



Cross-Cultural Differences in Student Attitudes Toward Intimate Partner Violence: A Systematic Review

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

This study reviewed the research on post-secondary students' attitudes towards intimate partner violence (IPV). IPV is especially common among post-secondary school students. Past research has shown that attitudes towards IPV are associated with increased risk for perpetrating or being victimized by IPV, and that attitudes may influence responses to being victimized. Supportive attitudes towards intimate partner violence are common in post-secondary students, but attitudes vary depending on culture. This review paper took a cross-cultural approach, which means it examined differences in attitudes across different cultural groups.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- Asian, South American, and European students had more supportive attitudes towards intimate partner violence than North American students, but results were different depending on the countries that were examined.
- Asian American students were more accepting of intimate partner violence than White students, but differences in attitudes between Hispanic American, African American, and White college students were less clear.
- Contextual factors including the type of violence, type of relationship, and reason for violence impacted students' attitudes.

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS DO?

The authors reviewed studies that compared attitudes towards intimate partner violence across cultures. This paper summarizes and discusses the findings of 18 articles, 11 of which compared attitudes across countries and 8 of which compared racial or ethnic groups within the United States.

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS FIND?

There were cross-cultural differences in attitudes on intimate partner violence between countries. Asian, South American, and European students had more supportive attitudes towards intimate partner violence than North American students' attitudes. However, attitudes varied between countries within a geographic area, showing that it is important not to generalize. The type of violence, the type of relationship, and the reason for the violence also influenced attitudes, highlighting that it is important to consider contextual factors. For example, students in Chile had more accepting attitudes of intimate partner violence than students in the United States, but only when the violence was jealousy-related.

The studies reviewed in this paper revealed some ethnic/racial differences in attitudes, as well. Within the United States, Asian American students were more accepting of intimate partner violence than White students. However, it is still unclear how Hispanic American and African American students' attitudes about intimate partner violence compare to White college students. Results suggest that there are more similarities than differences between these groups. Similar to the cross-country comparisons, contextual factors impacted students' attitudes toward intimate partner violence.

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS RESEARCH?

This research can be used by those who are developing intimate partner violence prevention programs and policymakers who are in a position to fund such programs. It highlights the need to individually develop programs for particular cultural groups, rather than taking a "one-size-fits-all" approach. These programs should address cultural values that may contribute to more supportive attitudes toward intimate partner violence in the group's population. Additionally, this research shows that rather than comparing broad cultural groups, it is more useful to make specific cross-cultural comparisons.

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