

Turkish College Students' Attitudes towards Emotional Abuse in Romantic Relationships from a Gender Perspective

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Abstract : Emotional abuse is one of the most challenging forms of violence to define, and many individuals often unknowingly experience emotional abuse. Existing literature has found that individuals who have experienced psychological abuse tend to suffer from depression, low self-esteem, a decreased sense of autonomy, fear, and an increased risk of suicide. Current research indicates that physical abuse in romantic relationships is often accompanied by emotional abuse, supporting the idea that identifying emotional abuse is an essential factor in romantic relationships. On the other hand, studies on emotional abuse between partners in romantic relationships are limited. This study investigated attitudes towards emotional abuse among Turkish university students. Gender differences were investigated. Additionally, the study examined whether the degree of emotional abuse was related to attitudes towards emotional abuse. A total of 243 university students participated in the research, with 156 female and 87 male participants. Participants' attitudes toward emotional abuse were measured using the Turkish adaptation of Follingstad Psychological Aggression Scale and hypothetical scenarios created by the researchers. The results revealed that attitudes of women and men vary significantly in attack looks/sexuality, fidelity, gender roles, and jealousy subscales of Follingstad Psychological Aggression Scale. Furthermore, attitudes towards moderate-level and severe-level emotional abuse exhibit statistically significant variability by gender, while attitudes towards mild-level emotional abuse do not.

Keywords : emotional abuse, gender differences, Turkish culture, university students

Conference Title : ICRDV 2024 : International Conference on Reasons of Domestic Violence

Conference Location : Zurich, Switzerland

Conference Dates : September 16-17, 2024