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Dating Violence on the College Campus: Exploring Student Perception and Awareness

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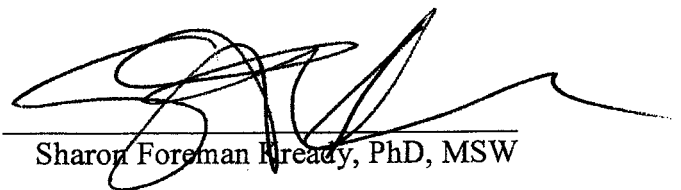Exploring Student Perception and Awareness

Patrice Gibson

Senior Honors Project

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the graduation requirements
of the Westover Honors Program
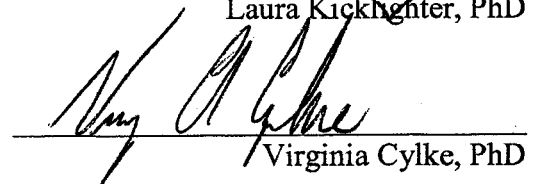
Westover Honors Program

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Abstract

Dating violence is a crime that plagues college students all over the world. Many students are unaware of what specifically constitutes dating violence and what resources are available to those who are affected by this crime. Colleges and universities tend to have vague or nonexistent rules and regulations regarding dating violence; there is also a lack of education provided to first-year students about dating violence and resources available to them. The present study explored student perception of dating violence and focused on students from small, liberal arts colleges in the central and southwest part of Virginia. Furthermore, this study built upon a base measure of student perception of the crime alone in order to look at the students' awareness of school policies and procedures in regards to dating violence. While numerous studies have been done on dating violence, this thesis research study sought to look into specific colleges (Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Sweet Briar College, Hampden Sydney College, and Bridgewater College) and how their students are affected by dating violence. The findings from this study revealed these five colleges not only have an overall lack of policies and educational programming in place regarding dating, but also students at these five institutions recognize there is such a lack of resources available to them and desire a change.

Dating Violence on the College Campus: Exploring Student Perception and Awareness

Dating violence, also commonly known as courtship violence and intimate partner violence (IPV), includes the threatening or actual use of physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional/psychological abuse, and/or neglect. This abuse occurs between members of an unmarried, or dating, couple and is inflicted by one member onto the other (Anderson & Danis, 2007). Straus (2008) and Kaukinen, Gover, and Hartman (2012) both concluded that the most common pattern of dating violence was bidirectional violence, meaning there was a mutuality of violence between both members of the dating relationship. Following bidirectional violence, female perpetrated violence was the next most common and male perpetrated violence was the least common among the three (Straus, 2008). The controversy of female perpetration and male victimization in a violent dating relationship will be discussed later on.

Dating violence is associated with many negative consequences for those involved. Katz, Arias, and Beach (2000) found an association between dating violence and lesser intimacy and stability in such relationships, especially for the women involved in the violent relationship. Kaura and Lohman (2007) supported these findings that partner violence is associated with dissatisfaction in romantic relationships and added to this research on negative consequences by demonstrating an association between violence and the victim's overall mental health as well.

Makepeace (1981) has been credited with conducting the initial research study into dating violence, or courtship violence as it was known at the time, on the college campus and found that one out of every five college students he surveyed had experienced at least one incident of dating violence in their college career. Researchers today consider this to be an accurate representation of the amount of dating violence still perpetrated on college campuses. Perry and Fromuth (2005) determined that 60% of the couples surveyed in their study were in violent relationships.

Barrick, Krebs, and Lindquist (2013) conducted a study surveying women at historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) and found an alarmingly high rate of dating violence victimization among their sample. Of the respondents, 34% reported being victims of psychological and verbal abuse, 14% of the HBCU women reported being threatened by their dating partner, and 18% reported being victims of physical IPV (Barrick et al., 2013).

Since the 1980s dating violence has become an even more studied topic; however, there are still many understudied areas in this field, especially pertaining to dating violence on the college campus. Many of the research studies conducted since Makepeace's initial study have focused predominantly on large, public universities with little attention being given to smaller, private institutions. Through studying institutional responses to dating violence and student perception and opinion of this crime, researchers will be able to provide a clearer and more detailed picture of why dating violence occurs so frequently on college campuses and how best to prevent the occurrence of this crime. Without acknowledging student opinion and awareness, an institution can only do but so much to protect their campus from this heinous crime.

Literature Review

Dating violence is a complex phenomenon that does not discriminate towards gender, race, socioeconomic status, etc. It has the ability to affect anyone from any background and at any age. Research such as Makepeace's (1981) study and many more have shown that dating violence tends to be an issue for many college students at most if not all colleges and universities within the United States. There are many different factors which perpetuate dating violence as well as varying offenders and victims. The literature on this crime is controversial and conflictive, depending on which theoretical perspective and criminological lenses are being utilized.

Factors for the Perpetration of Dating Violence

Researchers have linked multiple factors to the perpetration of dating violence among college couples. Miller (2011) found the length of the dating relationship was significantly positively correlated with the perpetration of dating violence; meaning, the longer the relationship the greater the amount of perpetration of violence. Participation in a previous violent dating relationship was also found to be a significant factor (Miller, 2011). Childhood abuse and victimization has been found to be a very common predictor of collegiate IPV (Barrick et al., 2013; Gover, Jennings, Tomsich, Park, & Rennison, 2011; Shook, Gerrity, Jurich, & Segrist, 2000; Smith, White, & Holland, 2003). Childhood victimization includes sexual abuse, physical abuse, and witnessing domestic violence between parents (Smith et al., 2003). Mental health is another common factor leading to the perpetration of dating violence (Barrick et al., 2013).

