A Quantitative Study of Intimate Partner Violence Context: Is Self-Compassion Related to Sexual Esteem?

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Keywords	Abstract
_____ self-compassion, sexual esteem, intimate partner violence _____	_____ Intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined as physical, psychological, or sexual violence perpetrated by a partner. This conduct is harmful and has long-term negative consequences for people who encounter it, particularly psychological illnesses. This has an impact on judgment, self-satisfaction with sexuality, and sexual function. This can influence how people evaluate their relationships and sexuality, how individuals assess their worth in a sexual context, which is thought to be related to self-compassion in individuals. This study drew 227 participants, consisting of men and women aged 20 to 30 who have been or are now in a dating relationship for at least one year. Purposive sampling was used to collect the research sample. The Conflict Tactic Scale Revised-2 (CTS-2) measurement tool, the Multidimensional Sexual Self-Concept Questionnaire (MSSCQ) subscale sexual esteem, and the Self-Compassion Scale were utilized for data collection. The direction of the association between variables is positive, indicating that the higher the level of self-compassion ability, the higher the level of sexual-esteem capacity in persons, and vice versa.

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INTRODUCTION

The interaction between two people in a romantic relationship or dating is passionate and is intended to be a process of reciprocal love, respect, support, and attention (Rihandita, 2018). There is no way around the likelihood of conflict in the process of developing a dating or love relationship between two people. This is because the more intensive the engagement between persons, the greater the likelihood of conflict. Conflict will escalate if the two parties involved become interdependent as a result of everyone's activities (Taylor et al., 2009). When a couple's argument is not effectively resolved, it might lead to violence (Pratiwi, 2017., Raiford & Braxton, 2013).

Violence in dating and other intimate relationships is referred to as intimate partner violence (IPV) (Bhattacharjee & Gopal, 2022; Ko & Park, 2020). According to WHO, IPV is an act that refers to behavior by intimate partners or former partners that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm. These behaviors include physical aggressiveness, sexual coercion, psychological coercion, and overly controlling behavior toward a relationship. Hattery and Smith (2019) define IPV conduct as violent behavior between two people who profess to love each other and are in a romantic relationship, whether committed long-term or just dating.

According to WHO data (2021), data on the distribution of IPV acts occurs globally in various countries, one of which is Indonesia. WHO (2021) has also compiled global data showing that there are women aged 15–49 who are in romantic relationships and have experienced violence, both physically and sexually, committed by their partners at least once in their lifetime. However, victims of violence in dating and other romantic relationships are victims regardless of gender, both men and women (Khaninah & Widjanarko, 2016). This is reinforced by the results of research conducted by Putri (in Rihandita, 2018), which shows that as many as 69.4% of women and 30.6% of men in Indonesia are victims of violence in romantic dating relationships. In addition, data on cases of violence in romantic relationships in Indonesia are also collected by national institutions, one of which is the Annual Record of the National Commission on Women, which compiles several cases of violence that occurred in dating relationships and ex-boyfriends in 2019–2021. This data can be detailed as follows:

Table 1. Number of Cases of Dating Violence and Violence by Ex-boyfriend/Ex-girlfriend

Year	Number of Dating Violence Cases	Number of Cases of Violence by Ex-Boyfriend/Ex-Girlfriend	Total Number of Violence
2019	1.815	996	
2020	1.309	401	7.131
2021	1.685	925	

Based on the table above, it can be concluded that from 2019 to 2021, there were 7,131 cases of IPV, in which every day there were 6–7 individuals who were victims of Dating Violence and Violence by an ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend. This is certainly not a small number considering the number of IPV cases that occurred based on the data above in the period 2019–2021, which shows that there are still many possible similar cases that have occurred to date.

Pratiwi (2017) defines IPV conduct as having three components: physical, psychological, and sexual violence. IPV, according to Hattery and Smith (2019), refers to physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse behaviors that occur between partners. Individuals who have IPV can endure long-term negative consequences as a result of these painful encounters. Some of the consequences or hazards that couples who suffer from IPV face might disrupt their lives, one of which is mental health. When confronted with violence, an individual's mental health will influence

their self-esteem and view of their sexual encounter. This has something to do with self-esteem. Self-esteem is significant because it influences an individual's predisposition to relate positively to others. This is related to self-esteem. Self-esteem is important, in the form of an individual's tendency to relate positively with others, so that it will affect the quality of relationships between one individual and another (Snell, 2001).

