by Gender in the Czech Republic

	Mean (SD)		<i>t</i> Value	Possible Range
	Women	Men		
Economic stress	0.70 (0.9)	0.85 (1.1)	1.10 ($p = .274$)	0 to 10
Network stress	0.69 (0.9)	0.61 (1.0)	-0.56 ($p = .576$)	0 to 11
Depression	9.34 (7.5)	5.52 (5.7)	-3.54 ($p = .001$)	0 to 52
Anxiety	6.00 (4.8)	3.57 (3.2)	-3.56 ($p = .001$)	0 to 40
Somatization	10.28 (7.4)	7.33 (6.7)	-2.65 ($p = .009$)	0 to 48
Hostility	4.24 (3.6)	3.87 (3.2)	-.68 ($p = .497$)	0 to 24
Social support	128.56 (14.5)	127.56 (12.6)	0.97 ($p = .335$)	0 to 160
Mastery	19.37 (2.8)	19.97 (3.1)	1.33 ($p = .185$)	0 to 28

Gender and Distress

Did Czech women and men in 1991 manifest the same gender pattern of distress (internalization vs. externalization) found in the United States (hypothesis 2)? Table I presents means and standard deviations for distress symptoms. Czech women had higher depression symptoms than men ($t = -3.54$, $p < .001$), were more anxious ($t = -3.56$, $p < .001$), had higher somatization symptom scores ($t = -2.65$, $p < .009$), but there was no significant gender difference in hostility ($t = -.68$, $p < .497$). This gender pattern is consistent with previous findings in the United States except for hostility (Aneshensel, Rutter, and Lachenbruch 1991; Lennon 1987). Czech women were as likely as men to externalize distress into hostility.

Gender and Stress-Distress

To examine additional hypothesized relationships, we used OLS regressions with standardized coefficients reported. In Table II, we first entered gender, economic and network stress into the regressions and then interaction terms for gender were entered. Gender is significantly associated with depression, anxiety, and somatization, but not with hostility, consistent with results in Table I. Economic stress significantly increases anxiety, somatization and hostility, and network stress significantly increases depression and anxiety. There are no significant interaction terms for gender in the regressions. The

Table II. Regression of Distress Symptoms on Economic and Network Stress with Interaction Terms for Gender

	Depression		Anxiety		Somatization		Hostility	
	Beta	<i>T</i> score	Beta	<i>T</i> score	Beta	<i>T</i> score	Beta	<i>T</i> score
Gender	.25	3.62 ^a	.25	3.72 ^a	.20	2.87 ^a	.06	.86
Economic stress	.11	1.57 ^a	.15	2.13 ^a	.20	2.81 ^a	.21	2.95 ^a
Network stress	.18	2.62 ^a	.20	2.87 ^a	.07	1.05	.12	1.68 ^a
Interaction between economic stress and gender	.33	1.26	.37	1.55	.27	1.08	.36	1.43
Interaction between network stress and gender	.32	1.36	.22	.86	.11	.044	-.12	-.46
<i>R</i> ²	.13		.15		.09		.08	
<i>F</i>	5.69 ($p = .00$)		6.51 ($p = .00$)		3.79 ($p = .00$)		3.15 ($p = .01$)	

^aSignificance at .05 level.

relations between distress symptoms and economic and network stress are the same for Czech women and men. The gender pattern of women being distressed (internal symptoms) by network problems and men (external symptoms) by economic problems is not found (hypothesis 3).

Network stress was disaggregated into negative family and friend events in a separate analysis (not shown). American women report being distressed by larger network (friends) as well as family events and men by only nuclear family events. We found no significant interaction terms for gender in these same associations. These Czech men and women's distress is affected the same way by family and friend events.

Gender and Vulnerability to Stress

There are no significant difference in mean levels of social support and mastery for Czech men and women (Table I). There is no gender pattern of differential vulnerability to stress as measured by mastery and social support, contrary to findings in the United States (Kessler and McLeod 1984; Thoits 1987) and hypothesis 4. In Table III, we first introduced gender, social support and mastery, and then interaction terms for gender. Only the associations between depression, anxiety and mastery are significant; mastery significantly reduces depression and anxiety. There are no significant interaction terms for gender in these regression and, thus, no gender differences in the relation between mastery and social support and distress symptoms.

Table III. Regression of Distress Symptoms on Social Support and Mastery with Interaction Terms for Gender

	Depression		Anxiety		Somatization		Hostility	
	Beta	T score	Beta	T score	Beta	T score	Beta	T score
Gender	.23	3.32 ^a	.23	3.29 ^a	.18	2.53 ^a	.04	.56
Social support	.01	.22	-.02	-.35 ^a	.04	.54 ^a	.01	.16 ^a
Mastery	-.19	-2.62 ^a	-.19	-2.73 ^a	-.11	-1.45	-.09	-1.25
Interaction between social support and gender	-.79	-1.47	-.29	-.54	-.61	-1.10	-.58	-1.03
Interaction between mastery and gender	.19	.37	.16	.32	.67	1.27	.03	.06
R ²	.11		.10		.07		.02	
F	4.58	p = .00)	4.35	p = .00)	2.65	p = .02)	.15	p = .66)

^aSignificance at .05 level.

Correspondence Hypothesis

According to the correspondence hypothesis, social support buffers men and women alike from network stress and mastery buffers the genders from economic stress. In Table IV, there are no significant interaction terms for gender in the regressions between distress symptoms and the two buffers. Any possible buffering effect of social support and mastery is the same for men and women. Mastery significantly interacts with economic stress, and somatization and hostility (reducing both), evidence of a buffering effect. Social support significantly interacts with network stress and hostility, but it increases the hostility. Having social support amplified the hostility of respondents with high network stress. There is no support for the correspondence hypothesis that social support buffers network stress and there is only partial support that mastery buffers economic stress.