The most controversial factor of dating violence perpetration is alcohol consumption. Makepeace (1981) did not find a correlation between alcohol consumption and dating violence; however, multiple other studies conducted since have found a link between the two (Barrick et al., 2013; Roudsari, Leahy, & Walters, 2009; Shook et al., 2000). Roudsari et al. (2009) determined peak blood-alcohol content level (BAC) was associated with a higher perpetration of verbal and emotional abuse and that both the victims and the perpetrators reported the presence of alcohol for a substantial proportion of abusive behaviors. Furthermore, Shook et al. (2000) found that for verbal aggression and physical aggression, drinking three hours either before or after the perpetrated abuse was significantly related. The researchers, however, were unable to conclude the directionality and causality of the alcohol consumption and violent activities (Shook et al., 2000). Interestingly, Shook et al. (2000) also found the greater alcohol consumption and binge drinking among male college students led to lower perpetration of

violent activities in dating relationship. The researchers believe this greater alcohol consumption

serves as a coping strategy and as a means to reduce the desire to act aggressively towards one's

dating partner.

Female Perpetrators

A highly debated aspect of dating violence is female perpetrated violence. Many studies

have shown women to be victims of dating violence. Makepeace (1981) reported 91.7% of

female respondents viewed themselves solely as victims and not as perpetrators. Katz et al.

(2000) found 11% of college women had experienced physical abuse and 94% had experienced

some form of psychological abuse by their dating partner (these acts included swearing, acting

insensitive, and saying something to purposefully spite the victim). Although these statistics do

begin to paint the picture of female victimization, many other studies have been conducted that

contradict the notion that females are always the victims of dating violence.

Perry and Fromuth (2005) found 36% of both male and female college students reported

being physically aggressive toward their dating partner and it was the female students who

reported the highest rates of inflicting psychological abuse on their dating partner. Interestingly,

not only did these female students report inflicting more psychological abuse, but they also

reported receiving less abuse than they perpetrated. Studies show females also report

significantly higher levels of physical aggression and verbal aggression than men do (Shook et

al., 2000). Miller (2011) and Kaukinen et al. (2011) support this finding that females are

significantly more likely to be perpetrators of dating violence than males.

Sorority Victimization

Although many studies have found females have overall higher rates of dating violence

perpetration than males do (Kaukinen et al., 2011; Miller, 2011; Shook et al., 2000), Copenhaver

and Grauerholz (1991) conducted a dating violence study and found college women who are members of a sorority are more at risk of being victimized in a dating relationship than the general population of college women. They suggest this is because sorority members are highly encouraged to date men who are in fraternities. This population of college men has been shown to hold a strong patriarchal view of society and have a greater propensity for committing dating violence like crimes (Copenhaver & Grauerholz, 1991). Even though Copenhaver and Grauerholz conducted their study over 20 years ago, Barrick et al. (2013) corroborates their findings by showing an association between sorority membership and victimization of physical and sexual dating abuse.

Perception of Dating Violence

The perception of dating violence among college students is separated by gender. Perry and Fromuth (2005) reported an overall disagreement among couples about who perpetrated and who received dating violence. Gender also plays a role in the perception of appropriate punishment for those who commit acts of abuse. McDonald and Kline (2004) found when recommending punishments for the perpetration of dating violence, female students recommended harsher punishment than did the male college students; furthermore, they showed that how the crime was presented was less important for recommended punishment than the gender of the participant doing the recommending.

In regards to seeking help, Beyers, Leonard, Mays, and Rosén (2000) reported the way in which an individual perceives and interprets the abusive behavior affects the types of intervention an individual seeks out and is receptive to. Even considering the research indicating women perpetrate higher rates of dating violence, Miller (2011) found college men were three times as likely as college women to perceive abuse in a dating relationship as not only effective,

but acceptable, appropriate, and even necessary at times. This male perception of dating violence occurred regardless of if the male was the victim or the perpetrator of the dating violence (Miller, 2011).

Formal Support Systems

As has been shown so far, research on dating violence shows many conflicting view points on perpetrator identity, perpetuating factors of violence, and even student perception of the crime. Furthermore, these conflicting viewpoints are carried over in the policies and educative programs geared towards preventing dating violence among student bodies. Formal support systems include preventative programs designed to educate students and formal school polices designed to counteract violent activity.

Preventative programs. Anderson and Danis (2007) completed a study on the preventative programs and education regarding dating violence available to college sorority women. Not only did they find a lack of both formal and informal programming in place, they also found many sorority women felt they had been provided with too few opportunities for education on dating violence by their national organizers. One of the women interviewed stated she would have no idea what to do or who to contact if another sorority member had been victimized in a dating relationship. Sorority women are at higher risk of becoming victims of dating violence and this study demonstrates how the national organizers have done very little in prevention programming and education for their members (Anderson & Danis, 2007).

Anderson and Whiston (2005) reviewed sexual assault education programming on a few college campuses and showed that such programming has some strengths and many weaknesses. Although this programming is not specifically regarding dating violence, sexual abuse is a very pertinent aspect of dating violence on college campuses. In this review, it was determined that

the programming which elicited the most positive change in participants was rape programming. They found that when the program focused on education, knowledge, and dispelling myths, participants were much more likely to have a positive impact than from rape empathy programs (Anderson & Whiston, 2005). Other notable findings from this study were the status of the facilitator (meaning a professional presenter vs. a graduate student or peer presenter) influenced how successful the programs were in promoting positive changes. They also were able to determine that programs which included more than one subject area are less effective overall than those programs focused on one topic (Anderson & Whiston, 2005).

Theory

Being exploratory in nature, this study recognizes how there are many differing and conflicting theories which attempt to explain why dating collegiate couples use violence, in any shape or form, towards one another. When considering theoretical application, it must be taken into consideration how this study does not strive to determine why dating violence occurs, but to look at how schools are responding to dating violence and the student perception of such responses; therefore, this study utilizes multiple theories in order to attempt to explain these things. Feminist theory, the social construction of masculinity, and queer theory are used to explore the institutional policies and educational programming set in place at these five colleges. These three theories are used because they help explain societal views of dating violence and how these views may impact the development of policies and programming on college campuses. Furthermore, the theory of symbolic interactionism is used to examine the student perception piece of this study. Although not commonly used in the inquiry of dating violence, this theory is applicable to this research project because it helps explain why students feel the way they do and how their perception impacts their social interactions. This research project

consists of a two part study; therefore, in order to achieve a more holistic and comprehensive

review, this multi-faceted theoretical application is warranted.

