

An Examination of the Attitudes Underlying Sexual Coercion Among Acquaintances

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Abstract:

Analyses of rape-supportive attitudes, with few exceptions, have not included conceptual or operational definitions of attitudes, and analysts have not explicitly examined the affective, cognitive, and behavioral components of attitudes toward rape. The purposes of the present article are to (a) use a social psychological framework for the analysis of attitudes toward rape and (b) examine the usefulness of distinguishing between the affective and cognitive components of attitudes toward rape. Three studies are presented. In Study 1, items from 14 published attitudes-toward-rape scales were categorized as affective, cognitive, or behavioral. Results revealed that 1.1% of the items were identified as behavioral; 52.2% of the items were categorized as cognitive and 46.7% as affective. Secondary analyses of published data revealed the respondents reported more disagreement with affectively-based rape attitude items than cognitively-based rape attitude items. In Study 2, we further examined the distinction between affective and cognitive components of attitudes using Burt's (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Data collected from college men confirmed the affective-cognitive distinction. Furthermore, affectively-based attitudes, but not cognitively-based attitudes, were correlated with level of self-reported sexual coercion. In Study 3, we compared affective and cognitive components using a factor-analytically derived attitude measure. These analyses replicated the findings from Study 2. Together, these results support the importance of attending to the separate components of attitudes. In particular, the affective component of attitudes toward rape may have more predictive utility than the cognitive component.

Article:

The relationship between rape-supportive attitudes and sexually coercive behavior is central to our understanding of sexual coercion. Based on this conceptual relationship, it frequently is assumed that rape-supportive attitudes may influence a man's perceptions and facilitate sexually coercive behavior (Burt, 1980, 1991; Shotland, 1989, 1992). Researchers consistently have identified statistically significant relationships between the endorsement of rape-supportive attitudes and self-reported sexually coercive behavior. Self-reported sexually coercive men are more accepting of traditional sex roles, interpersonal violence, adversarial relationships, and rape myths (Adler, 1985; Koss & Leonard, 1984; Koss, Leonard, Beezley, & Oros, 1985). The link between attitudes and coercive behavior is supported further by the observed correlation between attitudes toward rape and self-reported likelihood of raping a woman (Malamuth, 1981, 1983), self-reported level of sexually coercive behavior (Koss et al., 1985; Koss & Dinero, 1988), and physical aggression against women in a laboratory setting (Malamuth, /981, 1983).

The attitudes-toward-rape literature, however, suffers from inadequacies in the psychometric properties of the measures used in the field (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Lonsway and Fitzgerald concluded that many measures used to study rape-supportive attitudes lack content validity because of inexplicit definitions of key concepts (e.g., consent, force). Few studies to establish criterion-related validity have been conducted. Additionally, the wording of many attitude items may include either more than one concept or words and phrases that may have different meanings for different people. These difficulties may account for the numerous inconsistencies in findings relating attitudes toward rape and factors such as educational/occupational level, ethnicity, age, knowledge/awareness of rape, and knowing a rape victim. Lonsway and Fitzgerald's critique

indicates further work is needed to address the conceptual and psychometric inadequacies of the measures used to study rape-supportive attitudes.

In this article, we argue that previous researchers have not applied a theoretical understanding of the attitude construct to rape attitudes. In this article, the substantial attitudes-toward-rape literature is examined in the context of psychological theories and research on attitudes. Particular attention is given to the affective and cognitive components of attitude items found in the attitudes-toward-rape literature. The usefulness of distinguishing these components in the prediction of self-reported sexually coercive behavior in college men is also explored.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES OF ATTITUDES

Historically, social psychologists have conceptualized an attitude as a tricomponent evaluation consisting of affective, cognitive, and behavioral intention components (e.g., Allport, 1935; Kramer, 1949; Thurstone, 1928). Each component is measured on an evaluative continuum from extremely negative to extremely positive. The cognitive dimension includes thoughts and beliefs about the attitude object. The affective dimension includes feelings or emotions in relation to the attitude object. The behavioral component encompasses intentions or overt behavior toward the attitude object.