In addition to causing symptoms of disorders such as anxiety, trauma, and other disorders that can interfere with daily activities, IPV behavior can also affect victims in assessing and evaluating themselves when relating to others, which is referred to as sexual esteem. Sexual esteem is more related to the concept of interpersonal sexuality than to personal or autosexual arrangements, which is the term for the sexual orientation of the individual's self (Snell, 1989). Sexual-esteem is a component of self-esteem, but sexual-esteem is more reflective of the feelings, thoughts, and experiences that individuals have regarding their sexuality (Zeanah & Schwarz, 1996). In addition, according to Maslow (in Hally & Pollack, 1993) sexual esteem owned by individuals also affects the increase in self-esteem and sexual satisfaction which also affects self-actualization.

Sexual esteem has consequences if it is not fulfilled. Because sexual esteem is closely related to sexual satisfaction (Ebrahimkhani, Nouri, &; Azizi, 2017). According to Mayers and Heller (2003), sexual esteem refers to how much a person values themselves as sexual beings, including their sexual personalities and understanding of their own sexual. Among the key analysts developing the Harter's Confidence show are Zeanah and Schwarz. They have made references to sexual esteem in relation to early adaptation, family coordination, friends, and society. Each person views it as a crucial element in the creation of standards as the paradigm for evaluating thoughts, emotions, and sexual behaviors. These researchers have demonstrated that an individual's positive reaction to mental evaluations may influence the foundation of sexual esteem and its five components. According to Zeanah and Schwarz (1996), there are five components of sexual esteem: abilities and experience, control, beauty, moral judgment, and adaptability. According to Anderson and Cyranowski (1994), sexual esteem is a reference to an individual's sexual measurements derived from previous encounters, as demonstrated by display encounters and measurements impacting vital social information addressing sexual concerns and directing sexual activity.

IPV behavior in couples can also cause individuals to be unable to accept the experiences they feel, which tends to trigger a refusal to live their lives at this time (Neff, 2003a), and causes strong emotional resistance to unpleasant feelings experienced so that a person is trapped and drifted by unpleasant responses that have been experienced before (Neff, 2003a). Bluth, et al (2018) explained the relationship of self-compassion when individuals face stress. When individuals have a high level of self-compassion, it is more likely to lead to the use of positive self-affirmations when facing unpleasant events, whereas individuals who have low self-compassion tend to be alone and more often reflect on their actions, which indicates high self-criticism and isolation in individuals (Leary et al, 2007; Macbeth & Gumley 2012). This can also apply when someone is facing problems in their romantic relationships.

Based on the description above, this research needs to be conducted to examine the correlation between self-compassion and sexual esteem, to find out how and what victims feel about themselves and their influence on the quality of romantic relationships with their partners. Therefore, the importance of this research is to examine more deeply the relationship between self-compassion and sexual esteem in early adults who experience intimate partner violence.

METHOD

Design

The method in this study uses quantitative research methods with a correlational research design, which aims to examine the correlation between self-compassion and sexual esteem in early adults who experience intimate partner violence. Correlational research is used by researchers with the aim of knowing the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables to be studied (Azwar, 2017).

Participants

The population of this study is individuals with characteristics or traits that have been determined as follows: 1) Women and men aged 20 - 30 years; 2) Have experienced one or more dating violence, either physically, psychologically, or sexually; and 3) Have been or are dating for at least one year. The sampling method in this study uses non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is a sampling technique by compiling certain criteria and considerations that will be used as a sample (Sugiyono, 2013).

Instruments

There are three research instruments used in this study, namely the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2) which is used to screen for violence experienced by respondents who will be used in the study. This measurement tool is also often used to measure the extent to which the dynamics of violence in romantic relationships occur. This scale consists of 39 items with statements in the form of behaviors that are raised by partners in the form of a Likert scale with 8 alternative answer choices, adapted and referring to the preparation by Straus, et al (1996). The scale used to measure self-compassion is the Self-Compassion Scale (SWD) which has been adopted by Sugianto, et al (2020) and has been adjusted to the self-compassion theory developed by Neff (2003a; 2003b). This scale consists of 26 items with 5 alternative answers. Furthermore, the scale used to measure sexual esteem is the Multidimensional Sexuality Self-Concept Questionnaire (MSSCQ) subscale sexual esteem scale adapted from the scale compiled by Snell, et al (2001). This scale consists of 5 items with 5 alternative answer choices. The reliability of each of these measuring instruments is the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2) of .919, MSSCQ (sexual esteem dimension) of .962, and the Self-Compassion Scale of .872.