Feminist theory. Feminist theory stems from the ideas of Marx and Engels and focuses

on the causes of women's oppression (Spade & Valentine, 2011). Feminist theory is broad and

there are many different dimensions. Social and radical feminist approaches best suit the

exploration of IPV. Social feminism posits that the capitalistic system coupled with the

patriarchal family structure work together as the basis for female oppression and exploitation

(Spade & Valentine, 2011). Radical feminism argues patriarchy, which is the domination and

power of men over women, is the fundamental way men oppress women (Spade & Valentine,

2011). These theorists believe IPV to be the result of male dominance and female subservience

and men are always viewed as the perpetrators of such violence (Shorey et al., 2008). This

patriarchal aspect of feminist theory help to explain how important the power and control of the

patriarchal society are to preserve male dominance and female subordination (Akers & Sellers,

2009).

According to Marin and Russo (1999, as cited in Basile, Hall, & Walters, 2013) this

patriarchal society, which the social and radical feminist posit, helps to encourage the

perpetration and use of violence as a means by which to maintain and exert power in dating

relationships. The power and control sought by men in dating relationships is seen as the

epicenter of IPV perpetration (Basile et al., 2013). Another dimension of feminist theory which

attempts to explain violence in dating relationships is gender role conflict (Burton, Halpern-

Felsher, Rankin, Rehm, & Humphreys, 2011). This conflict occurs when restrictive gender roles,

which have been learned through adolescent socialization, result in the restriction, devaluation,

or violation of women in intimate relationships (Good, et al., 1995, as cited in Burton et al.,

2011). These restrictive gender roles have the potential to affect how women perceive their own

need to maintain a healthy personal wellbeing and may lead to further subordination to male

power exerted through violence.

Feminist theorists also believe if a female is violent towards her male partner it is solely

out of self-defense while male aggression is always used to instill fear and oppress female

victims. Theorists have attempted to show how control and power are used by males in dating

relationships; however, the directionality is hard to determine. What this means is it is difficult to

determine whether control and power cause dating violence or are the natural result of violent

relationships (Shorey et al., 2008).

Feminist theory focuses on female empowerment and the formation of the patriarchal

society. This theory is informed by the social construction of masculinity and shares many

similar premises. The social construction of masculinity helps to explain why a patriarchal

society exists and how both genders (male and female) are impacted by the construction and

stratification of society. These theories also paint a detailed picture of how society has impacted

male and female relations, specifically violence in male/female intimate relationships.

Social Construction of Masculinity. Lorber (2006) explains in her essay how gender is

one of the most pervasive ideologies in society. She argues gender is not biologically founded or

constructed, rather it is an ideology which has been constructed over and over again by society as

a whole (Lorber, 2006). The construction of gender by society provides a rigid framework of

expectations of gendered roles, even from childhood. Lorber (2006) argues this social

construction of gender begins at birth when the sex of the child determines how it should act and

be treated for the rest of its life. She claims gender is a social institution which attributes rights

and responsibility to those individuals who fall into this construction and these roles are enforced

through the informal sanctions of peers and formal sanctions by those in positions of authority so that an individual must take huge risks in order to live outside of this socially constructed gendered society (Lorber, 2006).

Kaufman (2007) takes this idea of gender roles a step further by discussing how these roles influence the social construction of masculinity. He too agrees this construction begins very early on in life and by the age of five or six, most male children have already been indoctrinated by the masculinity ideology. Masculinity is constantly being reinforced through daily interactions with society; however, Kaufman (2007) claims this is because masculinity is in a constant state of fragility. This fragility stems from the idea that masculinity does not actually exist biologically, it is simply an ideology, a scripted behavior men are taught to live by. Kaufman (2007) argues boys are not simply taught about masculinity, it is engrained in them, as if it becomes a central part of their identity; therefore, they must protect this fragile core of their being. One of the most common forms of expression of this fragility is male violence towards women because it is one of the most straightforward demonstrations of patriarchy and male dominance over women. This male domination helps to reinforce masculinity and protect it in its most fragile state (Kaufman, 2007). This violence serves as a means to affirm personal power in relation to the socially structured roles of gender and masculinity (Kaufman, 2007).

Feminist based theories and the social construction of masculinity paint a picture of a male dominant, patriarchal society; however, these theories tend to focus on a heterosexual society and fail to consider not all individuals fit this label. Queer theory is informed by feminist and gender constructionist perspectives and takes these theories a step further. This new and emerging theory takes into consideration all aspects of sexuality and uses the socially

constructed gender roles to explain all forms of IPV, whether it be heterosexual or homosexual in

nature.

Queer Theory. Queer theory is an emerging theory and is focused on attempting to

understand sexuality not in the terms in which it has been traditionally defined by society, but

exploring the idea that sexual identities are fluid, flexible, and changing (Spade & Valentine,

2011). The primary tenet of queer theory relating to dating violence is the argument that identity

and behaviors must be separated from one another (Spade & Valentine, 2011). Queer theorists

stemmed from feminist theory and argue power and control are not only used by men to

dominate women, but can be used in the context of IPV by any individual towards another

individual regardless of either individual's sexual identity (Romero, Jackson, & Fineman, 2009).

Few studies have incorporated queer theory in their research framework and this current study

seeks to expand upon the narrow feminist perspective of dating violence and incorporate this

new idea which breaks down the pre-existing cultural categories of sexuality.

These three theories allow for a macro-level theoretical analysis. The strength of

combining these theories provides a means by which to apply a theoretical perspective to these

social institutions with a focus on sex and gender. However, this theoretical analysis would be

incomplete without an investigation of interpersonal, micro-level sociological theory. By

utilizing a micro-level theory, such as symbolic interactionism, the individual student's

perceptions and opinions can be taken into consideration.

