

Dating Violence of College Students in Japan, Taiwan and the United States: A Cross-Cultural Comparison^{*1}

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大学生の親密な関係における暴力

—日本、台湾、米国の比較—

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要 約

本研究は、日本、台湾、米国の大学生のデート暴力の特徴を報告したものである。3カ国の男女大学生に、葛藤解決方略尺度（Conflict Tactics Scale; Straus, 1979）を用いて、交際相手に与えた暴力および非暴力的攻撃、交際相手から受けた暴力および非暴力的攻撃の回数について回答を求めた。分析は回答者の中から現在あるいは過去に交際相手のいる者あるいはいた者を対象として行い、3カ国の暴力や非暴力的攻撃の実態について検討した。非暴力的攻撃の場合には、生起頻度が50%を越えるものもあり、国や性別による差異もうかがえたが、全体の割合では3カ国を通じて女子の方が男子よりも攻撃の頻度が高く、また米国の女子学生は日本の女子学生よりも攻撃的であった。一方、暴力に関しては、激しい身体的暴力そのものの生起頻度が少なく、性別や国による差異は見られなかった。また、交際相手との暴力が相互的かどうかを検討したところ、3カ国ともに暴力や攻撃のないカップルが多かったが、暴力をふるう回答者のみに注目した場合には、カップルのどちらか一方が暴力をふるう場合よりも、相互に暴力的なカップルのほうが多かった。こうした結果についてStraus（2008）の結果と比較検討し、考察を行った。

キーワード：デート暴力、葛藤解決方略尺度（CTS）、比較文化、大学生

Key words: dating violence, Conflict Tactics Scale, cross-cultural comparison, college students

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There has been great concern around the world about husbands' violence against wives and about marital violence more generally (e.g., Krahé, Bieneck, & Möller, 2005). Although violence within dating couples has received less attention, it is a growing interest of researchers in many countries (e.g., Straus, 2004). Violent dating relationships appear to be more fluid and more concealed than married couples' violence, meaning that protection of victims or relief through legal remedies is more difficult. But, victims of dating violence can have severe reactions, just as victims of marital violence (e.g., Frieze, 2005). In this study, characteristics of self-reported perpetration and receipt of dating violence and aggression in women and men are compared within three different countries, Japan, Taiwan and the United States.

Dating violence refers to the perpetration or threat of an act of physical violence by at least one member of an unmarried dyad directed toward the other, within the context of a dating relationship (Sugarman & Hotaling, 1989). Dating violence has been most extensively studied in the United States. Although there have been studies of dating violence done in other countries, very few of these include Asian samples (Krahé et al., 2005; Straus, 2004). Reported prevalence of dating violence in the U. S. and elsewhere varies widely across studies, depending on the sample used and on the precise definition of "violence" (Frieze, 2005; Frieze, 2008; Krahé et al., 2005).

In 2000, Archer published a meta-analysis of studies of dating and marital violence, drawn largely from U.S. populations, but also including some data from other countries. Data indicated that injuries resulting from severe violence are more frequent among men, but that overall frequencies of violent behavior directed toward a dating or marital partner (including lesser violence such as slapping, pushing, or verbal aggression) are almost the same in men and women, or even higher in women (Archer, 2000). For example, Bookwala, Frieze, Smith, and Ryan (1992) found that 58% of female and 55% of male college students reported using physical violence toward a dating partner, and 43% of women and 48% of men reported receiving such violence. The Archer data suggest that, at least in the United States, women can be as aggressive as men against an intimate dating or marital partner, if one looks at percentages of those who have used some act of physical aggression against their partner (e.g., Richardson, 2005). On the basis of studies done primarily in the United States, it is also clear that most intimate partner violence can be characterized as mutual or reciprocal (e.g., Hendy, Weiner, Bakerofskie, Eggen, Gustitus, & McLeod, 2003; Hines & Saudino, 2003; Williams & Frieze, 2005). Thus, the most common types of relationships are either those in which neither partner uses physical aggression against the partner, or both use it toward the other. It is unclear how

generalizable these data are to other countries. In this study, we classify couples as completely non-violent, as mutually violent, or as having only women who are violent or as having only men who are violent in order to determine if this pattern of mutual violence can also be seen in Japanese and Taiwanese dating couples.