Although these components (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) may be interdependent, they also have a large degree of independence (Zajonc, 1980, 1984). Therefore, behaviors associated with some attitudes may *be* consistent across response classes, whereas others are less consistent (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). A person may hold strong beliefs in regard to an attitude object, but have feelings that may contradict that belief. For example, a person may believe that women have rape fantasies but feel that sexually coercive behavior is morally reprehensible.

AFFECT-BASED AND COGNITION-BASED ATTITUDES

The distinction between affective and cognitive components has been central to the historical discussion of attitudes (Insko & Schopler, 1967; Krech & Crutchfield, 1948; Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960). Empirical evidence also supports the distinction between these components (Abelson, Kinder, Peters, & Fiske, 1982; Breckler & Wiggins, 1989; Crites, Fabrigar, & Petty, 1994; Edwards, 1990, 1992; Millar & Millar, 1990; Millar & Tesser, 1986). Some attitudes are more affectively-based, whereas others are more cognitively-based. For example, Abelson and his colleagues (1982) found that affects associated with presidential candidates were more strongly related to the person's attitudes than judgments about the candidates' traits. Moreover, Abelson et al. (1982) suggested that behavioral prediction might be better when using affective reports because they more strongly reflect behavioral motivation. Affect also may be a more direct reflection of experience than cognition, which may be filtered and altered to maintain consistency among attitude components. Additionally, Zanna and Rempel (1988) suggested that attitudes based primarily on affect may lead to greater selective perceptions and attributions about other peoples' behaviors.

Two views have been proposed to explain the greater predictive ability of one component over the other. It may be that the relation between affective and cognitive attitudinal components and behavior are simply a matter of one component (affective) being better at predicting behavior than another (cognitive). However, Millar and Tesser (1986) have suggested that the relation between attitudes and behavior is more complex. The strength of the attitude-behavior relation is determined by the source on which the attitude is based (i.e., affective or cognitive) and the function of the behavior being measured. Instrumental behavior is cognitively driven. For example, a person who works a puzzle in order to develop analytic abilities is interested in the puzzle's characteristics that facilitate skill-building, not how the puzzle makes the person feel. In contrast, consummatory behavior is affectively driven. For example, a person who works a puzzle simply for fun is interested in the pleasure that the puzzle provides rather than its skill-enhancing characteristics. Therefore, to predict behavior, one must know the type of behavior being predicted and the type of attitudinal component being measured or manipulated.

The distinction between affect-based and cognition-based attitudes has been verified empirically. Researchers have demonstrated that these components are partially independent and their ability to predict behavior depends in part on the basis of attitude formation, how deeply held the attitude is, which component is currently salient, and whether the behavior is instrumental or consummatory.

APPLICATIONS TO THE ATTITUDES-TOWARD-RAPE LITERATURE

Analysts of rape-supportive attitudes, with few exceptions, have not addressed conceptual or operational definitions of attitudes and have not attempted to examine explicitly the affective, cognitive, and behavioral components of attitudes toward rape. However, the literature on attitudes suggests that attention to these components could enable us to better predict sexually coercive behavior and to develop more effective attitude change strategies. Given the hedonistic and dominance motives for engaging in sexual behavior reported by sexually coercive men (Donat, 1990; Malamuth, 1986; White & Farmer, 1988) and the potentially consummatory nature of hostile sexual activity, one might expect that affective attitude statements would be correlated more strongly with self-reported sexual behavior than would cognitive attitude statements.

Thus, in this article we first examine the cognitive, affective, and behavioral intention components of several measures used with college populations to study attitudes toward rape. Second, we examine the usefulness of distinguishing between the affective and cognitive components of attitudes toward rape by looking at their ability to predict sexually coercive behavior. To accomplish these goals, analyses are presented from three studies. In Study 1, all published attitudes-toward-rape scales were identified and examined for behavioral items; remaining items were categorized as affective or cognitive. Then, secondary data analyses on previously published data tested the hypothesis that affective and cognitive components would be endorsed differentially. In Study 2, this hypothesis was tested further. Data from a sample of college men permitted the examination of correlations between the affective and cognitive components as a further test of their partial independence. In Study 2, we also examined the hypothesis that the affective component would better predict sexually coercive behavior in men than would the cognitive component. In Study 3, this hypothesis was further tested using a factor analytically-derived measure of attitudes toward rape (derived from one sample of college students and tested in a new sample).