Symbolic interactionism. George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) laid the foundation for the

development of the theory of symbolic interactionism through his work on the sociology of

everyday life (Ritzer, 2007). One of Mead's students, Herbert Blumer, helped to develop the

main tenets of theory. These tenets are as follows: (1) humans define their own situations and act

on those definitions; (2) the cause of these actions is based off of social interaction with other humans; (3) and the meanings and definitions humans attribute to things are interpreted, modified, and acted upon based on each individual's perspective (Blumer, 1969). Since this original formation of the theory, other premises such as humans needing to be understood as social creatures, understood as thinking beings, and understood as active beings in relation to responding to their environments have been added to the theory of symbolic interactionism (Charon, 2010).

What this theory says is humans respond to any given situation based on how they personally define it, whether or not this personal definition corresponds to the actual reality of what is occurring. This concept of the "defined situation" was created by W.I. Thomas (1863-1947), in which he explained reality does not really matter, the individual's defined situation does. This definition, not reality, causes people to act in certain ways and not in other ways (Ritzer, 2007). An example would be if an individual perceives they are in danger walking around at night, when in reality they are not, they may stay inside once it gets dark in order to protect themselves.

Symbolic interactionism is all about the lenses through which individuals view society. Each person has their own unique lenses which have been developed based on their previous interactions with society. College students have their own ways of viewing society around them and interact with society based on their own personal views, the lenses they choose to wear. This is especially true in terms of students' views of dating violence and preventative measure taken. This theory helps to provide insight into how they way college students perceive dating violence affects their opinions, beliefs, and interactions with the crime.

Theoretical Synthesis and Application

Feminist theory, the social construction of masculinity, and queer theory, while not

utilized heavily to develop of the questionnaire, are leading and emerging theories in the field.

These theories will be useful in the examination of the policies and programming regarding

dating violence and how the patriarchal society may have influenced the formulation of both.

Symbolic interactionism is not a common theory to be attributed to dating violence. Since this

study focuses on student perception and not on the causes of dating violence in intimate

relationships, it is deemed to be an acceptable and necessary theory for the analysis of the

questionnaire portion of this study. As such, this study is informed by social theory and the

findings of the study will incorporate an assessment of the ways at which and extent to which the

data collected in this study support the application of these theories to the specific area of dating

violence.

Hypotheses

Based on the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework being applied the

following hypotheses have been formed: (1) The first part of this study, the policy and

programming analysis, will show a trend in policies and programs geared towards female

students. Based on feminist theory, these five schools being analyzed may be more inclined to

believe females are the most likely victims of dating violence and would require the most help

and education on the topic. Furthermore, in the second part of this study, the survey

questionnaire, (2) Female students will be more likely to believe that dating violence is a

prevalent crime on their campus, regardless of their institution; (3) Female students will feel

more at risk of becoming a victim and will fear becoming a victim more than male students; (4)

Female students at coed colleges will be less likely to rate their schools' policies and educational

programs regarding dating violence as adequate than female students at non-coed colleges, male

students at coed colleges, and male students at non-coed colleges. These hypothesized results

will be revealed from the questionnaire based on the symbolic interactionist theory, the idea that

female students at coed colleges will perceive themselves to be at a greater risk of being

victimized by dating violence and will feel there need to be more policies and programs available

to them because of this perceived risk.

Rationale

Even though dating violence is becoming an ever-increasingly studied topic, the current

research study is exploratory in nature because there has been little research done focusing on a

group of institutions in a specific geographical area. Many of the researcher studies conducted

thus far have focused on large universities and there is a lack of information about the

perpetration of dating violence on smaller college campuses. This study seeks to answer the

question of how small, liberal arts colleges in central and southwestern Virginia are tackling the

issue of dating violence. Through a systematic inquiry into the policy and programming of each

of the five institutions, this study aims to gain a better understanding of how smaller colleges are

attempting to combat such a large issue.

This study also seeks to gain a better understanding of how students at these small, liberal

arts college perceive dating violence and the level of awareness they have about the opportunities

for education and prevention of dating violence on their campus. It is important to gain an

understanding of student perception since they are the ones being victimized. Without

acknowledging student opinion and awareness, an institution can only do but so much to protect

their campus from this heinous crime.

Methodology Part One: Systematic Inquiry of Policies and Educational Programming

Before either of the two research components were conducted, approval from each of the five institutions' (Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Sweet Briar College, Hampden-Sydney College, and Bridgewater College) Institutional Review Board (IRB) was obtained. This IRB approval must be obtained for any research involving human subjects and serves as a means to protect participants from any harm they may face by participating in any research activity. Approval had to be obtained from each institution on an individual basis in order to ensure the wellbeing of all student participants involved, regardless of the institution they attend.

Colleges

The content being analyzed is from the five institutions involved in the study: Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Sweet Briar College, Hampden-Sydney College, and Bridgewater College. The policy and programming information is publicly available and this content analysis is serving as a comparison between the five institutions and not as an official policy analysis being performed for these institutions.

Source Documents

The materials used for the content analysis are the official institution websites and the student handbook from each institution, which is available to the public. The information about programming and educational services regarding dating violence was obtained from the institutions' websites and was found using the website search engines and student information sections. The student handbooks were used to learn about the various policies and procedures, or lack thereof, regarding dating violence and what resources are available to students if they are, or know of someone, who is a victim of dating violence.

Procedure and Analysis

This aspect of the research study consisted of a modified policy/content analysis based on guidance from Miles and Hubberman (1994), which provided a guide for coding and analyzing content such as the schools' policies and programs regarding dating violence. The data gathered was analyzed through a comparative content analysis using mezzo-level policies.

Results Part One: Systematic Inquiry of Policies and Educational Programing

For each of the five institutions surveyed, the policies contained within their school handbooks and their educational programming regarding dating violence found via the search engine on each of the institution's official webpages was reviewed. All of the information found in this section was publicly available and was reviewed for the sole purpose of this project and should not under any circumstances be considered an official review for any of the institutions. The five institutions involved in this study were: Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Bridgewater College, Sweet Briar College, and Hampden-Sydney College.

