

1. Background

- Dating violence amongst college aged youth is a subject of interest within university populations; it can be powerful in shaping their lives at an important point in their personal development (Smith et al., 2003).
- The goal of this project is to determine the relationship between sports participation and attitudes and practices about dating violence.
- Sports participation by males may contribute a different influence on their dating practices as compared to the influence on females (Forbes et al., 2006; Merten, 2008; Miller et al., 2006).
- HYPOTHESIS:** Women involved in sports activities will have attitudes and beliefs reflecting decreased acceptance of dating violence; conversely, men participating in sports will have more accepting attitudes and beliefs about dating violence.

RATIONALE:

- Women**—team and skill-building atmosphere cultivated during athletic training and competition, ultimately leading to more beneficial, less-accepting, attitudes towards dating violence (Miller et al., 2006).
- Men**—physical competition fostered by athletic participation may translate into their personal lives leading to a desire to control or “win” in various dating situations with resultant accepting attitudes and beliefs about dating violence (Merten, 2008).

2. Methods

- Cross-sectional survey of a convenient sample of UMKC students approached in campus housing and student athletic and Greek meetings.

Instruments:

- Demographics**—8 items including: gender, age, race/ethnicity, grade, relationship status, Greek member, sexual preference and living situation.
- Acceptance of couple violence**—11 items with 3 subscales (acceptance of male on female violence 3 items; acceptance of female on male violence 3 items; acceptance of general dating violence 5 items); Cronbach’s alphas scores of .74, .71 and .73 respectively; scored on a 4-point Likert Scale with higher scores indicating greater acceptance of couple violence (Foshee, Fothergill & Stuart, 1992).
- Conflict Tactics Scale 2 “Short Form”**—measures extend to which conflict tactics have been used; 20 items, 3 subscales (reasoning (4 items), verbal aggression (2 items) and physical assault (14 items)); respondents indicate the frequency of each behavior on a scale from 0 to 7; measure has good concurrent and construct validity (Straus, 2004).
- Sports Participation**—7 items with 3 subscales: high school sports participation (scored : 0 = no participation, 1 = either competitive or school participation, and 2 = both), college sports participation (scored as above), and college intramural sports participation (scored: 0 = no participation, 1 = participation).

- Data Analysis:** Data was entered into the SPSS database; Descriptive statistics and bivariate analyses to assess the relationship between sports participation (independent variables) and attitudes and practices related to dating violence (dependent variables). Two multiple regression models (one for women and one for men) will be run to further assess these relationships.

- Approval to conduct this study was granted by the UMKC Social Sciences Institutional Review Board

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3. Results

- Preliminary analysis showed that of the 540 participants, 56.5% women (245/322) and 43.5% men (189/218) had participated in sports.
- This initial analysis showed that women had better scores on each of the three scales of Acceptance of Couple Violence instrument. The bivariate and multivariate analyses are in process.

Table 1: Characteristics of Participants

	All n=540*	Female n = 322 (59.6%)	Male n =218 (40.4%)	P
Age				
--17-18	196 (36.3%)	134 (68.4%)	62 (31.6%)	< .001
--19-20	226 (41.9%)	140 (61.9%)	86 (38.1%)	
--21-22	97 (18.0%)	43 (44.3%)	54 (55.7%)	
>22	20 (3.7%)	5 (25.0%)	15 (75.0%)	
Year in college				
--Freshman	261 (48.3)	168 (64.4%)	93 (35.6%)	< .05
--Sophomore	116 (21.5%)	71 (61.2%)	45 (38.8%)	
--Junior	105 (19.4%)	51 (48.6%)	54 (51.4%)	
--Senior	56 (10.4%)	30 (53.6%)	26 (46.4%)	
Race				
--White	354 (65.6%)	217 (61.3%)	137 (38.7%)	< .5
--African-American	85 (15.7%)	52 (61.2%)	33 (38.8%)	
--Asian/Pacific Islander	59 (10.9)	31 (52.5%)	28 (47.5%)	
--Other	20 (3.7%)	13 (65.0%)	7 (35.0%)	
Hispanic ethnicity				
--Yes	21 (3.9%)	9 (42.9%)	12 (57.1%)	
Housing				
--Dorms, on-campus	278 (51.5%)	190 (68.3%)	88 (31.7%)	< .001
--Apts, on campus	79 (14.6%)	47 (59.5%)	32 (40.5%)	
--With family	53 (9.8%)	31 (58.5%)	22 (41.5%)	
--Frat/Sorority house	29 (5.3%)	5 (17.2%)	24 (82.8%)	
--Other	84 (16.0%)	40 (47.6%)	44 (52.4%)	
Sports participation				
--Yes	434 (80.4%)	245 (56.5%)	189 (43.5%)	< .01
Acceptance of Couple Violence Score				
--Male on female		Mean 3.29; SD 1.082	Mean 3.57; SD 1.357	
--Female on male		Mean 3.67; SD 1.588	Mean 4; SD 1.7	
--General		Mean 5.5; SD 1.956	Mean 5.88; SD 2.361	

*May not total 540 due to missing data

4. Discussion

- Cross-sectional surveys are a good method for detecting associations between variables; they cannot, of course, provide us with information about the direction of the association.
- While only preliminary results are available from the analysis of this study, the sample size provides considerable power for detecting gender differences; multivariate analysis will provide additional information for conclusions on this important topic.

5. References

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