DISCUSSION

Czech women and men indicated similar levels of economic and network stress and the effects of these stressors on distress were the same for Czech men and women. Czech women and men alike were distressed by economic problems and this was significant for three of the four distress

Table IV. Regression of Distress Symptoms on Social Support and Mastery with Interaction Terms for Source of Stress and Gender

	Depression		Anxiety		Somatization		Hostility	
	Beta	T score	Beta	T score	Beta	T score	Beta	T score
Social support	.11	1.22	.03	.30	.03	.34	-.03	-.33
Gender	.22	2.37 ^a	.20	2.27 ^a	.15	.16	.00	.04
Economic stress	.78	1.35	.37	.65	-.06	-.10	-.35	-.59
Interaction b/w economic stress, and social support	-.84	-1.46	-.44	-.76	.04	.07	.32	.55
Interaction b/w economic stress, social support and gender	.19	.81	.25	1.04	.24	1.01	.28	1.15
R ²	.09		.10		.09		.06	
F	3.87	(p = .00)	4.13	(p = .00)	3.58	(p = .00)	2.54	(p = .03)
Social support	.08	.94	.01	.09	.06	.72	-.06	-.64
Gender	.18	2.21 ^a	.20	2.41 ^a	.19	2.17 ^a	.07	.84
Economic stress	.35	.85	.07	.14	.07	.15	-.82	-1.73
Interaction b/w economic stress, and social support	-.51	-.97	-.05	-.10	.03	.05	1.16	2.14 ^a
Interaction b/w economic stress, social support and gender	.35	1.37	.22	.88	.01	.05	-.19	-.74
R ²	.11		.12		.05		.05	
F	4.80	(p = .00)	4.83	(p = .00)	1.97	(p = .08)	1.97	(p = .08)
Mastery	-.14	-1.53	-.16	-1.76 ^a	-.00	-.02	.03	.28
Gender	.16	1.76 ^a	.16	1.85 ^a	.11	1.22	-.01	-.10
Economic stress	.65	1.28	.51	1.02	1.24	2.43 ^a	1.33	2.56 ^a
Interaction b/w economic stress, and mastery	-.87	-1.53	-.68	-1.20	-1.41	-2.47 ^a	-1.40	-2.43 ^a
Interaction b/w economic stress, mastery, and gender	.35	1.54	.32	1.50	.38	1.58	.30	1.25
R ²	.13		.14		.12		.09	
F	5.57	(p = .00)	6.04	(p = .00)	5.15	(p = .00)	3.74	(p = .00)
Mastery	-.27	-3.04 ^a	-.24	-2.72 ^a	-.13	-1.45	-.06	-.61
Gender	.15	1.84	.18	2.22 ^a	.16	1.84 ^a	.06	.72
Economic stress	-.64	-1.24	-.40	-.77	-.17	-.32	.36	.65
Interaction b/w economic stress, and mastery	.47	.84	.39	.70	.19	.32	-.08	-.14
Interaction b/w economic stress, mastery, and gender	.39	1.60	.23	.94	.09	.35	-.14	-.55
R ²	.15		.15		.06		.03	
F	6.71	(p = .00)	6.51	(p = .00)	2.31	(p = .04)	1.29	(p = .27)

^aSignificance at .05 level.

symptoms. They were also affected alike by network stress and this was significant for two of the distress symptoms (depression and anxiety). Czech women had higher levels of internal distress symptoms but there was no gender difference in hostility. There were no gender differences in levels of vulnerability to stress and the effects of mastery and social support on distress. That is, there were no gender differences in exposure to stress, vulnerability to stress, in the effects of mastery and social support on distress symptoms, and there was no gender pattern of internal versus external distress symptoms.

Because of gender role convergence under socialism, Czech women and men were equally exposed in the labor market to the economic stress of the reforms. They faced job insecurity and the loss of women's income was as much a financial difficulty as that of men to families. Interestingly, network stress affected Czech men's distress the same as that of Czech women. Czech men and women were also similar in their levels of vulnerability to stress, as well as the relation between mastery and social support and distress. The American pattern of women's distress stemming from network stress and/or greater vulnerability, and men's distress from economic stress and/or less vulnerability appears to be tied to traditional American gender roles. Neither these traditional gender roles nor the American gender pattern of stress-distress is found in the Czech Republic. It is not the crossing of international borders that makes for a change in the gender pattern of stress-distress; it is the difference in the history of gender roles from one country to the other.

It is possible that these findings are time-specific, limited to the shock phase (1991-1992) of the Czech transformation. It is hardly a surprise that both women and men in this 1991 sample were distressed by 1990 economic events. However, the shock phase ended at the beginning of 1993, the time at which Czechoslovakia separated into two republics, and economic difficulties in the Czech Republic have eased since 1993. Perhaps, the gender pattern of stress-distress in the Czech Republic is now more comparable to that in the United States. As for past comparisons, it is impossible to know what were the gender differences in stress-distress, if any, before 1990 in the Czech Republic since no such research is available.

Finally, the correspondence hypothesis was only partially confirmed. Only mastery was a buffer between economic stress and two distress symptoms (somatization and hostility), and this was true for both genders. Social support exacerbated hostility stemming from network stress, suggesting that with network stress Czech women and men fight back, or the hostility itself is stressful, and this is aggravated when the network is close (high social support).

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