

RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS: OTHER IN SELF AND DATING ABUSE AMONG COLLEGE WOMEN

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The proposed research investigated dating violence using an innovative approach to the study of dating violence among college students. The Inclusion of Others in the Self Scale (IOS) by Aron et al., (1992) was used to explore the role of interdependence in intimate (dating) relationships, and physically, sexually, or psychologically abusive behavior. The objectives of this study were to measure if the level of relationship seriousness, and sexual relationship power were indicators of risk for violence in dating relationships, and to determine if different dimensions of the (IOS) scale (i.e., cognitive, behavioral, and affective) are more predictive of dating violence. It was hypothesized that the more serious, cognitively interdependent, and affectively interdependent a relationship is, the greater the risks are for an unhealthy relationship and dating violence. A sample of 302 college women completed a questionnaire containing items about the perceived interdependence of their current or past dating relationship, relationship seriousness, and current or recent dating behaviors. Analyses revealed that relationship seriousness was correlated with measures of dating violence (indices of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS)). In addition, cognitive and affective interdependence were correlated with dating violence, partially supporting our hypotheses. Implications of this study are discussed.