

Shortened Relationship Conflict Tactics

Year 14

Fast Track Project Technical Report

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Citation

Instrument

Dodge, K.A., Bates, J.E., & Pettit, G.S. (1997). How the experience of physical abuse leads a child to become chronically violent toward others. In D. Cicchetti & S.L. Toth (Eds.), *Rochester Symposium on Developmental Psychopathology, Vol. 8: Developmental perspectives on trauma* (pp. 263-288). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Straus, M. (1979). Measuring intrafamily conflict and violence: the Conflict Tactics Scales. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 41*, 75-88.

Report

Iselin, A. R. (2011). *Shortened Relationship Conflict Tactics Scale* (Fast Track Project Technical Report). Available: <http://www.fasttrackproject.org>

Data Sources

Raw: C14AR

Scored: RCT14

I. Scale Description

The Shortened Relationship Conflict Tactics Scale measure is a revised version of the Conflict Tactics Scale (Strauss, 1979). The Shortened Relationship Conflict Tactics Scale is a 30-item measure specifically developed to assess conflict in romantic relationships. Fifteen questions are directed to the participant about his/her current girlfriend/boyfriend. The other 15 questions are asked about the boyfriend's/girlfriend's behavior toward the participant. The questions deal with how the couple has handled disagreements in the past year (e.g., "I showed my boyfriend/girlfriend I cared for him/her even though we disagreed."). Items are rated on a seven-point scale, ranging from zero "this has never happened" to 6 "more than 20 times in the past year."

II. Report Sample

Analyses were conducted on Cohort 1 year 14 for the normative and control participants only. The total sample size for these analyses was 253, with 180 Normative participants and 73 Control participants. Eighty-nine participants were either missing data or part of the overlap between the normative and control samples. The sample sizes used for analyses are non-overlapping samples such that the Normative sample is comprised of only Low-Risk respondents and the Control sample is comprised of only high risk respondents. The total sample was fairly evenly spread across all sites: Durham (31.0%), Pennsylvania (27.8%), Nashville (18.4%), and Seattle (22.8%).

III. Scaling

This instrument has 18 scales, 9 that reflect how the participant behaved toward his/her current boyfriend/girlfriend and 9 that reflect how the participant's boyfriend/girlfriend behaved toward the participant. Six of these scales reflect behaviors that occurred during the past year, while another six scales reflect behaviors that occurred in the distant past but NOT in the past year. Finally the last six scores contrast whether the behaviors had never occurred versus having occurred at sometime during the student's lifetime.

The response choice "P" was treated in two ways, in order to ensure a comprehensive look at the data. First, because a choice of "P" indicates that the behavior did not occur in the past year, the response choice of "P" was recoded to zero. These variables have an "r" in the variable name to indicate that they were recoded. Scales were then created to reflect behaviors that had occurred in the past year. Then, new dichotomous variables were created to capture data about previous violence that had occurred prior to the past year, such that the behavior had or had not occurred in the distant past. These variables had a "P" added to the variable's name.

Finally, additional dichotomous (never or sometime) variables were created to examine the events as having happened over the course of the student's lifetime. Responses that were zero were coded as "0" for having never occurred. All other responses, whether they were "P" or 1 through 6, were coded as "1" for having occurred at sometime in the student's lifetime. The items were given an "X" in their name. The scales were then created to reflect events that had occurred in the student's lifetime.

The scales were as follows: *Physical Aggression—Student* (12r, 14r, 18r, 20r, 22r, 28r, 30r, 36r), *Verbal Aggression—Student* (10r, 24r, 34r), *Verbal Discussion—Student* (8r, 16r, 26r, 32r), *Previous Physical Aggression—Student* (p12, p14, p18, p20, p22, p28, p30, p36), *Previous Verbal Aggression—Student* (p10, p24, p34), *Previous Verbal Discussion—Student* (p8, p16, p26, p32), *Lifetime Physical Aggression—Student* (x12, x14, x18, x20, x22, x28, x30, x36), *Lifetime Verbal Aggression—Student* (x10, x24, x34), *Lifetime Verbal Discussion—Student* (x8, x16, x26, x32), *Physical Aggression—Partner* (13r, 15r, 19r, 21r, 23r, 29r, 31r, 37r), *Verbal Aggression—Partner* (11r, 25r, 35r), *Verbal Discussion—Partner* (9r, 17r, 27r, 33r), *Previous Physical Aggression—Partner* (p13, p15, p19, p21, p23, p29, p31, p37), *Previous Verbal Aggression—Partner* (p11, p25, p35), *Previous Verbal Discussion—Partner* (p9, p17, p27, p33), *Lifetime Physical Aggression—Partner* (x13, x15, x19, x21, x23, x29, x31, x37), *Lifetime Verbal Aggression—Partner* (x11, x25, x35), and *Lifetime Verbal Discussion—Partner* (x9, x17, x27, x33).