STUDY 1

Method

Materials. A review of the literature initially identified 20 attitudes-toward-rape scales. This list was narrowed to 14 scales for further examination.¹ For all but two scales (Gilmartin-Zena, 1987; Sandberg, Jackson, & Petretic-Jackson, 1987), some psychometric information was provided. A summary of each scale along with psychometric information is provided in Table 1.

Procedure. The initial examination of the items revealed only two be-

TABLE 1. Scales to measure attitudes toward rape.

Scales	Source	Description ^a (A = affective; B = behavioral intention; C = cognitive)	Psychometric properties
<u>Scales Measuring General Attitude</u>			
Acceptance of Rape Myths Scale	Gilmanin-Zena (1987)	29 items (21 A; 0 B; 8 C)	No psychometric data reported
Attitudes-Toward-Rape	Feild (1978)	32 items (12 A; 0 B; 20 C)	8 factors; Cronbach's alphas ranging from .81 to .89
Attitudes-Toward-Rape Victims Scale	Ward (1988)	25 items (8 A; 17 C)	1 factor; Cronbach's alpha of .83; evidence for validity reported
Belief in Rape Myths	Weidner & Griffitt (1983)	2 items (2 A; 0 B; 0 C)	No psychometric data reported for these items added to the larger Sexual Opinion Survey, which has split-half reliability of .84 and evidence of construct validity.
Beliefs About Rape	Costin (1985)	20 items (8 A; 0 B; 10 C)	3 factors; Cronbach's alphas ranging from .49 to .70
General Attitudes Toward Rape	Larsen & Long (1988)	22 items (9 A; 13 C)	3 factors; Cronbach's alpha of .81
Likelihood to Force Sex and Likelihood to Rape Scales	Malamuth (1981); Malamuth (1989a,b)	2 items (0 A; 2 B; 0 C)	The 6-item Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale from which these items were taken has 1 factor; Cronbach's alphas ranging from .84 to .91 across administrations; and evidence for construct and discriminant validity reported.
Rape Belief Scale	Bunting & Reeves (1983)	15 items (12 A; 0 B; 3 C)	1 factor; no reliability reported; evidence for validity reported.
Rape Myth Acceptance Scale	Burt (1980)	19 items (7 A; 0 B; 4 C) ^b	1 factor; Cronbach's alpha of .875; construct validity reported by Ashton, 1982
<u>Scales Specific to Dating</u>			
Date Rape Subscale	Dull & Giacobassi (1987)	15 items (3 A; 0 B; 12 C)	1 factor; no reliability reported
Dating Attitude Questionnaire	Sandberg et al. (1987)	13 items (4 A; 0 B; 9 C)	No psychometric data reported
Endorsement of Force Scale	Rapaport & Burkhart (1984)	20 brief descriptions of dating situations (N/A)	1 dimension; Cronbach's alpha of .90
Forcible Date Rape Scale	Goodchilds et al. (1988)	9 circumstances (N/A)	1 factor, verified by Fischer, 1986; no reliability reported
<p>^a Most scales use a Likert response format. Malamuth et al. (1980, 1981, 1983, 1989a,b) use a 5-point "not at all likely to vary likely" scale for his Likelihood items. Goodchilds et al. (1988) use a 5-point "acceptability of force" scale. Sandberg et al. (1987) use a 6-point "never to frequently" scale. Rapaport and Burkhart (1984) use a 7-point "endorsement of use of force on the part of the man to obtain sexual acts" scale.</p> <p>^b The last 8 items were not categorized; 2 ask respondents to estimate percentages and 6 ask for ratings of believability of rape reports by best friend, Indian woman, neighborhood woman, young boy, White woman, Black woman</p>			

havioral items, the Likelihood to Force Sex and Likelihood to Rape measures by Malamuth and colleagues. Thus, five independent judges, all doctoral students in social or clinical psychology, were asked to categorize all remaining items as affective or cognitive. The judges were provided with operational definitions of affective and cognitive statements along with copies of items from each scale. A cognition was defined as a statement

that could be verified, i.e., one that provided information or fact about the attitude object (though the statement did not actually have to be true, such as "the world is flat"), or a statement of belief, with judgment missing (e.g., "there is a god"). Examples of cognitive items from the attitudes-toward-rape scales included "In forcible rape the victim never causes the crime" (Costin, 1985), and "For some females, physical aggressiveness by the male is a necessary prelude to the acceptance of love and affection" (Dull & Giacopassi, 1987). Affective statements were defined as opinions that provided a value judgment, a conclusion about someone's character (i.e., good-bad, worthy-unworthy, right-wrong), or injunctions (i.e., statements indicating how things ought to be). Examples include "Women who get raped while hitchhiking get what they deserve" (Burt, 1980), and "A raped woman is a less desirable woman" (Feild, 1978).