Although there have been some studies of marital and dating violence in Japan and Taiwan, very little is known about the nature of this violence. Violent actions against a dating or marital partner are assumed to vary from country to country, or from region to region, depending on political, historical, religious, and economic factors (Nayak, Byrne, Martin, & Abraham, 2003). Straus and his associates conducted violence studies on college students of 32 nations including the United States, Japan and Taiwan. Straus (2008) found that for female students Taiwanese ranked highest among three countries in terms of expressing both overall and severe assault (41.9% for overall and 25.6% for severe assault in Taiwan) and Japanese ranked in the lowest (18.3% and 10.2%, respectively) with U.S. students in the middle (31.5% and 12.1%). For men, Taiwanese students ranked lower for overall assault together with Japanese than U.S. (18.4% for Taiwanese, 18.3% for Japanese and 26.6% for U.S.) but highest for severe assault (15.8%, 6.6% and 8.9%, respectively). In a sample of students who reported at least one assault occurred in the previous 12 months, however, more Japanese students were in mutual violent relationships than U.S. and Taiwanese students. U.S. and Taiwanese students were more likely to be in only female violent relationships. Apparently Japanese students of both genders were less likely to commit physical violence, but those who tended to reveal violent behaviors were more likely to be in mutual violent relationships.

Measurement of Intimate Partner Violence and Aggression

The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS: Straus, 1979) has been the most widely used scale to measure intimate partner violence in the United States and other countries (e.g., Archer, 2000; Hamby, 2005; Krahe et al., 2005). The scale begins by talking about couple disagreements, and then asks the participants to note how often they and their partners used each of a list of specific actions toward their partner during disagreements. The scale contains less serious violent behavior (e.g., "Threatened to hit or throw something at your partner"), and more serious violent behavior (e.g., "Beat up your partner"). Data is typically reported in terms of "incidence rates" where researchers note what percentage of couples report using one or more of the violent actions (expressed violence) or being the target of one or more violent actions from their partner (received violence) within a particular time period, such as a year or six months (Krahe et al., 2005).

Typically, studies look at reported incidence rates for women and men separately, reporting both received and expressed violence, or only at received violence, sometimes

only for women (e.g., Krahé et al., 2005). In this study, we examine all of these values. We also go further and look at patterns within couples. Couples are considered as mutually violent, if the student reports using at least one violent act and this person further reports that the partner has also been violent towards him or her at least once. Such couples are also labeled as having “bidirectional violence” (Straus, 2008). This detailed analysis was done since there have been very few studies of dating violence in Japanese and Taiwanese couples; we felt it was important to understand the nature of the data clearly.

Current Study

This study provides a detailed examination of patterns of dating partner violence in samples of university students from Japan, the United States and Taiwan. We first examine the nature of that violence, noting what types of aggressive and violent actions are reported, to provide information about the nature of dating violence in the three countries.

Data is available from both men and women about the nonviolent aggression and the violence they have expressed towards their partners and whether or not the partner has been aggressive or violent towards them. These reports of expressed and received violence are independent ways of testing relative levels of male and female violence. Next, we examine the patterns within couples, to determine whether dating violence within each country is primarily violence directed from men to women, from women to men, or mutual violence where both the man and the woman in the couple are violent.

METHOD

Participants

A total of 1, 429 students were recruited as study participants. Participants who did not fill out the violent perpetration and victimization items were removed from the data. After excluding these data and those of students who had never experienced a dating relationship or courtship and those who were married, a total of 747 participants under the aged of 22 were remained in the analysis. Japanese participants were recruited in Hiroshima, Hyogo, and Tokushima prefectures, Taiwanese participants in Taipei, and U.S. participants in Pittsburgh. The final sample in analysis included 139 Japanese women, 124 Japanese men, 198 Taiwanese women, 122 Taiwanese men, 117 U.S. women and 47 U.S. men. All aged 18 to 22.

Questionnaire

Demographic variables. Students were asked a number of questions about their relationships. Table 1 shows information about the reported relationships by country and

gender. Chi-square tests were conducted. In Taiwan women and men differed on frequency of dating ($\chi^2(4) = 9.90, p < .05$). Significantly more men than women reported that they saw their partners almost everyday and more women than men reported that they saw their partners twice or three times a week. No significant differences between men and women in Japan and the United States.

