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Token Resistance to Sex Scale
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The Token Resistance to Sex Scale (TRSS; Osman, 1995) was developed to measure the predispositional belief that women use token resistance to sexual advances; that is, they say “no” to sexual advances but mean “yes.” The belief in token resistance has been recognized as an important determinant of perceptions, opinions, and outcomes of date rape (Muehlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985; Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988; Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987; Shotland & Goodstein, 1983). Although the concept of token resistance has been documented, this is the first scale to measure this predispositional belief by examining the situational factors known to be associated with belief in token resistance. Prior to the development of this scale, past researchers had measured belief in token resistance as a dependent variable by asking questions about whether sexual activity was desired. As a predispositional measure, this scale allows the belief in token resistance to be treated as an independent variable.

Description
The TRSS consists of eight items arranged on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

Response Mode and Timing
Respondents can write the number from 1 to 7 that corresponds to their agreement with an item. The scale can be completed in less than 5 minutes.

Scoring
All eight items are keyed in the same direction, with a higher score indicating a stronger belief in token resistance and a lower score indicating a weaker belief in token resistance. Scores can range from 8 to 56.

Reliability
In a sample of 81 college men (Osman, 1995), the original Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient for the TRSS was .86. In subsequent studies, the Cronbach alpha for this scale has ranged from .83 to .87 in samples of men and women (r’s ranging from 131 to 541) (Osman, 2003, 2004, 2007b; Osman & Davis, 1997, 1999a, 1999b).

Validity
Across several studies, it has been found consistently that greater belief in token resistance is associated with weaker perceptions of date rape (Osman, 2003; Osman & Davis, 1997, 1999a, 1999b). With related measures, Osman and Davis (1999a) found that the TRSS significantly correlated with Burt’s (1980) Sex Role Stereotyping Scale, r = .28, and with Mosher and Sirkin’s (1984) Hypermasculinity Inventory, including Callous Sexual Attitudes, r = .60, Danger as Exciting, r = .28, and Violence as Manly, r = .28. Of these scales, the TRSS was the best dispositional predictor of date rape perceptions, supporting its construct validity. Furthermore, Osman and Davis (1997) found that the TRSS significantly correlated in the expected directions with all five subscales of Muehlenhard and Felts’s (1998) Sexual Beliefs Scale, including Token Refusal, No Means Stop, Leading on Justifies Force, Men Should Dominate, and Women Like Force.

Predictive utility for the TRSS has been demonstrated in studies examining men’s perceptions of date rape based on experimentally manipulated scenarios. For example, Osman and Davis (1997) found that men with higher scores on the TRSS attended relatively more to nonverbal cues of sexual availability (i.e., provocative clothing, going to the man’s apartment, timing of protest) in their judgments of whether rape occurred, whereas men who scored lower were more sensitive to the victim’s verbal refusals. Furthermore, Osman and Davis (1999a) found that men with a stronger belief in token resistance were less certain that the situation was rape when the woman verbally resisted the man’s sexual advances than when she fought back physically. Men with a weaker belief did not make this distinction and were more certain than their stronger belief counterparts that rape occurred as long as the woman offered some type of resistance. Lastly, Osman (2003) presented participants with a date rape, a consensual sex, or an ambiguous scenario. Men with lower TRSS scores had stronger rape perceptions than men with higher scores, in the rape condition only. Results suggested that the woman’s verbal refusal to sexual intercourse was not taken seriously by those with higher TRSS scores.

More recently, the concept of token resistance has been applied to sexual harassment (Osman, 2004, 2007a, 2007b). As with date rape, some individuals may think that women use token resistance in response to sexual attention from men: that they say “stop” to sexual attention but truly want it to continue. Consistent with this, higher scores on

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the TRSS have been associated with weaker perceptions of sexual harassment (Osman, 2004, 2007b). Furthermore, whereas those with lower TRSS scores were more certain that harassment occurred when any type of resistance was present in sexual harassment scenarios, this was not true for those scoring higher. When the woman offered verbal or physical resistance to sexual attention, those with higher TRSS scores had weaker harassment perceptions than those with lower scores (Osman, 2007b).

**References**


**Exhibit**

**Token Resistance to Sex Scale**

Respond to the following statements by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Respond using the following scale for each statement.

1 = Strongly Disagree  
2 = Disagree  
3 = Slightly Disagree  
4 = Undecided, Neither Agree nor Disagree  
5 = Slightly Agree  
6 = Agree  
7 = Strongly Agree

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1. Women usually say “no” to sex when they really mean “yes.”

2. When a man only has to use a minimal amount of force on a woman to get her to have sex, it probably means she wanted him to force her.

3. When a woman waits until the very last minute to object to sex in a sexual interaction, she probably really wants to have sex.

4. A woman who initiates a date with a man probably wants to have sex.

5. Many times a woman will pretend she doesn’t want to have intercourse because she doesn’t want to seem too loose, but she’s really hoping the man will force her.

6. A woman who allows a man to pick her up for a date probably hopes to have sex that night.

7. When a woman allows a man to treat her to an expensive dinner on a date, it usually indicates that she is willing to have sex with him.

8. Going home with a man at the end of a date is a woman’s way of communicating to him that she wants to have sex.