Results. Interrater reliability was high among the independent raters. At least four judges agreed on 78.32% of the 180 items categorized.² Three out of five judges agreed on the remaining items. Overall, 1.1% of the items were identified as behavioral, 52.2% of the items were categorized as cognitive, and the remainder as affective.³ The number of cognitive, affective, and behavioral intention items on each scale is listed in Table 1.

In addition, sufficient data (means and standard deviations) were provided for individual items in the articles by Feild (1978), Dull and Giacopassi (1987), and Ward (1988) to compute means and average standard deviations for the affective and cognitive components of their full scales, as well as for each factor of Feild's and Dull and Giacopassi's scales. Ward reported data separately for women and men in two samples, one from Singapore and one from the United States. Using data from these scales and assuming equal sample sizes, we conducted two-tailed t-tests comparing the mean level of endorsement of the affective and cognitive items.⁴ Results revealed that people reported more disagreement with affectively-based rape attitude items than cognitively-based rape attitude items ($p < .001$). Mean ratings for the affective and cognitive components are presented in Table 2. To determine whether there is a general tendency to respond more extremely to affective items than to cognitive items, we also analyzed items from the nonrape attitude scale developed by Dull and Giacopassi (the Sex and Dating Scale [SDS]). For this scale, in contrast to

TABLE 2. Mean level of disagreement with affective and cognitive components of selected attitude toward rape scales.

Citation	Sample Size	Mean level of disagreement ¹		<i>t</i> ³
		Affective	Cognitive	
		Mean (deviation score ²)	Mean (deviation score ²)	
Study 1				
Feild (1978)				
Total	1448	4.24 (+0.74)	3.90 (+0.40)	7.26
Factor I		4.66 (+1.16)	4.11 (+0.61)	11.96
Factor III		3.98 (+0.48)	3.89 (+0.39)	1.38
Factor IV		4.22 (+0.72)	3.55 (+0.05)	11.96
Dull & Giacopassi (1987)				
Total	449	2.53 (+0.53)	2.21 (+0.21)	4.21
SDS		1.75 (-0.25)	2.11 (+0.11)	4.83
RS		2.79 (+0.74)	2.35 (+0.35)	5.62
Ward (1988)				
Singapore	411	1.70 (+0.30)	1.17 (+0.83)	5.12
Women	212	1.02 (+0.98)	1.31 (+0.69)	3.47
Men	199	1.35 (+0.65)	1.83 (+0.17)	3.08
U.S.A.	572	.46 (+2.54)	.78 (+2.22)	4.32
Women	359	.42 (+1.58)	.97 (+1.03)	6.53
Men	211	.92 (+1.08)	1.47 (+0.53)	6.52
Study 2				
Burt's RMAS	280	5.60 (+1.60)	4.87 (+0.87)	17.30
Burt's ASB	299	4.42 (+0.42)	4.73 (+0.73)	-5.70
Burt's AIV	298	4.86 (+0.86)	5.35 (+1.35)	-5.80
Study 3				
Rape Factor	278	4.11 (+1.11)	3.82 (+0.82)	7.42

SDS = Sex & Dating Scale; RS = Rape Scale; RMAS = Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; ASB = Adversarial Sex Beliefs; AIV = Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence

¹ Means reported are based on Likert ratings from agree to disagree: Feild, scored 1-6; Dull & Giacopassi, 0-4; Burt, 1-7; White et al., 1-5. Ward's scale is scored 0-4, disagree to agree.

² Reporting of deviation scores was necessary because of differences in midpoints across attitude scales. The deviation score is calculated by subtracting each scale's midpoint from the mean reported. Positive deviation scores reflect disagreement with the attitude item.