Table 1 Relationship Variables by Country and Gender

	Men		Women	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Frequency of dating				
- Japan				
1. once a month	10	(8.5)	14	(10.3)
2. 2-3 times a month	20	(16.9)	22	(16.2)
3. once a week	19	(16.1)	29	(21.3)
4. 2-3 times a week	27	(22.9)	35	(25.7)
5. almost every day	42	(35.6)	36	(26.5)
- Taiwan				
1. once a month	7	(5.9)	16	(8.3)
2. 2-3 times a month	11	(9.3)	14	(7.3)
3. once a week	13	(11.0)	26	(13.5)
4. 2-3 times a week	31	(26.3)	74	(38.3)
5. almost every day	56	(47.5)	63	(32.6)
- US				
1. once a month	0	(0.0)	0	(0.0)
2. 2-3 times a month	1	(2.1)	4	(3.4)
3. once a week	4	(8.5)	14	(12.0)
4. 2-3 times a week	25	(53.2)	41	(35.0)
5. almost every day	17	(36.2)	58	(49.6)
Cohabitation experience				
- Japan				
Yes	19	(16.2)	22	(15.9)
No	98	(83.8)	116	(84.1)
- Taiwan				
Yes	15	(12.7)	24	(12.3)
No	103	(87.3)	171	(87.7)
- US				
Yes	0		3	(2.6)
No	47	(100.0)	114	(97.4)

Measurement of intimate partner violence and aggression. Partner violence was measured using the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979). Students were asked to answer in terms of a current dating partner, if currently dating, or a previous partner if not currently dating. As mentioned before, the scale has been widely used in the United States and other countries (e.g., Archer, 2000; Hamby, 2005). Items that were used in the present analysis can be seen in Table 2 and 3. Researchers do sometimes add other types of violent acts to their scales, or omit one or more of the original CTS items (Caetano, Ramisetty-Mikler, & Field, 2005; Krahé et al., 2005; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, &

Sugarman, 1996). In this study, we omitted the item “cry.” This item is not a true violent act, and has been omitted from later versions of the CTS (Straus et al., 1996). Participants were asked to rate both expressed behavior against their partner and received behavior from their partner on these items using a 5-point scale (1=never, 2=once, 3=2 or 3 times, 4=4 to 9 times, 5=more than ten times) in the past six months. Initial inspection of the data indicated that the scores were strongly skewed as is often found in dating violence studies (Straus, 2008). Such data violates assumptions of normality. For this reason, we followed the typical procedure of dichotomizing the scores. This meant that scores were computed as incidence rates, indicating whether the person had ever used violence. Thus, each study participant had a score of 0 or 1 for their own expression of partner violence and a score of 0 or 1 for whether or not his or her partner had been violent to him or her. Items involving violent aggressive acts, such as “Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your partner” and “Slapped your partner” were computed together. Cronbach alpha obtained for expressed violence scores (10 items) was 0.86 and for received violence was 0.86.

Other items assessing non-violent aggression are included in the standard CTS scale, but are not typically used to assess partner violence. These items were: Insulted or swore at your partner; Sulked or refused to talk about it; Stomped out of the room; and Did or said something to spite your partner. These items are also measured on the same 1 to 5 scale as the violence items. For exploratory purposes, we also analyzed these nonviolent aggression items. Scores for individual items were again dichotomized. Cronbach’s alpha for expressed nonviolent aggression (4 items) was 0.67 and for received nonviolent aggression was 0.69.

Procedure

Back translation. A Japanese researcher who understood both English and Japanese translated English questions to Japanese and Japanese questions to English, and a Taiwanese researcher who understood both Japanese and Taiwanese translated our Taiwanese questions to Japanese. If there were any differences between the original phrases and the translated phrases, we discussed the differences and made some adjustments, such as “Threatened your partner with a knife or gun” in the U.S. version and “Threatened your partner with a weapon including a knife” in Japanese and Taiwanese versions since possessing any firearms are legally prohibited in Japan and Taiwan.

Administration of the survey. The data for this study were collected in universities in Japan, Taiwan and the United States in 2007. Japanese and Taiwanese students were administered questionnaires at the beginning or the end of the psychology classes. U.S. students participated as partial fulfillment of a requirement for their introductory

psychology class, which was done in small groups outside of class time. This study was described as “Cross-cultural study of courtship style.” The participants were instructed to respond to the survey in terms of their ongoing dating relationship, or, if they were not engaged in one at the time, to respond to the items in terms of their most recent relationship, or, if they had never been in a dating relationship, to respond to them in terms of an imaginary partner.

