Is there Consistency between Self-Esteem, Identification, and Evaluation of Aggression?

Kevin L. Nunes, Chantal A. Hermann, and Mandie E. Woods

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Consistency between Self-Esteem, Identification as Violent, and Attitude to Violence

Consistent			Inconsistent		
Self	Identification	Violence	Self	Identification	Violence
+	Violent	+	+	Violent	-
+	Nonviolent	-	+	Nonviolent	+
-	Violent	-	-	Violent	+
-	Nonviolent	+	-	Nonviolent	-

2

Research Questions

1. Is there consistency between self-esteem, identification, and attitude towards violence?

2. Is the interaction of these constructs associated with violent behaviour?

3

Measures

- Attitude towards violence
  - e.g., violence is very negative (1) vs. very positive (7)
- Self-esteem
  - e.g., I am very negative (1) vs. very positive (7)
- Identification as violent
  - e.g., I am very peaceful (1) vs. very violent (7)
- Violent Behaviour Scale (VBS)
  - e.g., How many times have you started a physical fight with someone? Never (0) vs. 9 times or more (9)

4

Research Question #1

- Is there consistency between self-esteem, identification, and attitude towards violence?

5

Participants

- 327 undergraduate students above median (2+) on self-reported past violent behaviour (VBS)
- 31% men, 67% women, and 2% did not report gender
- Median age 18-19 years old

6

Descriptives and Intercorrelations (*N* = 327)

	1	2	*M*	*SD*
1. Attitude to violence			1.93	0.85
2. Self-esteem	-.13*		5.62	0.73
3. ID as violent	.36*	-.45*	2.96	1.13

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* *p* < .05

7

Predicting Identification of Self as Violent from Attitude towards Violence and Self-Esteem

Predictor	Partial *r*
Attitude to violence*	.34
Self-esteem*	-.45
Attitude X Self-esteem*	.12

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* *p* < .05

8

Predicting Self-Esteem from Attitude towards Violence and Identification of Self as Violent

Predictor	Partial *r*
Attitude to violence	.00
Identification as violent*	-.46
Attitude X Identification*	.16

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* *p* < .05

9

Predicting Attitude towards Violence from Self-Esteem and Identification of Self as Violent

Predictor	Partial *r*
Self-esteem	.00
Identification as violent*	.35
Self-esteem X Identification*	.15

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* *p* < .05

10

Attitude to Violence as a Function of Identification (ID) and Self-Esteem (SE)

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11
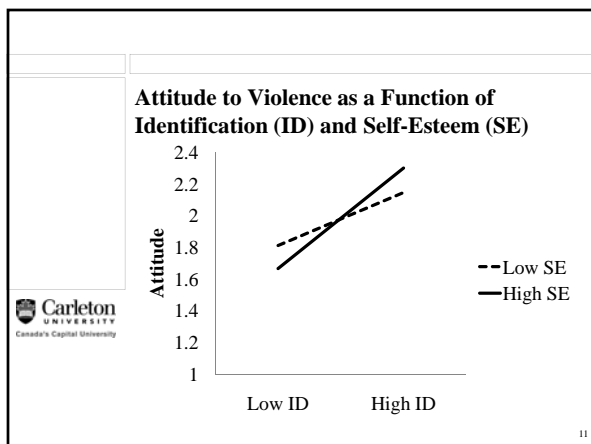
Results

- 2-way interactions suggest some consistency between self-esteem, identification, and attitude towards violence
- The relationship between ID and attitude was stronger for participants with higher self-esteem than those with lower self-esteem

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12

Research Question #2

- Is the interaction of self-esteem, identification, and attitude towards violence associated with violent behaviour?

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13

Participants

- 654 undergraduate students (including those with or without past violent behaviour)
- 24.3% men, 73.9% women, and 1.8% did not report gender
- Median age 18-19 years old

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14

Descriptives and Intercorrelations ($N = 654$)

	1	2	3	M	SD
1. Attitude to violence				1.69	0.80
2. Self-esteem	-.29*			5.77	0.74
3. ID as violent	.46*	-.51*		2.54	1.10
4. VBS	.37*	-.18*	.45*	4.95	6.50

* $p < .05$

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15

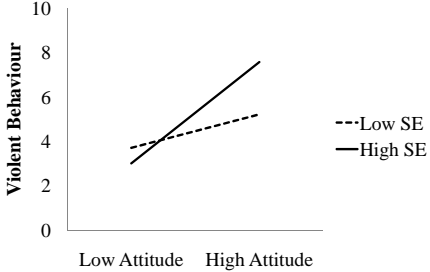### Predicting Violent Behaviour from Attitude, Self-Esteem, and Identification

Predictor	Partial r
Attitude*	.21
Self-esteem	.06
Identification*	.30
Attitude X Self-esteem*	.10
Attitude X Identification	.04
Self-esteem X Identification	-.07
Attitude X Self-esteem X Identification	.01

* $p < .05$

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16

Violent Behaviour as a Function of Attitude to Violence and Self-Esteem (SE)

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17

Results

- Contrary to expectations, 3-way interaction of self-esteem, identification, and attitude towards violence was not significantly associated with violent behaviour

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18

- However, 2-way interaction of self-esteem and attitude was significant
- The relationship between attitude and behaviour was stronger for participants with higher self-esteem than those with lower self-esteem

19

Limitations

- Self-report
- Student sample
- Polarization towards negative attitude to violence, high self-esteem, and non-identification as violent
- Small effects

20

Conclusion

- In spite of limitations, these findings suggest that considering self-esteem, identification as violent, and attitude towards violence in combination may advance our understanding of aggression

21

Combinations Consonant with Violent Behaviour?

Self-esteem	Identification	Attitude to violence
+	Violent	+
+	Nonviolent	-
-	Violent	-
-	Nonviolent	+

22

kevin_nunes@carleton.ca

Presentation slides available at

http://carleton.ca/acbrlab

23