³ All *t* values are significant at $p < .02$. Positive *t* values indicate greater disagreement with affective than cognitive items.

the attitudes-toward-rape scale, cognitive items were disagreed with more strongly than affective items.

Discussion

In general, attitudes-toward-rape scales currently used in research ignore the behavioral intention component of attitudes. Items from Malamuth's (Malamuth, 1981) Likelihood to Force Sex and Likelihood to Rape scales, and his multi-item Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale (Malamuth, 1989a, b), were the only items that assessed behavioral intentions. These items, however, are not acknowledged in the literature as attitudinal scales. Rather, they often are used as outcome rather than predictor variables.

Moreover, all the scales we examined mixed affectively- and cognitively-based attitude items. Some were loaded with more cognitive than affective items (Costin, 1985; Dull & Giacopassi, 1987; Feild, 1978; Larsen & Long, 1988; Sandberg et al., 1987; Ward, 1988), whereas others were more affectively laden (Bunting & Reeves, 1983; Burt, 1980; Gilmartin-Zena, 1987; Weidner & Griffitt, 1983). However, level of endorsement of affective and cognitive items differed significantly for the scales for which data were available. Whereas people may accept certain myths and stereotypes about rape, they certainly do not *feel* positively about rape. Additionally, most means are below the center of the rating scales, indicating that differences are in degree of *disagreement* rather than *agreement*. In sum, when ratings of cognitive and affective items are averaged, the differences in *feelings* about rape may be obscured.

Although level of endorsement of affective and cognitive items differed significantly, the differences were small and may reflect the psychometric inadequacy of the scales rather than real differences, as identified by Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994). Thus, further research is necessary to assess whether affective and cognitive statements about rape necessarily differ in their potency. That is, are affective items more likely to elicit greater disagreement because of people's negative feelings about rape, or do extant scales inadvertently contain affective items with greater potency, hence eliciting a more extreme reaction, than cognitive items? Consideration of our analyses of Dull and Giacopassi's SDS indicates that affective items do not always elicit more extreme responses. This possibility has implications for procedures used to develop new attitudes-toward-rape scales. Researchers would be well-advised to include an equal number of equally valence affective, cognitive, and behavioral intention items when developing new scales (see Crites et al., 1994, for a discussion of measuring affective and cognitive properties of attitudes).

STUDY 2

Although we found statistically significant differences in college students' ratings of cognitive and affective attitudes about rape, it is unclear whether this distinction has practical significance. The distinction between affective and cognitive components of attitudes will be most helpful if it increases the predictive validity of the attitude scales. Though past research indicates that men who report engaging in sexually coercive behavior endorse rape-supportive attitudes more so than others, the strength of the relationships has been weak. These results may be due to the fact that combining affective and cognitive components obscured the relationship between each component and sexually coercive behavior. Thus, in Study 2 we assessed the relative independence of the affective and cognitive components and their predictive power. Also, we tested the hypothesis that affective items will elicit greater disagreement than would cognitive items, using Burt's (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Burt's scale was chosen because it is the most widely used attitudes-toward-rape scale. Additionally, we further explored the possibility that affective items, in general, elicit more extreme responses than cognitive items by examining the difference between the affective and cognitive components of two additional scales, Burt's Adversarial Sex Beliefs and Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence.

Method

Participants. Three hundred two undergraduate male college students from a large state university participated in the study in return for credit in an introductory psychology course (referred to as Phase One). As part of a second, unrelated study (referred to as Phase Two), a random sample of 166 men were invited back to complete an additional set of surveys (see White & Farmer, 1988).

Materials. In Phase One, participants completed a self-report questionnaire that consisted of Burt's (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAS) described in Study 1, Burt's Adversarial Sex Beliefs (ASB), Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence (MV), and the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) developed by Koss and Oros (1982). The *men* who participated in the second phase also completed Malamuth's (1981) Likelihood to Use **Force** and Rape (LF & LR) measures.

The RMAS is internally consistent (Cronbach's $\alpha = .875$) and is reported to have construct validity (Ashton, 1982). The ASB consists of nine items, with a reliability of .802; the AIV consists of six items with a reliability of .586. All items were categorized as affective or cognitive by the judges used in Study 1.

