

LENGTH OF THE CTS2 COMPARED TO THE ORIGINAL CTS

The revised CTS is double the length of the original CTS: 19 items versus 39 items. Most of the increase is due to the addition of new scales to measure Injury and Sexual Coercion. If these two scales are omitted, the increase is from 19 items to 27 items, i.e. 8 additional items.

If you need a shorter instrument, it is better to shorten the CTS2 by omitting the two new scales (Injury and Sexual Coercion) rather than to use the original CTS. If you use the original CTS you will also not have data on injury or sexual coercion, and the data you will have on the three core scales will be less adequate. The shortened version of the CTS2 takes 7 to 10 minutes.

The way the CTS2 is formatted in the article describing this instrument (Straus et al. 1996) gives the impression that the CTS2 is four times longer rather than twice as long. This is because that article lists each item twice: once for what the respondent did and then for what the partner did. The CTS1 lists each item only for what the respondent did, but the instructions say to ask each item twice.

To understand the confusion about the length, it may be helpful to distinguish between "questions" and "items." The original CTS had 19 items, each of which was asked twice: first for what the respondent did and then for what the partner did, resulting in 38 questions. The revised CTS has 39 items, each of which is asked twice, resulting in 78 questions.

Most of the increase is because of the addition of 6 Injury and 7 sexual Coercion scales. If these 13 items are not asked, the CTS2 has 27 items, or 8 more than the original 19.

Another reason for the confusion is that feminist researchers almost always ask only about what the partner did, i.e. they convert the CTS from a measure of couple interaction into a measure of victimization of women. And when they do administer the full CTS, they rarely publish results on the behavior of the female partner. Thus one sees many articles based on what seems to be a 19-item scale.

In my opinion, to understand what goes on in a couple relationship, requires information on the behavior of both partners. This is also true when the sole purpose is to seek an understanding of the victimization of women. Primary prevention of victimization of women requires taking into account the behavior of both partners in a relationship. See paper CTS21 on my website.

REFERENCE

Straus, Murray A., Sherry L. Hamby, Susan Boney-McCoy, and David B. Sugarman. 1996. "The revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2): Development and preliminary psychometric data." *Journal of Family Issues* 17:283-316.