

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Explicit and Implicit Attitudes and Attributions of Responsibility and Blame in Cases of Domestic Violence: Do Men and Women Differ?

STUDENT: Z. Vance Jackson

DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy

COLLEGE: Teachers College

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Although there are many studies that have examined explicit attitudes toward domestic violence, no studies to date have examined participants' implicit attitudes towards this topic. The current research sought to address this absence and examined gender differences in implicit and explicit attitudes toward domestic violence. In addition, gender differences in attributions of responsibility and blame for an instance of domestic violence were examined. Participants' implicit attitudes toward a female victim and male perpetrator of domestic violence were assessed using a modified version of the Implicit Association Test (IAT) (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). In addition, the Inventory of Beliefs About Wife Beating Scale (Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) and an attribution for violence scale (Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders, 1997) were used. It was hypothesized that men would hold more negative explicit and implicit attitudes toward victims of domestic violence than women. It was next hypothesized that when compared to women, men would assign more responsibility and blame for an instance of domestic violence to the victim. It was also hypothesized that participants'

responses on the explicit and implicit attitude measures would not be correlated with one another. Results for these hypotheses were mixed. Limitations to the current research and implications for future research and practice are discussed.