Informed consent and debriefing. As this survey includes some private questions such as experienced violence, participants were informed at the beginning of the questionnaire that they were welcome to skip any questions they would rather not answer. They were also informed at the end of the questionnaire about some aid agencies near each university. And they were promised to get the feedback of this survey.

RESULTS

Nonviolent Aggression

In order to better understand the nature of dating violence and aggression, we first looked at rates of endorsement of all the items measuring aggression or violence towards the partner. Looking first at the nonviolent aggression items by gender and country, it can be seen in Table 2 that the most commonly used forms of nonviolent aggression in Japanese men and women were sulking (item 2) and doing something to spite the partner (item 4). Both genders in Taiwan were most likely to sulk when they faced conflicts in their relationships (item 2). Approximately half of U.S. women and men reported showing aggressions by insulting (item 1), sulking (item 2), and/or doing something to spite their partners (item 4).

Table 2 Reports of Nonviolent Aggressive Behavior

Expressed to Partner	Japan		Taiwan		United States	
	Men N (%)	Women N (%)	Men N (%)	Women N (%)	Men N (%)	Women N (%)
1. Insulted or swore at partner	28 (22.6)	37 (26.6)	29 (23.8)	46 (23.2)	24 (51.1)	58 (49.6)
2. Sulked or refused to talk	54 (43.5)	72 (51.8)	69 (56.6)	137 (69.2)	24 (51.1)	77 (65.8)
3. Stomped out of the room	14 (11.3)	16 (11.5)	23 (18.9)	41 (20.7)	9 (19.1)	34 (29.1)
4. Did or said something to spite partner	45 (36.3)	77 (55.4)	24 (19.7)	69 (34.8)	30 (63.8)	68 (58.1)
Mean Proportion Expressing Nonviolent Aggression	0.56	0.70	0.62	0.76	0.77	0.81
Mean Proportion Receiving Nonviolent Aggression	0.56	0.58	0.70	0.60	0.77	0.73

Note. Mean proportions have a significant country main effect and gender by country interaction for expressed nonviolent aggression.

These descriptive frequencies for individual items were combined into overall expressed and received nonviolent aggression proportions. Since the data were recoded as 0 if never done and 1 if ever done, the means represent proportions of those ever doing the behaviors. These combined scores were examined by a gender by country ANOVA with repeated measures (Expressed and Received). It yielded main effects for countries ($F(2, 741) = 7.459, p < .01$) and repeated measures ($F(1, 741) = 7.164, p < .01$) as well as a significant interaction of genders by repeated measures ($F(1, 741) = 17.896, p < .001$). Tukey's post hoc tests indicated that significantly more students reported aggression in the U.S. than in Japan, but no significant differences between Taiwan and other two countries. Post hoc comparisons of the significant interaction revealed that women are more likely expressed nonviolent forms of aggression than they received and that women expressed their aggression more often than men did.

Partner Violence

We next looked at responses to specific items used to assess partner violence. As seen in Table 3, a large majority of the partner violence reported was not severe. Among the less severe forms of partner violence, throwing or otherwise using an object (item 6) was most reported by U.S. men (25.5%) followed by Japanese men (18.5%). Threatening such behavior (item 5) were often reported by both men and women of three countries students except for U.S. men (4.3%).

Table 3 Reports of Violent Aggressive Behavior

Expressed to partner	Japan		Taiwan		United States	
	Men N (%)	Women N (%)	Men N (%)	Women N (%)	Men N (%)	Women N (%)
5. Threatened to hit or throw something at your partner	18 (14.5)	20 (14.4)	9 (7.4)	20 (10.1)	2 (4.3)	10 (8.5)
6. Threw or smashed or hit or kicked something.	23 (18.5)	15 (10.8)	17 (13.9)	27 (13.6)	12 (25.5)	15 (12.8)
7. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your partner.	12 (9.7)	14 (10.1)	11 (9.0)	26 (13.1)	2 (4.3)	16 (13.7)
8. Slapped your partner	8 (6.5)	15 (10.8)	4 (3.3)	10 (5.1)	1 (2.1)	10 (8.5)
9. Kicked, bit, or hit your partner with a fist.	4 (3.2)	9 (6.5)	5 (4.1)	23 (11.6)	0 (0.0)	7 (6.0)
10. Hit or tried to hit them with something.	9 (7.3)	14 (10.1)	4 (3.3)	21 (10.6)	1 (2.1)	6 (5.1)
11. Beat up your partner	4 (3.2)	7 (5.0)	3 (2.5)	7 (3.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)
12. Threatened your partner with a knife or gun	6 (4.8)	3 (2.2)	2 (1.6)	1 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
13. Forced your partner to have sex	6 (4.8)	5 (3.6)	3 (2.5)	1 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)
14. Used some other form of violence	4 (3.2)	5 (3.6)	3 (2.5)	7 (3.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)
Mean Proportion Expressing Violence	0.27	0.24	0.19	0.29	0.30	0.27
Mean Proportion Receiving Violence	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.21	0.26	0.20

