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An Examination of the Coercion in Intimate Partner Relationships Scale: Validation of the Original Measure and Conceptualization of a Short Form

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Researchers studying intimate partner violence have highlighted a need for a standardized way of conceptualizing and measuring coercive control. In order to address this, the purpose of the current study was to validate and adapt the theory-driven Coercion in Intimate Partner Relationships (CIPR; Dutton, Goodman, Terrell, Schmidt, & Fujimoto, 2007) scale as well as conceptualize a short form of the instrument. A sample of 76 undergraduate students from the University of Windsor and 549 adults recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk completed measures of coercive control, physical and psychological intimate partner violence, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder. Confirmatory factor analyses, multiple regressions, and correlational analyses were conducted on two random samples to examine the psychometric properties of the CIPR. Support was found for the construct, concurrent, convergent, predictive, and discriminant validity of the CIPR. Support was also found for the reliability (i.e., internal consistency and test-retest) of the tool. A short form of the instrument is also proposed, as are recommendations for additional adjustments that would further improve the short form. It is argued that if these tools are widely accepted and used by researchers, the field will be a step closer to standardization in the conceptualization and measurement of coercive control, which should translate into a better understanding of coercion and its correlates. Outside of research, the validated tools could also be used in legal settings to help persons of authority better understand the context surrounding abusive relationships (e.g., by police responding to domestic violence calls). Additionally, the information gained regarding the relation between coercion and PTSD could potentially inform mental health services (e.g., treatment options for survivors of IPV).