

Sexual Victimization, Negative Cognitions, and Adjustment in College Women

Martie P. Thompson, PhD; J. B. Kingree, PhD

Objectives: To determine if negative cognitions accounted for the associations of sexual victimization with depression and alcohol-related problems among first-year college women. **Methods:** Data were collected from 719 first-year college females. Structural equation modeling was used to test if negative cognitive schemas mediated the links between sexual victimization and 2 outcomes. **Results:** Sexual victimization was related to higher levels of depression and

alcohol-related problems, and negative cognitions partially accounted for these associations. Whether or not the incident happened in a dating context did not impact on cognitions. **Conclusions:** Findings suggest that preventing negative cognitions might help offset adverse consequences associated with sexual victimization.

Key words: sexual victimization, cognitions, coping, college females

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