The SES is a 10-item behavioral survey that categorizes men along a continuum of sexual coercion. Men were asked the frequency with which they had engaged in each behavior listed since the age of 14. Only items subsequently identified by Koss, Gidycz, and Wisniewski (1987) were used to categorize men into five mutually exclusive sexual coercion categories based on the most severe form of sexual coercion reported. These categories were no sexual coercion, unwanted contact, verbal coercion, attempted rape, and rape. Significant correlations have been found between self-report on the SES and men's stated level of coercion in an interview two weeks later ($r = .61, p < .001$), lending support for the construct validity of this measure (Koss & Gidycz, 1985). Koss and Gidycz (1985) also reported test-retest reliability of .93 and an internal consistency reliability of .89 using a Cronbach alpha.

Procedure. In both Phase One and Phase Two, participants responded to the questionnaires in large mixed-sex groups. Students completed a large number of unrelated scales during the administration of these measures. Responses were recorded on a computerized answer sheet.

Results

Mean differences. There was a significant difference in mean level of disagreement with the affective and cognitive components of the RMAS, as well as for the ASB and MV (see Table 2). Students disagreed significantly more with the affective component of the RMAS than with the cognitive component, while disagreeing more with the cognitive components of the ASB and the AIV.

Self-reported sexually coercive behavior. Categorization of respondents, using the SES, indicated that 19.4% reported no experiences with sexual intercourse since the age of 14, whereas 47.6% reported consensual sexual experiences, but no sexually coercive experiences. The remaining 33% reported engaging in some form of sexual coercion since the age of 14: 4.8% used force to engage in unwanted sexual contact (kissing, petting, fondling, but not intercourse); 25.2% admitted to using verbal coercion to obtain intercourse with a woman when she did not want to; and 3.1% admitted to behaviors that meet the legal definition of rape or attempted rape.

Analyses of variance revealed that affectively-based attitudes, $F(4, 272) = 4.23, p = .002$, but not cognitively-based attitudes, $F(4, 272) = 1.58, p = .18$, were significantly related to level of self-reported sexual coercion. Means comparisons, using a Tukey HSD test ($\alpha = .05$), revealed that men who had engaged in rape or attempted rape were more accepting of the affective items than any other group of men, who did not differ from one another.

Consistent with Malamuth (1986), the frequency of each sexually coercive behavior reported on the SES was summed to produce a total sexual coercion score. To verify that this continuous measure reflects accurately the categorical assignment of respondents to an SES-assessed sexual coercion category, an analysis of variance using sexual coercion as a categorical variable and frequency of sexually coercive acts as the dependent variable was performed. Results revealed a significant relationship, $F(4, 289) = 299.33, p < .001$. Men in the unwanted coercion reported the fewest sexually coercive acts ($M = 1.2$), with men in the verbally coercive category reporting slightly more ($M = 1.64$), and men in the rape and attempted rape categories reporting considerably more ($M = 3.56$). Frequency of sexual coercion was correlated with the mean affective and cognitive RMAS scores. A significant correlation for the affective component, $r = .22, p < .01$, but not the cognitive component, $r = .11$, was found.

Correlation between components and self-reported coercion. The Pearson product moment correlation between the affective and cognitive components of the RMAS was significant, $r = .565, p < .01$. Its moderate size (accounting for 16% of the variance) suggests that the affective and cognitive items tap separate components of rape attitudes.

Because of the significant correlation between the affective and cognitive component of the RMAS, two analyses of covariance were performed on self-reported sexually coercive behavior to ascertain if one component accounted for a significant portion of the variance in sexual coercion after controlling for the other component. Results revealed that after adjustment for cognitive attitude items, self-reported sexual coercion varied significantly with affective attitude item endorsement, $F(4, 285) = 4.88, p = .001$. In contrast, after adjustment for affective attitude items, self-reported sexual coercion did not vary significantly with cognitive attitude item endorsement, $F(4, 285) = .89, p = .471$.

Relationship to behavioral intentions. Correlations between ratings on Malamuth's Likelihood to Use Force and Likelihood to Rape questions and with the affective and cognitive components of the RMAS indicated (a) the correlation between the likelihood to use force and the likelihood to rape was significant, $r = .504, p < .01$, with the likelihood of forcing a woman into sex ($M = 6.26$, range 2-7) being greater than the likelihood of raping ($M = 6.79$, range 4-7, on 1-7 scale where 1 = very likely to 7 = not at all likely); (b) the correlations between these two likelihood measures and the affective and cognitive components were significant and of comparable magnitudes (r s ranged from .32 to .43).