School Handbook Policies

Each of the five institutions included an introductory statement regarding honor and conduct being the responsibility of every individual within the college community. The handbooks also included language regarding respect for self and others and helping to create a safe environment for academic pursuits. Each handbook also encouraged students to report incidences of policy infractions and the Bridgewater College (2013) handbook encouraged students to not be a bystander in a situation "in which your involvement can make a difference in the lives of others" (pp. 71). This information was collected from the introductory portions of the student handbooks, specifically the introduction to the colleges' codes of conduct and honor codes. After analyzing the introductions, the handbooks were then analyzed for policies

regarding dating violence, sexual misconduct/rape, and violence in general. They were also analyzed for information regarding access to help for students provided by each institution.

Dating violence policies. Of the five colleges included within this study, three of the institutions had no language regarding dating violence specifically located within their student handbooks (Hampden-Sydney College, 2013; Lynchburg College, 2013; Sweet Briar College, 2103). Randolph College (2013) did not use the term dating violence specifically; however, in their policy regarding sexual misconduct, their handbook explained how sexual misconduct can occur in an intimate relationship as a tool to "maintain power and control" (Randolph College, 2013, pp. 101). The only college to use the term dating violence was Bridgewater College (Bridgewater College, 2013). They included dating violence as a type of sexual misconduct and defined it as "violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim" (BC, 2103, pp. 101). Although Bridgewater College does give a definition for dating violence, the policy places certain stipulations on what can be considered a "dating relationship" including length of the relationship and frequency of interaction between those involved in the relationship (BC, 2013).

Sexual misconduct/rape policies. In appliance with Title IX regulations, each of the five colleges has a policy regarding sexual misconduct on the college campus. The colleges included in this study all had very similar policies and reporting procedures regarding sexual misconduct. Each of the institutions defined the various forms of sexual misconduct and all included these basic categories: non-consensual intercourse or sexual contact, sexual exploitation, and sexual harassment. At each school students were encouraged to report any form of sexual misconduct they may have experienced or witnessed. Each school required judicial hearings and sought to best help the victim in feeling comfortable during the remained of their academic pursuits.

Students were also encouraged to seek medical help and to involve the local police department. Three of the colleges (H-SC, 2013; LC, 2013; RC, 2013) stated the college has the right to pursue legal action in cases regarding sexual misconduct with or without the consent of the victim. No one school had a sexual misconduct policy that was either far superior or far inferior to the rest; they all contained the same basic information for students.

General violence policies. None of the colleges had a specific section regarding violence in general. Sweet Briar College had virtually no language regarding physical violence (SBC, 2013). The other four institutions contained brief statements about physical violence and harassment in the overviews of their human rights policies and with most other human rights violations, students were encouraged to report violence violations and most incidences were resolved through administrative hearings.

Access to help. All five of the institutions provided information within their student handbooks regarding on campus resources for help and support provided to students. These resources included campus safety and security, health and counseling centers, and access to the dean of students office. Lynchburg College (2013), Randolph College (2013), and Bridgewater College (2013) also provided detailed information about off campus resources including local police departments, hospitals, and counseling services. Randolph College (2013) even provided contact information for local sexual assault programs that provide help to individuals who have suffered from any kind of sexual victimization. Overall, each of the five colleges provided students with clear and detailed information about the many different on and off campus resources and facilities they may contact if they have suffered any form of victimization.

School Educational Programming.

By using the search engine feature on each of the five schools' official webpages, the educational programs provided to students regarding dating violence and sexual misconduct/rape were analyzed. The same key terms were used in the search engine at each institution in the hopes of finding any relevant educational programs each school may have offered to students. It is possible that the search engines and the school websites were not fully up to date and that these schools may indeed offer educational programs this search was unable to identify. Similarly to the analysis of school handbooks, the school webpages were searched for educational programs regarding dating violence, sexual assault and rape. The availability of programs and the perceived targeted populations were analyzed as well.

Dating violence education. The terms used for this search at each of the five institutions were: dating, dating violence, dating education, and dating violence education. Using these search terms, Lynchburg College and Sweet Briar College revealed no educational programs regarding dating violence available to students. Hampden-Sydney College did not offer any on campus programing, but did supply students with a link to an external web source entitled "The Unabridged Student Counseling Virtual Pamphlet Collection" which provided students with information on relationships, sexual assault, and sexual harassment.

Furthermore, Randolph College provided a seminar regarding relationships, sexual misconduct, and dating violence provided by a local sexual assault program during their 2009 freshman orientation; however, through further research, it was unable to be determined whether or not this program is utilized during every freshman orientation that occurs. Lastly, determined through a 2013 report, Bridgewater College participates in the Red Flag Campaign, a public awareness campaign which focuses on shedding light on collegiate dating violence and educating

students in order to prevent further incidences of dating violence on the college campus. Although Randolph College and Bridgewater College do provide some form of dating violence education, it does not appear that any of the five institutions offer a regular and reoccurring dating violence educational program available to all students.

Sexual assault/rape education. The terms used for this search were sexual assault, sexual assault education, rape, and rape education. Through this search it was found Lynchburg College only offered links to external emergency resources including rape and sexual assault national hotlines; no other educational programs were found at this institution regarding these topics. Hampden-Sydney College once again mostly provided students with links to other web sources regarding these topics; however, they also provided new students with a program looking at the issues of dating, sex, and rape on campus during their freshman orientation.

Sweet Briar College and Bridgewater College both offer Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) training. Bridgewater College conducts two RAD courses each school year for female students and Sweet Briar College offers RAD as a .5 credit class students may choose to enroll in. Bridgewater College also offers programs on sexual misconduct during freshman orientation and for the general student body at the beginning of each semester according to a 2013 report. The Counseling Center and Health Services staff also offer smaller scale programs regarding these subjects as part of the residence hall programming at Bridgewater College. Randolph College offers similar programming through freshman orientation and mandatory hall meetings for residential students. Randolph College also offers self-defense classes taught quarterly.

