

# The Role of Education in Sexual Violence: Sex Ed. and Harmful Sexual Attitudes

Simone E. Laurent, Chelsea D. Kilimnik, M.S., & Cindy M. Meston, Ph.D.  
The University of Texas at Austin



## INTRODUCTION

- Sexual attitudes can lead to sexual violence.<sup>1</sup> Very little research has been done to examine how different types of sexual education shape these attitudes.
- Sexual education (sex ed.) can be received formally in school, and informally from family, peers, the media, and pornography.
- Studies addressing sex ed. on sexual violence typically focus on educational interventions on college campuses and do not examine how existing sexual education exposure shapes sexual attitudes.<sup>2</sup>

## AIM

- To examine the relationships between difference sources of sex ed. experiences and sexual attitudes that may lead to sexual violence.

### PREDICTION

- We predicted that sex ed. from peers and media will increase attitudes related to sexual violence while education from families and school will reduce these attitudes.

## METHODS

### PARTICIPANTS

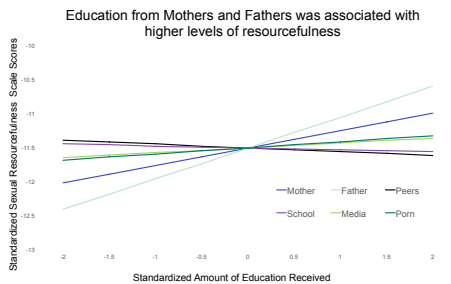
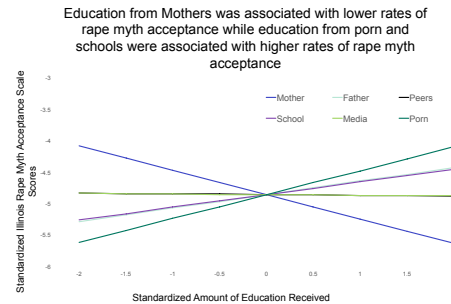
- Community members ( $n = 480$ ; 69% female) and undergraduate students ( $n=138$ ; 57% female)

### MEASURES

- **Sexuality Topics Addressed by Parents and Schools (STAPS)** – Modified (Kennett, Humphreys, & Schultz, 2012)
- **Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMAS)**; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999)
- **Sexual Double Standards Scale (SDS)**; Muehlenhard & Quackenbush, 1996)
- **Sexual Resourcefulness Scale (SRS)**; Kennett & Humphreys, 2012)

### PROCEDURE

- Community recruitment through social media and online advertisements. Student recruitment through introductory psychology pool.
- Data collected through anonymous online survey using UT Qualtrics.

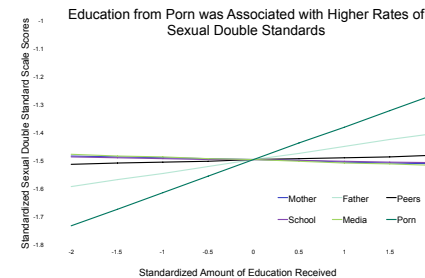


## METHODS cont.

- Sources were grouped into **familiar** (mother, father, and peers), **formal** (schools), and **informal** (media and porn)
- **13 education topics** were grouped into **4 categories**:
  - **Healthy Relationships** (Intimacy, Negotiating, Trust, Pleasure, Unwanted Advances, Consent)
  - **Safe Sex** (Condoms, STIs, Unplanned Pregnancy)
  - **Sexual Violence** (Rape, Sexual Assault, Abuse)
  - **Abstinence**

## ANALYSIS

- A series of multivariate linear regressions were run with both a 6 and a 12 factor model to explore correlations between sources of education, content of education, and sexual attitudes.



### Education Content Analysis Across Sources

Dependent Variable: SRS				
Multivariate Model:	F	df	p-value	
R <sup>2</sup> = .440	7.178	12, 359	.000	
Predictor Variable:	B (SE)	t	p-value	
Safe Sex Informal	2.189 (1.081)	2.025	.044	

Dependent Variable: IRMAS				
Multivariate Model:	F	df	p-value	
R <sup>2</sup> = .086	2.885	12, 369	.001	
Predictor Variable:	B (SE)	t	p-value	
Healthy Relationships School	3.651 (1.824)	2.001	.046	
Safe Sex School	-2.759 (1.157)	-2.385	.018	
Sexual Violence Familiar	-1.429 (.709)	-2.017	.044	
Abstinence Familiar	-1.171 (.425)	-2.759	.006	

Dependent Variable: SDSS				
Multivariate Model:	F	df	p-value	
R <sup>2</sup> = .107	3.607	12, 360	.000	
Predictor Variable:	B (SE)	t	p-value	
Healthy Relationships Schools	1.290 (.538)	2.397	.017	
Safe Sex Schools	-.758 (.340)	-2.228	.026	
Abstinence Schools	-.500 (.234)	-2.137	.033	
Abstinence Familiar	-.259 (.127)	-2.045	.042	
Abstinence Informal	.626 (.267)	1.952	.020	

## RESULTS SUMMARY

- Healthy relationship information from formal education was correlated with higher levels of rape myth acceptance and more endorsement of sexual double standards, while information about safe sex and abstinence from formal sources decreased these attitudes
- Information about sexual violence and abstinence from familiar sources was associated with lower levels of rape myth acceptance and endorsements of sexual double standards
- Information about safe sex and abstinence from informal sources was associated with higher level of sexual resourcefulness but also greater endorsement of sexual double standards

## DISCUSSION

- Consistent with previous research<sup>3</sup>, sexual education from parents was associated with higher sexual resourcefulness when examining sources exclusively but this effect was lost when looking at content within sources.
- Contrary to our predictions, formal education was associated with higher harmful sexual attitudes when examined as a whole. Analysis of content showed this effect driven by information on healthy relationships while information on safe sex was associated with lower levels of these attitudes.
- While a moderation model was not used, differences between groups with and without NSEs suggest that these experiences may be moderating attitudes.
- Future research should more closely examine the content from each source to included a larger sample.

## REFERENCES

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