ASSESSING IMPLICIT EVALUATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD VIOLENCE IN MEN CONVICTED OF VIOLENT OFFENCES

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1

EVALUATIVE ATTITUDES

- *Explicit Evaluative Attitudes*
  - Deliberative propositions about a psychological object
  - Assessed with self-report scales (e.g., semantic differential scales)
- *Implicit Evaluative Attitudes*
  - Immediately activated evaluations about a psychological object
  - Often assessed with response latency measures (e.g., Implicit Association Test)

2

AIM OF PROJECT

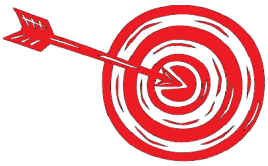
To explore the relationships between:

- *Implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence*
- *Self-reported/explicit attitudes toward violence*
- *Violent behavior (self-reported and based on criminal records)*

3

STUDY OBJECTIVE

Generalize results of previous study among justice-involved individuals



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METHODS

- Participants
  - Recruited from the Secure Treatment Unit (STU), in Brockville, ON

N = 33 males convicted of violent offences

5

STUDY MEASURES

Construct	Nature	Measures
Implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence	Response latency	**VE-IAT**: Violent Evaluation-Implicit Association Test **P-VE-IAT**: Personalized-Violent Evaluation-IAT
Explicit evaluative attitudes toward violence	Self-report	**VESD**: Semantic Differential Scales **EVQ**: Evaluation of Violence Questionnaire **MCAA-R-V**: Measures of Criminal Attitudes and Associates-Revised-Violence scale
Violent behaviour	Self-report	**EVQ-Likelihood** (Likelihood of violence) **VBVQ**: Violent Behavior Vignette Questionnaire (Current violent behaviour)

6

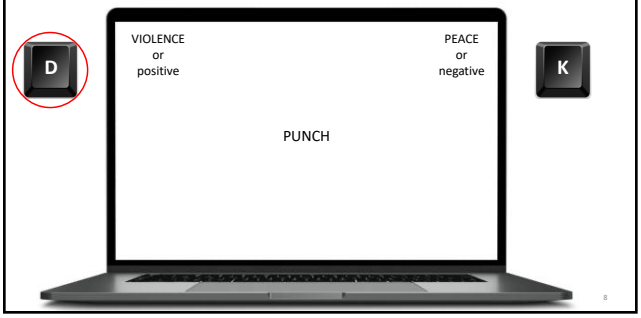
FILE CODED INFORMATION

- **File coded information:**
  - Violent Occurrence Information
    - All Violent Occurrences and Prior Violent Occurrences
  - Risk of Violent Recidivism
    - VRAG and VRAG-R
  - Risk of General Criminal Recidivism
    - LSI-OR

7

7

Violent Evaluation-Implicit Association Test (VE-IAT)



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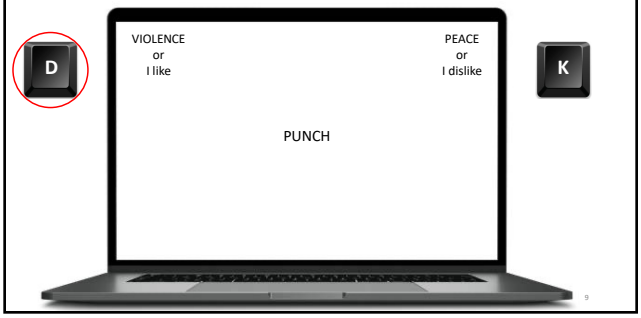
8

Personalized Violent Evaluation-Implicit Association Test (P-VE-IAT)



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9

STIMULI FOR IATs

- Pilot tested categories & stimulus words for response latency measures
- Participants:
  - *N* = 207 adult males recruited online through Qualtrics

Positive	Negative	Peace	Violence
happy	evil	peaceful	murder
joy	disaster	peace	assault
good	cancer	cuddle	punch
sunshine	disease	calm	attack
beautiful	mean	love	fight

10

10

RESULTS: CORRELATIONS

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. VE-IAT	--	.62**	.09	.01	.10	-.06	.19
2. P-VE-IAT	.62**	--	.04	-.04	-.08	-.24	.11
3. MCAA-R-V	.07	.03	--	.55**	.75***	.57**	.70***
4. VESD	-.02	-.10	.58***	--	.62***	.52**	.27
5. EVQ	.03	-.14	.73***	.69***	--	.66***	.57**
6. EVQLike	-.15	-.29	.53**	.57**	.58***	--	.41*
7. VBVQ	.10	.05	.68***	.37*	.57**	.40*	--

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.
Pearson's *r* = above diagonal, Spearman's rho = below diagonal