Procedure

Implementation in data collection takes approximately 1 month, which was carried out from April 16 - May 13, 2023. The criteria used in this study are 20-30 years old, currently or have been in a dating relationship for at least 1 year. The way to determine the sample size of an unknown population is by using the GPower 3.1 application. According to Cohen (1988) explains that effect size is used for research with large populations. In this study, the effect size used was 0.3 in the medium category, using alpha 0.5 and power 0.95 so the minimum sample generated was 134 samples. Therefore, to get valid research results, the number of samples obtained is at least 134 samples. The results of the data obtained in this study amounted to 227 data so it met the provisions of the predetermined sampling.

Data Analysis

The data analysis technique method used in this research is non-parametric with the Spearman Rank correlation test. This study hypothesizes that there is a correlation between self-compassion and sexual esteem in early adult individuals who experience intimate partner violence. Therefore, with the provisions of $p < 0.05$, it can be concluded that the hypothesis can be accepted.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on 227 data results obtained from respondents, it shows that the level of self-compassion and sexual esteem has a varied data distribution. The distribution of data on the gender of the respondents in this study was 62.1% or 141 respondents were female, and 37.9% or 86 respondents were male. Self-compassion data obtained from respondent distribution data shows the findings that based on empirical categories, there are 4 respondents, or 1.7% of the total sample in the categorization of low self-compassion levels, 220 respondents, or 97% of the total sample are in the categorization of moderate self-compassion levels, and a total of 3 respondents or 1.3% are in the categorization of high self-compassion levels. Furthermore, the lowest score obtained by respondents was 59 and the highest score obtained by respondents was 103. This shows that both female and male respondents on average already have self-compassion and can accept and give kindness to themselves when experiencing things that are not pleasant or following individual expectations (Neff, Kirkpatrick, and Rude, 2007). This is in line with the findings of Neff and Beretvas (2013) who explain that high levels of self-compassion in individuals are related to the perception of behavior and attitudes that are raised by the individual concerned to be more positive both to themselves and to their partners. This causes individuals who have high self-compassion abilities to generate more positive perceptions and attitudes, are better able to deal with conflicts with their partners and are considered more caring to their partners.

A study by Marshall, et al (2015) showed findings that individuals who have a high level of self-compassion will be able to know how to treat and accept their shortcomings well, and not get caught up in behaviors that harm and damage themselves. Likewise, when the individual treats their partner. Individuals with low levels of self-compassion will tend to fixate on shortcomings and mistakes that arise both from within and outside the individual's control. This is in line with what is explained by Paudi, et al (2021) that individuals who have low levels of self-compassion can cause individuals to experience high fear, anxiety, and stress when faced with unpleasant events or when facing difficult situations. This is related to when individuals face difficult situations with their partners and cause aggression from their partners, these individuals tend to have a high level of self-criticism themselves and choose to do things that can be detrimental, such as focusing more on mistakes than solutions, it is difficult to think clearly which causes anxiety which can result in negative thoughts, such as isolating themselves which causes difficulty connecting with others, especially partners. Nevertheless, the condition of self-compassion in everyone is at different levels, according to the conditions and situations experienced by the respondents. This is by Neff (2003), that various factors affect the level of self-compassion possessed by everyone, such as age, gender, culture, environment, and personality of the individual concerned.

The sexual-esteem data obtained from filling out questionnaires by respondents shows a varied level of data distribution. The results of the data distribution found that there were 23% or 52 respondents included in the category who had a high level of sexual esteem. Furthermore, a total of 32%, or 72 respondents are included in the category that has a moderate level of sexual-esteem, and a total of 45% or 103 respondents have a low level of sexual-esteem. The lowest score data obtained is 0 and the highest data obtained from the research data is 20. Based on the distribution of research data, the results of respondents' sexual-esteem data show that it is dominated by respondents who are in the low category with a percentage of 45% or 103 respondents. This proves that respondents, both male and female, on average, cannot evaluate themselves about sexual relationships and relationships with other people, both with their couples and ex-couples.

The first step of the inferential analysis test carried out is the normality assumption test. The normality test in research is a test conducted to determine and measure whether the data obtained has a normal distribution or not. This normality test uses the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov

Test technique with the help of software for statistical data processing SPSS version 20. Data can be declared normally distributed if the significance value of p> 0.05. If on the contrary, the significance value of p < 0.05 then the data is declared not normally distributed. The results of the normality test for self-compassion and sexual-esteem variables in early adults who experience intimate partner violence are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Normality Test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		227
Normal Parameters,b	Mean	0E-7
	Std. Deviation	5,14070461
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,100
	Positive	,100
	Negative	-,064
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1,503
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		,022
a. Test distribution is Normal.		
b. Calculated from data.		