Discussion

These results suggest that, for the RMAS, the affective and cognitive components are distinct and, consistent with the analyses of other attitude toward rape scales, disagreement was greater for affective than cognitive items. Finding that this pattern did not hold up for the ASB and AIV scales suggests that the results were not due to a general tendency for affective items to elicit more extreme responses than cognitive items. Rather, the differences may result from one or more psychological processes, including the basis on which the attitude was formed initially, the salience of the attitudinal components at the time of testing, or the function sexually coercive behavior serves. Clearly, future research is needed to explore the foundations of this difference.

Although both components were correlated with behavioral intention measures, only the affective component discriminated among groups of self-reported sexually coercive and sexually noncoercive men. Men who reported engaging in sexually coercive behavior were more likely to endorse rape-supportive attitudes, particularly the affectively-based items. We suggest that sexually coercive men's feelings about rape, rather than their beliefs, tend to distinguish them from sexually noncoercive men. They hold more negative opinions than do sexually noncoercive men about women who are sexually victimized, although sexually noncoercive men do not appear to differ from the sexually coercive men regarding beliefs about rape.

STUDY 3

The purpose of Study 3 was to confirm conceptually the results of Study 2 by using an independent sample of participants and a different measure of attitudes toward rape. This measure was derived by performing a principle components factor analysis on the RMAS, ASB, and AIV items from Study 2, as part of a larger study testing models of sexual coercion (White & Farmer, 1988).

Method

Participants. Two hundred seventy-eight men enrolled in introductory sociology classes over a two-semester period participated in a voluntary survey administered in large mixed-sex couples.

Materials. Participants filled out a survey containing items selected on the basis of a factor analysis of the responses to the RMAS, ASB, and AIV provided in Study 2, along with a number of unrelated measures. Of interest in the present study was the attitudes-toward-rape factor. There were the nine items; six were cognitive items and three were affective items. The cognitive items had an internal consistency of .624; the affective items had an internal consistency of .683. Participants also completed the Koss and Oros (1982) SES.

Results

Mean differences and relationship to self-reported coercion. Consistent with analyses from the first two studies, the affective items elicited greater disagreement than the cognitive items (see Table 2). Additionally,

analyses of variance and Tukey's HSD test for means comparisons revealed a significant difference for mean affective scores, $F(3, 267) = 10.69, p < .001$, as well as for mean cognitive scores, $F(3, 267) = 7.93, p < .001$, as a function of category of sexual coercion, with men who raped or attempted rape (8% of the sample) endorsing the affective and cognitive items more than nonsexually coercive men (68% of the sample) or men who reported other forms of sexual coercion (13.1% admitted to unwanted contact; 10.9% to verbal coercion).

The correlations between number of sexually coercive behaviors reported (as described in Study 2) and the affective and cognitive components of the factor-analytically derived attitude measure were significant, respective $r_s = .225, .206, p < .01$. Finally, although the correlation between the affective and cognitive components was significant, $r = .2581, p < .01$, analyses of covariance confirmed that the affective component accounted for unique variance. After adjustment for cognitive attitude items, self-reported sexual coercion varied significantly with affective attitude item endorsement, $F(3, 266) = 4.15, p = .007$, whereas self-reported sexual coercion did not vary significantly with cognitive attitude item endorsement, $F(3, 266) = 1.58, p = .194$, after adjustment for the affective items.

Discussion

Results of Study 3 confirmed the hypothesis that the affective component of rape attitudes elicited more disagreement than the cognitive component in an independent sample of college men. Unlike Study 2, these data showed that sexually coercive men differed from sexually noncoercive men on both the affective and cognitive components. However, the analyses of covariance from both studies yielded consistent results, supporting the claim that the components are partially independent. We found that, after controlling for shared variance, the affective component was significantly related to level of sexual coercion, but the cognitive component was not.