11

11

RESULTS: CORRELATIONS

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. VE-IAT	--	.62**	.09	.01	.10	.04	.03	.15	.14
2. P-VE-IAT	.62**	--	.04	-.04	-.08	-.01	-.02	-.05	-.03
3. MCAA-R-V	.07	.03	--	.55**	.75***	.26	.31†	.38*	.41*
4. VESD	-.02	-.10	.58***	--	.62***	.06	.16	.14	.19
5. EVQ	.03	-.14	.73***	.69***	--	.37*	.41*	.31†	.32†
6. VRAG	.03	-.02	.27	.11	.38*	--	.98***	.69***	.65***
7. VRAG Cat.	.03	-.02	.32†	.23	.44*	.98***	--	.72***	.70***
8. VRAG-R	.22	.03	.31†	.12	.32†	.81***	.81***	--	.98***
9. VRAG-R Cat	.19	.08	.35*	.20	.36*	.81***	.83***	.95***	--

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$, †significant at $p < .10$. Pearson's *r* = above diagonal, Spearman's rho = below

12

RESULTS: CORRELATIONS

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. VE-IAT	--	.62**	.09	.01	.10	.04	-.00
2. P-VE-IAT	.62**	--	.04	-.04	-.08	-.06	.06
3. MCAA-R-V	.07	.03	--	.55**	.75***	.33†	.41*
4. VESD	-.02	-.10	.58***	--	.62***	.19	.30†
5. EVQ	.03	-.14	.73***	.69***	--	.13	.19
6. LSI-OR	.13	.02	.30†	.20	.13	--	.93***
7. LSI-OR Cat.	.11	.17	.43*	.32†	.19	.90***	--

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, †significant at p < .10

Pearson's r = above diagonal, Spearman's rho = below diagonal

13

13

RESULTS: CORRELATIONS

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. VE-IAT	--	.62**	.09	.01	.10	-.38*	-.38*
2. P-VE-IAT	.62**	--	.04	-.04	-.08	-.30	-.33†
3. MCAA-R-V	.07	.03	--	.55**	.75***	.26	.19
4. VESD	-.02	-.10	.58***	--	.62***	.11	.01
5. EVQ	.03	-.14	.73***	.69***	--	.04	.01
6. All Viol. Occ.	-.36*	-.35†	.25	.06	.13	--	.97***
7. Prior Viol. Occ.	-.33†	-.39*	.19	-.03	.09	.92***	--

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, †significant at p < .10

Pearson's r = above diagonal, Spearman's rho = below diagonal

14

14

HYPOTHESES: MODERATED REGRESSIONS

Scenario 1:

Positive or Negative IAT Scores

=

Stronger Implicit Evaluative Attitudes

=

More consistent explicit evaluative attitudes

=

Strong
Expected Relationship btw
Explicit evaluative attitudes & Behaviour

OR

Scenario 2:

Neutral IAT Scores

=

Weaker Implicit Evaluative Attitudes

=

More inconsistent explicit evaluative attitudes

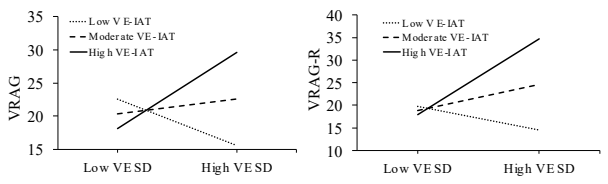
=

Weak
Expected Relationship btw
Explicit evaluative attitudes & Behaviour

15

15

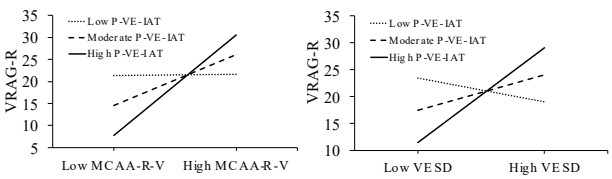
RESULTS: MODERATION



16

16

RESULTS: MODERATION



17

17

STUDY EXTENSIONS

- *Re-analyze these relationships in a well-powered sample of men convicted of violent offences*
- *Examine these relationships in a representative sample of men from the community*
- *Examine the underlying factor structure of the violent cognition measures*

18

18

SUMMARY

- Implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence were not related to most self-report/ explicit violent attitudes or violent outcomes
- Implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence were significantly negatively related to file coded number of violent occurrences
- Self-report/ explicit attitudes toward violence and were all associated
- SR/ explicit attitudes toward violence were consistently associated with violent behaviour
- Implicit evaluative attitudes moderated some relationships between explicit attitudes and violent risk (VRAG and VRAG-R)

19

19

LIMITATIONS

- The current sample was likely underpowered
- Methodology was retrospective, cross-sectional, and correlational in nature
- File information was limited when coding for violent histories
- IAT is a complicated procedure that likely introduces more error variance than self-report assessments

20

20

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Replicate these analyses with a larger sample of men convicted of violent offences
- Administer a hybrid implicit measure to assess implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence
- Assess the longitudinal relationship between implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence and future instances of violent behaviour (e.g., violent re-offending)
- Experimentally assess whether changes in implicit evaluative attitudes toward violence (and other violent cognitions) correspond to changes in violent outcomes

21

21

Thank you!

Questions?

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22

22