Availability of programs and targeted populations. Although there are some educational programs regarding dating violence and sexual assault/rape at the institutions studied, there appears to be room for improvement as well. Lynchburg College, Sweet Briar

College, and Hampden-Sydney College had little or no available programs to students and the programs they did offer were either only available to incoming freshmen or students interested in taking such courses for credit. Furthermore, even though Bridgewater College and Randolph College do offer a wider variety and greater quantity of programs, the targeted populations seem to still be incoming freshmen and female students, especially when it comes to the RAD programs at Bridgewater College. Each of these five schools hold incoming freshmen as their main priority in educational programming, with female students the next tier down. There is even a substantial amount of programming for residential students as well; however, there are still many perceived gaps in the educational programming provided to students at these institutions especially in regards to dating violence education.

Discussion Part One: Systematic Inquiry of Policies and Educational Programing

After analyzing the school handbooks and educational programs offered, certain things come to mind. In regards to the student handbooks and school policies, each school offered a very detailed and lengthy section on policies and procedures regarding sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct/assault/rape was included in the analysis portion of this project because it is a type of dating violence that may occur. However, to be clear, sexual misconduct/assault/rape does not always occur in a dating relationship and is not the only form of violence that occurs in dating relationships. Bridgewater College does give a brief definition of dating violence in their student handbook, but it is defined as a form of sexual misconduct. The definition of dating violence is pretty vague and since it is housed under the sexual misconduct policy, students may be lead to believe only violence of a sexual nature can be considered dating violence, which is not the case. Randolph College also included language explaining how sexual misconduct can and does occur in intimate relationships and is just as serious and should be reported. Sexual

misconduct/assault/rape is a serious crime and is nothing to be taken lightly, which none of the schools have done; however, this study focuses on dating violence and there is a huge gap in policy regarding this crime which literature shows is a fairly regular occurrence on almost all college campuses.

Furthermore, the school educational programming regarding dating violence was lacking overall as well. Only one of the schools (Bridgewater College) provided an event on campus for dating violence awareness and education, all of the other institutions did not. Most of the colleges had some form of educational opportunities regarding sexual assault and rape; however, these opportunities were geared towards incoming freshmen and female students only. Certain schools such as Randolph College did incorporate sexual misconduct education as part of their residential hall programs; however, none of the schools addressed this issue for commuter students or male students, other than the incoming freshmen. As stated above, this study focuses on dating violence and has found the educational programs of these five schools inadequate in response to the frequency of dating violence incidences the literature shows occurring on college campuses across the nation.

Methodology Part Two: Survey Research

Participants

Participants were obtained through school wide emails sent out to Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Bridgewater College, Sweet Briar College, and Hampden-Sydney College undergraduate students. The sample of participants in this study was 277 people. This sample included students of all academic standings and various majors at each institution. The mean age of participants was 19.96 (SD = 1.831). Table 1(see Appendix H) displays a frequency distribution of the survey demographic information collected for all participants. This includes

the variables gender, year in school, and school attending. Participation in this study was completely voluntary and no personally identifying information was gathered about those who chose to participate.

Materials

An online survey provided via Google Forms was taken by each individual who chose to participate in the study. The survey contained an introductory section (see Appendix A), informed consent agreement (see Appendix B), demographic information (see Appendix C), questions regarding student perception and awareness of dating violence (see Appendix D), and a debriefing statement (see Appendix E). The demographic information collected included age, gender, year in school, major, and which of the five institutions the participant was currently enrolled in. The questionnaire part of the survey contained open-ended, multiple choice, and scale questions. The open-ended and multiple choice questions sought to measure student knowledge of what constitutes dating violence while the scale questions were designed to gauge student perception and awareness of policies and programming regarding dating violence on their campus.

Procedure and Analysis

Participation in this study was completely voluntary. A campus-wide email was sent out at each institution to all of the current undergraduate students. The email contained a brief introduction of the study (see Appendix F), including information about the researcher and the purpose of the project, and the link to the online questionnaire. If students decided to participate, they clicked on the link and were taken to the survey. No personally identifiable information was collected and informed consent (see Appendix B) was obtained through checking a box which acknowledged the study's approval through the IRB and consent to participate. No participant

was allowed to continue further into the questionnaire if they did not check the box

acknowledging consent. Participants had the right to exit the survey at any time they wished

without finishing it. The data collected from the questionnaire was summarized and analyzed

using basic descriptive statistics for the key variables, and using inferential statistics for testing

the associations between and among key variables.

Results Part Two: Survey Research

The information provided in Table 2 (see Appendix H) are the top three answers provided

by students separated by college in regards to the open-ended question asking students about

what constitutes dating violence. The most common answers were physical and emotional abuse.

Table 3 (see Appendix H) displays the frequency distribution of student responses to the multiple

choice question regarding the most common form of dating violence on their particular college

campus. As seen in this table, 67.9% of students believe the most common form of dating

violence on their campus is emotional/psychological abuse. Furthermore, students were also

asked another open-ended question about what could be done to prevent dating violence on their

campus, these results are shown in Table 4 (see Appendix H). The results for this question are

again provided by displaying the top three answers at each institution. Students at all five schools

overwhelmingly answered education and awareness as the main ways their institutions could

prevent dating violence on their campuses.

After the open-ended questions and the multiple choice question, students were asked a

series of 13 scale questions. These questions were all measured on a scale from one to five with

one being strongly disagree and five being strongly agree. The responses to these 13 questions

were aggregated to form 5 variables: (1) Overall understanding of dating violence; (2)

Prevalence of dating violence on the student's specific campus; (3) whether or not educational

programs and school policies should be made available to the students at their particular

institution; (4) fear of victimization of dating violence; (5) overall adequacy of the policies and

educational programming currently provided by their institution. These five variables represent

students' overall perception of dating violence. For each of these variables, participants were

given a score between one and five. For the first variable, overall understanding of dating

violence, the lower the participant's score, the higher their understanding of dating violence. For

the rest of the variables the opposite was true, meaning the higher the score the more the

student's agreed with the variables.