Confirmation of Study 2 results is not surprising, in part, because Study 3 defined attitudes toward rape using a factor-analytically determined subset of Burt's items. Thus, to examine the generalizability of these results and to address some conceptual and psychometric problems associated with attitudes-toward-rape measures, future researchers should develop a new rape attitude scale, following standard test construction procedures. The hypotheses considered in the present series of studies should be verified with this new instrument.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

There is overwhelming support for the dynamic interplay between affect and cognition in the precipitation of behavior (Zajonc, 1980). The concept of *attitude* provides a highly useful integration of the influence of affect and cognition on behavior. However, the fact that affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses toward an attitude object are not always highly correlated must be noted. Moreover, a scale's predictive value may be affected by the components an attitudinal instrument actually measures. Thus, the distinctions among affective, cognitive, and behavioral components of an attitude have both theoretical and practical significance.

Our review of the attitudes-toward-rape literature reveals little attention to the definition of attitude and virtually no attention to the affective, cognitive, and behavioral distinctions discussed previously. Furthermore, our analyses indicate that many attitudes-toward-rape scales tend to be loaded with cognitive items; however, affective items tend to better predict sexually coercive behavior than do cognitive items.

Intervention strategies should be based on counterattitudinal advocacy research, which suggests that people think and behave to maintain consistency between attitudes and behavior (Cook & Flay, 1978). In particular, based on Olson and Zanna's (1993) review, intervention strategies must consider whether attitudes are newly-formed or well-entrenched, and whether they are primarily affectively- or cognitively-based. For newly formed, affectively-based attitudes, attitude change should be greater when the persuasive communication is affective rather than cognitive (Edwards, 1990). In contrast, for established attitudes, "mismatch" approaches may be more effective (i.e., using a cognitive appeal with an affectively-based attitude or vice-versa) (Millar & Millar, 1990).

For example, if rape-supportive attitudes are affectively-based and relatively newly-formed, as for adolescents, for instance, it may be best to focus on affective persuasive messages followed by new "affective" experiences, such as role-play. However, this type of intervention may strengthen rape-supportive attitudes in individuals with well-established attitudes. The affect associated with a well-established attitude may be resistant to change (Zajonc, 1980). Challenging one's deeply held feelings may actually strengthen, rather than weaken, them. This may be why some sexual coercion awareness programs backfire (Donnerstein, 1992; Fischer, 1986a). In these cases, intervention strategies need to avoid arousing defensive reactions, perhaps focusing on rationally persuasive messages, with no appeal to feelings. These interventions could provide educational information on women's sexuality, consequences of sexual coercion, social skills training, and other rational arguments against rape (see Linz, Wilson, & Donnerstein, 1992, for a more extensive discussion of intervention strategies).

Our findings suggest that it is crucial for theorists and researchers to attend to the structural characteristics of attitudes when attempting to predict behavior and induce attitude change. Future researchers using attitudinal measures should (a) explicitly address the definition of attitude; (b) be guided by attitude-behavior theories; (c) systematically assess affective, cognitive, and behavioral components toward the attitude object; and (d) consider the implications of the distinction among these components for the prediction of sexual coercion and the success of prevention strategies.

NOTES

1. Several scales found in the literature (e.g., Ellis, O'Sullivan, & Sowards, 1992; Fonow, Richardson, & Wemmerus, 1992; Jenkins & Dambrot, 1987; Mayer-son & Taylor, 1987; Spanos, Dubreuil, & Gwynnm, 1991-1992; Thornton, Robbins, & Johnson, 1981) were not included in this review because the scales were composed of items from other scales, primarily Burt (1980), Feild (1978), and Costin (1985), which are included in the present analyses. Additionally, items used by Fischer (1986a, b) were not included because the items, created by Allgeier and Hyde (1979), were not devised for research use (Allgeier, personal communication, September, 1994). Finally, scales assessing attribution of blame for rape were not included (such as Resick & Jackson, 1981).
2. Items from Goodchilds, Zellman, Johnson, and Giarrusso (1988) and Rapaport and Burkhart (1984) could not be classified because they presented vignettes to which respondents were to judge whether forced sex was acceptable.
3. If you need a copy of the categorization of individual items, contact the first author.
4. Only three of Feild's eight subscales could be analyzed in this manner. Three subscales consisted of only cognitive items and two of only affective items.

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