From the results of the normality test on the self-compassion and sexual-esteem variables, a significance value of 0.022 was found. Furthermore, because the significance value of p is smaller than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data distribution has an abnormal distribution. So, the research data is included in data that is not normally distributed, so the analysis is carried out using non-parametric analysis. Because the data uses non-parametric analysis, the hypothesis test used in this study is the Spearman Rank correlation test.

The next step of the inferential analysis test is carried out using the Spearman Rank correlation analysis test. The data correlation test was carried out with the help of SPSS statistical data processing software with the following test results.

Table 3. Hypothesis Test Results

Correlations			Self-Compassion	Sexual-Esteem
Spearman's rho	Self-Compassion	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,258**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000
		N	227	227
	Sexual-Esteem	Correlation Coefficient	,258**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.
		N	227	227
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

From the results of hypothesis testing between self-compassion and sexual-esteem variables, there is a value of the correlation coefficient (r) of 0.258 with a significance value (p) of 0.00. From the results of the significance value, the p-value is 0.00 <0.05 so it can be concluded that the

hypothesis "there is a correlation between self-compassion and sexual esteem in early adults who experience intimate partner violence" is accepted. Furthermore, because the correlation coefficient (r) value of the two variables is 0.258, it indicates that the correlation between the two variables is positive. This means that the higher the level of self-compassion, the higher the level of sexual esteem possessed by early adult individuals who experience intimate partner violence.

The findings of this study show a relationship between self-compassion and sexual esteem in early adult individuals who experience intimate partner violence. Neff and Beretvas (2013) explain the positive impact of having the ability of self-compassion, which is being able to have more positive perceptions of themselves and couples when facing difficult situations and suffering, including when aggression occurs. This relates to three aspects described by Neff (2003a), namely self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. In the aspect of self-kindness, when the individual is able to give a sense of affection and kindness to himself even though under difficult and unpleasant circumstances. However, this does not indicate that the individual is becoming self-centered or a person who cares only about himself (Neff, 2003a). Therefore, self-kindness will increase well-being, happiness, acceptance, and self-worth related to satisfaction with self, partner and relationships that are being lived together (Neff and Berevats, 2013).

In the aspect of common humanity, where individuals are seen as whole people so that individuals do not burden themselves with negative thoughts and helpless when experiencing difficult situations (Neff, Kirkpatrick & Rude, 2007). This can increase the resilience of individuals who can recognize and dig deeper into their abilities to be better and be able to handle the situation, so that they can finally evaluate themselves and their relationship with positive judgments and perceptions (Heinrichs et al., 2009). Furthermore, in the aspect of mindfulness, individuals accept the thoughts and feelings they experience at that time, and do not suppress the emotions that arise, and do not make judgments on themselves, thereby reducing the level of anxiety in individuals, which is related to increased satisfaction both with themselves and their relationships with their partners (Heinrichs et al., 2009).

With the unpleasant experiences that occur in dating relationships and relationships that are established with ex-girlfriends, causing vulnerability in the ability of individuals to assess and evaluate the behavior received from their partners (Leary and Baumeister, 2000). This leads to the appearance of a feeling of not comfortable, less feeling valued by the partner and decreased levels of satisfaction in relation to aspects of individual sexuality with their partners that affect how to assess the relationship with the partner (Maas and Lefkowitz, 2015). Because it is related to dissatisfaction in relationships, individuals tend to blame themselves for aggression exerted by their partners, which is included in the self-judgment component (Neff, 2003a). This can lead to other behaviors, such as staying away from the closest person (isolation), the emergence of self-harm behavior and being unable to control themselves (over-identification) (Neff, 2003a). Finally, some limitations that need to be considered in this study are technical obstacles when there are some respondents who fail to access the questionnaire that has been provided because they must have a certain mail account. This can be a concern for future researchers who want to use online data capture to prepare and test technical carefully.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research exposure above, it can be concluded that there is a correlation between self-compassion and sexual esteem in early adult individuals who experience intimate partner violence (IPV), both male and female. The direction of the relationship between variables shows a positive number with a value of .258, which means that the higher the level of self-compassion ability, the higher the level of sexual-esteem ability in individuals, and vice versa. In

addition, the value of .258 indicates that the relationship between self-compassion and sexual esteem is quite strong.

The description of self-compassion abilities in early adult individual respondents who experienced IPV was in the moderate category, with a percentage of 97%. The description of sexual esteem abilities in early adult individuals who experienced IPV shows a low category with a percentage of 45%. Based on the description of the ability of self-compassion and sexual esteem and the accepted hypothesis, the existence of these two variables in individuals will affect the actions and perceptions that arise when individuals get aggression or acts of violence from their partners so that the impact of the two variables that arise will determine how thoughts, perceptions, and actions taken by individuals in dealing with these events.

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