Student perception of dating violence was first analyzed by type of school: coed schools

vs. single sex institutions. Table 5 (see Appendix H) displays a descriptive analysis of the five

variables by type of school. An Independent Samples T-Test was run in order to determine any

significant differences of these five variables between types of school. Table 6 (see Appendix H)

displays the results of this test. There was a significant difference in the scores for the students'

belief of whether or not programs and policies specifically regarding dating violence should be

made available to them by their institution, $t = 2.790$, $p = 0.006$. This result shows students at

coed colleges have a significantly higher belief that programs and policies should be made

available to them than students at single sex colleges.

After analyzing student perception by type of school, perception was then analyzed by

each of the five schools. Table 7 (see Appendix H) shows a descriptive analysis of student

perception by school. A One-Way ANOVA was run in order to determine if there were any

significant differences between the five variables, the results of which can be seen in Table 8

(see Appendix H). This analysis revealed a significant difference for three variables: overall

understanding of dating violence ($F[4,264] = 3.094$, $p = 0.16$), whether or not programs or

policies should be made available (*F*[4,270] = 5.093, p = .001), and fear of victimization

(*F*[4,272] = 1.311, p = .021).

In order to determine where the significant difference was, a post-hoc Tukey test was run. The post-hoc test revealed the difference for both overall understanding and a need for programs and policies were between Hampden-Sydney College and all four of the other schools. Hampden-Sydney students had an overall lesser understanding of dating violence and had a significantly lower belief programs and policies regarding dating violence should be made available to them. It is possible these results are slightly skewed because of the low response rate from Hampden-Sydney students. However, the post-hoc Tukey test also revealed the difference in fear of victimization was between Lynchburg College and Randolph College (p = 0.46).

Furthermore, student perception was also analyzed by gender. Although there were two transgender participants and one participant who chose not to answer, student perception was analyzed by male and female participants only because there were not enough participants in the other groups in order to properly conduct an analysis. Table 9 (see Appendix H) displays the descriptive analysis of student perception by gender. An Independent Samples T-Test was run in order to determine any significant differences of the five variables between genders. Table 10 (see Appendix H) displays the results of this test. There was a significant difference between males and females for their overall understanding of dating violence, t = 3.340, p = .001. Females had a significantly better understanding of dating violence than the male students. The T-Test also revealed a significant difference in whether or not programs and policies should be made available, t = -3.044, p = .003. Similarly to the first variable, female students had a significantly greater belief that programs and policies should be made available to them by their colleges. Lastly, the T-Test revealed a significant difference in fear of victimization, t = -1.972, p

= .050. Not surprisingly, female students had a significantly greater fear of victimization than their male counterparts.

The last statistical analysis of student perception conducted was by type of school and gender, creating four new categories: female students attending coed colleges, female students attending a single-sex college, male students attending coed colleges, and male students attending a single-sex college. The descriptive analysis of student perception by type of school and gender can be found in Table 11 (see Appendix H). A One-Way ANOVA (see Table 12, Appendix B) was run in order to determine if there were any significant differences. This analysis revealed a significant difference in three variables: overall understanding of dating violence (F[3,261] = 1.234, p = .001), prevalence of dating violence on campus (F[3,265] = 2.896, p = .043), and whether or not programs and policies should be made available (F[3,268] = 5.985, p = .000).

In order to determine where the significant difference was, a post-hoc Tukey test was run. Although initial significance was found for prevalence of dating violence on campus, when the post-hoc test was conducted, the significance did not hold. However, the post-hoc Tukey test did reveal for overall understanding of dating violence the difference was between coed females and coed males (p = .032) and single sex males (p = .002). This means coed females have an overall better understanding of dating violence than coed males and single-sex males. There was also a difference between single-sex females and single-sex males (p = .034) for the same variable, meaning single-sex females have an overall better understanding of dating violence than single-sex males. For the variable whether or not programs and policies should be made available, the significant difference was between single sex males and coed females (p = .001) and single-sex

females (p = .041). This means single-sex males have an overall less of a belief programs and

policies should be made available to them than coed females and single-sex females.

Discussion Part Two: Survey Research

Being exploratory in nature, the goal of this study was not to prove or disprove the

aforementioned hypotheses provided. The hypotheses merely served as a starting point, as

educated guesses as to what may or may not have been found through this research. The

findings, however, did support the hypotheses that female students regard dating violence to be a

more pertinent issue to their lives and have an overall greater fear of victimization than male

students do. These findings regarding female students' beliefs on dating violence support the use

of symbolic interactionism as a theoretical perspective. Females view their collegiate experience

through a lens where dating violence is part of their reality and they interact with the subject

differently than anyone else. Although there were few school policies and educational programs

in place regarding dating violence at these five schools, female students were the targeted group

for most of these policies and programs. However, the finding of this study should not be

condensed to only male vs. female perspectives; the needs and opinions of students as a whole,

of liberal arts students as a whole, should be taken into careful consideration.

When students were asked to determine the most common form of dating violence on

their campuses, 67.9% of all students surveyed answered emotional/psychological abuse (with

sexual abuse coming in a distant second with only 21.7%). When the first phase of this study was

conducted, the modified content analysis, no programs or policies regarding this specific form of

dating violence were found to be in place at any of the five schools. Many of the policies and

programs offered focused solely on dating violence as sexual misconduct, but this not only

makes dating violence out to be solely a sexual crime, it also fails to address what students are

saying is the key issue: emotional and psychological abuse. Emotional and psychological abuse are the gateway to all other forms of abuse in a dating relationship and cannot be separated from the other forms of dating violence, such as sexual abuse, physical abuse, or neglect. How is it then colleges are failing to address what appears to be the most pertinent aspect of dating violence their students face?