Table 3 provides dichotomized means across all forms of expressed and received violence by genders and countries. A gender by country ANOVA with repeated measures (Expressed and Received) revealed no significant main effects or interaction.

Patterns of Violence Within Couples

We next compared what students reported about their own violence and what they reported about their partners. Couples where neither used any form of violence were classified as non-violent. If both used violence, the couple was classified as “Mutual Violence.” Other couples were classified as only the women being violent or only the men being violent. Frequencies of each type of couple by country are shown in Table 4. More than 60% of students were in nonviolent relationships across three countries and 15 or 17% were in mutual violent relationships. The overall chi square for this table wasn’t significant.

Table 4 Patterns of Couple Violence

Country	Japan	Taiwan	U.S.
Type of couple			
No Violence	177 67%	217 68%	111 68%
Mutual Violence	44 17%	47 15%	27 17%
Male Only Violence	23 9 %	18 6 %	10 6 %
Female Only Violence	19 7 %	38 12%	16 10%
Total couple reports	263	320	164

DISCUSSION

We examined both nonviolent aggression and direct physical violence in dating couples of three countries. In terms of nonviolent aggressive behavior such as sulking or spiting, our data revealed that women were more likely to show their aggression to their partners than men did across countries (Table 2). As in Archer (2000) and Bookwala et al. (1992), women in Japan and Taiwan can be as aggressive as men or even more. Although U.S. students were significantly more aggressive than Japanese students with the Taiwanese in between (Table 2), we did not find any significant differences among three countries in perpetrating physical violence to their partners (Table 3). Straus (2008) found that Taiwanese women were most likely to attack their partners severely, but in our sample the violence severity of Taiwanese women were as low as Japanese and U.S.

Our data rather suggested that women of three countries might express their emotions not in forms of direct physical violence but in forms of indirect aggressive attitudes.

Perhaps nonviolent aggressive attitudes may be related to gender stereotypes, for example women in general are perceived to be emotional and have high concern about interpersonal relationships, which might lead them to express negative emotions in forms of indirect “relational aggression” when facing conflicts with intimate partners. However, women and men in the United States were more likely to show aggressive nonviolent behavior than in Japan. This might be related to socially adapted coping behavior in close relationships. We will need further investigation about gender-related strategies to cope with conflicts and how they turn into severe violence such as beating up partners or forcing them to have sex.

In addition to examining reports of expressed and received dating partner violence by men and women, we also looked at patterns of violence within couples (Table 4). We feel that this allows a clearer picture of the dynamics of the relationship than examining reports of only one partner at a time. As we predicted the most common type of relationships was that in which neither partner uses physical violence against the partner. Approximately 70% of respondents of three countries were in those nonviolent relationships. The highest proportion of couples with any violence was found for mutually violent couples, and the percentage of female only violent couples was as high as that of male only violent couples. There weren't any statistically significant cultural differences. Again our data didn't support Straus (2008) who showed that more Japanese were in mutual violent relationships than the U.S. and Taiwanese students. However, both studies similarly showed that when looking into dating violence, bidirectional violent couples were most common.

Although we went beyond a simple examination of reported violent actions as measured by the CTS scale in this study by classifying different types of couples, we were limited by this measure. There have been many criticisms of the Conflict Tactics Scale (Frieze, 2008). One concern is that it purports to measure “violence.” As Table 3 indicated, the behaviors included on the scale are examples of physical violence, but many are quite minor forms of physical aggression. There is very little severe violence reported in any of the three countries. The label of couple “violence” may be misleading if one does not understand what types of behaviors are being combined to provide a “violence” score.

Our data come from college students. Such samples may provide quite different data than would be obtained from community or clinical samples (Krahé et al., 2005). Further data are needed to see how generalizable these data are with larger and more representative samples within each country.

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