All of the scales were created by taking the mean of the items in the scale.

IV. Descriptives

Some of the subscales had a high number of 0s. Table 1 shows the frequency of participants with scores of 0 averaging across both samples

Table 1. Frequency of 0s

	Current (within the past year)	Previous	Lifetime
<i>Physical Aggression—Participant</i>	74%	98%	73%
<i>Verbal Aggression—Participant</i>	36%	97%	34%
<i>Verbal Discussion—Participant</i>	6%	93%	3%
<i>Physical Aggression—Partner</i>	74%	98%	73%
<i>Verbal Aggression—Partner</i>	37%	97%	35%
<i>Verbal Discussion—Partner</i>	6%	93%	4%

Table 2 shows means, standard deviations, and ranges of subscale scores for the normative and control samples. A series of t-tests—with unequal variances assumed—indicated one significant difference between the control and normative samples on the physical aggression previous scale ($t=2.01, p=0.05$). The normative sample scores significantly lower than the high-risk control sample on this scale.

Scale	Sample	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Physical Aggression-Participant	Normative	180	0.13	0.38	0	3.25
	Control	73	0.14	0.42	0	2.38
Verbal Aggression-Participant	Normative	180	1.13	1.25	0	5.67
	Control	73	1.08	1.37	0	4.67
Verbal Discussion-Participant	Normative	180	3.58	1.82	0	6.00
	Control	73	3.68	1.83	0	6.00
Physical Aggression-Partner	Normative	180	0.12	0.40	0	3
	Control	73	0.21	0.57	0	3.13
Verbal Aggression-Partner	Normative	180	1.00	1.18	0	5.67
	Control	73	1.11	1.39	0	4.67
Verbal Discussion-Partner	Normative	180	3.47	1.80	0	6.00
	Control	73	3.55	1.79	0	6.00
Previous Physical Aggression-Participant	Normative	180	0.00	0.01	0	0.13
	Control	73	0.01	0.04	0	0.25
Previous Verbal Aggression-Participant	Normative	180	0.00	0.04	0	0.33
	Control	73	0.01	0.05	0	0.33
Previous Verbal Discussion-Participant	Normative	180	0.04	0.16	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.04	0.13	0	0.75
Previous Physical Aggression-Partner	Normative	180	0.00	0.01	0	0.13
	Control	73	0.01	0.02	0	0.13
Previous Verbal Aggression-Partner	Normative	180	0.00	0.04	0	0.33
	Control	73	0.01	0.05	0	0.33
Previous Verbal Discussion-Partner	Normative	180	0.04	0.17	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.04	0.12	0	0.75
Lifetime Physical Aggression-Participant	Normative	180	0.07	0.17	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.08	0.17	0	0.75
Lifetime Verbal Aggression-Participant	Normative	180	0.39	0.32	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.36	0.00	0	1.00
Lifetime Verbal Discussion-Participant	Normative	180	0.87	0.26	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.86	0.25	0	1.00
Lifetime Physical Aggression-Partner	Normative	180	0.05	0.15	0	0.88
	Control	73	0.11	0.22	0	0.88
Lifetime Verbal Aggression-Partner	Normative	180	0.35	0.30	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.38	0.36	0	1.00
Lifetime Verbal Discussion-Partner	Normative	180	0.85	0.26	0	1.00
	Control	73	0.85	0.25	0	1.00

V. Recommendations for Use

The Shortened Relationship Conflict Tactics Scale is a 30-item measure specifically developed to assess conflict in romantic relationships, asking questions about both the participant and his/her partner. Some of the scales indicated floor effects and should be analyzed accordingly.