



4th Global Conference on Psychology

21 - 23 August 2026

Oxford, United Kingdom

Relational Responding Task: Assessing Child Sexual Abuse and Rape Myths using an Implicit Approach

Inês Chim, Cláudia Camilo, Nélío Brazão, Eunice Magalhães

ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon, Centre for Psychological Research and Social Intervention, Portugal

Abstract

Child Sexual Abuse Myths (CSAM) and Rape Myths (RM) are socially accepted yet erroneous beliefs that legitimize sexual violence and its consequences, fostering victim-blaming attitudes and adversely affecting victims' well-being. Literature has primarily relied on explicit measures (e.g., self-report measures) to assess CSAM and RM, often neglecting implicit processes that can be captured through implicit measures. This research aimed to develop two Relational Responding Tasks (RRTs) focusing on CSAM (Study 1) and RM (Study 2), providing initial validity evidence. Samples of 114 (Study 1) and 105 participants (Study 2) were recruited. The RRTs included statements regarding myths and facts about child sexual abuse and rape, and the differences in mean response latencies between the fact and myth blocks were analyzed to determine participants' level of myth endorsement. Both RRTs showed good internal consistency ($R_{sb}=.82$ for the CSAM-RRT and $R_{sb}=.78$ for the RM-RRT). Positive and significant associations were found between the RRT and the Denial of Abusiveness in Study 1, and between the RRT and the GIRMA scale in Study 2. The findings provide initial psychometric support for using implicit measures to assess myth endorsement. Future research should consider employing both implicit and explicit measures, as they offer complementary and distinct insights into these myths.

Keywords: implicit measures; relational responding task; child sexual abuse myths; rape myths; myth endorsement