

# **DATING VIOLENCE AMONG MEXICAN-AMERICAN AND MEXICAN ADOLESCENTS**

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The purpose of this study is to examine dating violence among Mexican and Mexican-American adolescents. Specifically, the study examines: the prevalence of psychological-emotional, sexual and physical abuse in Mexican and Mexican-American teens, and differences in dating violence and attitudes about dating violence between Mexican and Mexican-American teens. Results on 396 high school students from Monterrey and Mexicali, Mexico and 471 Mexican American students from San Diego County (aged 14 to 18 years old) revealed that adolescent girls were more physically and emotionally abusive than boys and boys were more sexually abusive than girls. In addition, although there were no differences between Mexicans and Mexican Americans in physical and sexual abuse, Mexicans perpetrate more psychological-emotional abuse than Mexican Americans. Boys had higher acceptance of violence and justification for violence scores than girls. Interestingly, whereas there was no gender difference in justification scores in Mexican Americans, Mexican boys had higher justification for violence scores than Mexican girls. The results highlight the importance of studying teen dating violence across cultures, and implications for interventions are discussed.