Furthermore, when students were asked what could be done to prevent dating violence on their campus, the top two overwhelming responses at each of the five institutions were education and awareness. Students recognize a need and these findings demonstrate this need for a greater understanding of dating violence and a greater awareness of this crime is applicable to students at each of these five institutions.

Student perception was measured in five variables analyzed by four different categories. The variable overall understanding of dating violence was statistically significantly different between Hampden-Sydney College students and all other students surveyed, between male and female students, between coed females and coed/single-sex males, and between single-sex males and single-sex females. Male students, especially those attending the single-sex institution, had an overall lesser of an understanding of dating violence, this is possibly the result of the lens through which male students view reality and by which they formulate their social interactions. It is important for male students to not only understand what constitutes dating violence, but for them to understand dating violence is pertinent to their lives as well.

One of the more surprising results encountered were the post-hoc results for the ANOVA run regarding student perception by school. It was not surprising at all to find Hampden-Sydney College students had an overall less of an understanding of dating violence and a lesser of a belief programs and policies should be made available to them compared to all of the other

institutions. However, the result indicating Randolph College students had a significantly greater

fear of victimization than Lynchburg College students was astounding.

Randolph College and Lynchburg College are located 3.8 miles away from each other in

Lynchburg, Virginia. So then, why is there such a difference of fear of victimization of dating

violence between these students? Randolph College does provide more education regarding

sexual misconduct and dating violence than Lynchburg College does. One possible explanation

is Randolph College students fear victimization more because they have a better understanding

of the crime than Lynchburg College students. Another possible explanation is Randolph College

is located closer to downtown Lynchburg; therefore, the students have an overall greater fear of

crime in general due to their geographic location. It is impossible to accurately determine why

there is a disparity between these two groups of students without conducting further analytical

research on the topic.

Continuing further, the variable regarding whether or not programs and policies should

be made available was the only variable to be statistically significant regardless of grouping. It is

important to note even though certain groupings of students, such as female students and coed

students, held stronger beliefs about policies and programs being made available to them, the

mean for this variable, regardless of grouping, was never below 3.3, meaning, overall, all of the

students surveyed at least somewhat agreed there should be policies and educational

programming specifically regarding dating violence made available to them by their institutions.

This echoes the students' earlier responses indicating education and awareness were the most

efficient ways to prevent dating violence on these college campuses.

What about the programs these schools do offer though? The only group of students to

rate their school's offered programs and policies regarding dating violence as adequate were

Hampden-Sydney students, all of the other groups of students overall rated the offered programs and policies as less than adequate. Since most of the schools did not offer educational programming regarding dating violence and virtually none of the schools offered student conduct polices in their official school handbooks regarding this issue, it is not surprising students feel dissatisfied with what measures of prevention are being taken on their campuses.

Conclusion

What does all of this mean? The literary review revealed dating violence as a significant problem plaguing college students across the United States; however, the literature also left huge gaps in the field of study regarding collegiate dating violence. With virtually no studies conducted regarding not only student perception of the crime and college response to the issue, but also small, liberal arts colleges in a somewhat understudied region of the country, this study sought to open the door and allow the students' voices to be heard. The findings revealed the depth of concern students have regarding this topic and the seeming lack of precautionary measures these colleges are taking in order to educate and protect their students about and from this heinous crime.

Limitations

For the first phase of this study, there were a couple possible limitations. The search words used in the analysis of the official school websites may have either been too broad or possibly may have been not specific enough in order for the websites' search engines to find the programming regarding dating violence these schools may offer. On the other hand, it is also possible the official schools websites are incomplete and do not accurately represent the educational programs regarding dating violence provided by each of these five institutions. It is possible these schools do offer programs for their students about dating violence but do not post

them on their official websites. Programs such as these may send the "wrong message" to potential students and parents, making it appear as if these schools have a problem with dating violence. The fact of the matter is, whether the schools choose to recognize it or not, dating violence is a problem on all college campuses and should be thought of as more than simply a possible public relations issue.

There were also multiple limitations regarding the second phase of the study. Demographically, there were far more females who participated in the survey than male students (see Table 1, Appendix H). As discussed previously, this could be because, based on the symbolic interactionist model, female student perceive dating violence to be more relevant to their lives and thus would be more willing to participate in a research study such as this. Furthermore, due to unforeseen circumstances out of the control of the researcher, the amount of time available to survey Hampden-Sydney students was shorter than all of the other schools, resulting in a low response rate for participants from the all-male, single-sex institution. This may have possibly skewed the statistical results regarding Hampden-Sydney College stated above.

There is always the possibility of human error as a limitation with any research study of this kind. It is possible the questionnaire did not accurately measure student perception and knowledge of dating violence or students were unable to fully understand what the questionnaire was intending to ask. It is also possible, although highly unlikely, an individual outside of these five colleges may have taken the survey. The survey was sent out through official school wide emails to all of the undergraduate students at each of these five colleges. Being completely anonymous though, it is impossible to determine whether or not all of the participants were in

fact undergraduate students at these five colleges or if the participants were truthful in all of their responses.

Recommendations

Overall, through this research it appears colleges are not doing enough to prevent dating violence on their campuses. Students recognize dating violence as a viable problem and see a need for education and awareness. Colleges should take student opinion and perceptions into consideration when forming policies and educational programming not only regarding dating violence, but all issues relevant on college campuses. No one knows better about events on the college campus than the students who go there. Further studies should be conducted in order to determine student perception regarding various other problems on college campuses in order to provide college officials with a clearer picture of what is happening on their campuses.

If students and college administrators were to work together in order to formulate student conduct policies and educational programs, it is likely these policies and programs would more accurately reflect the actual needs of the students and would be of more benefit to the college community overall. If a study like this was conducted with a fixed-interval longitudinal design, rather than cross-sectional, it would provide a clearer picture of how schools are taking student opinion into consideration and responding to campus issues. The more colleges are confronted with how students really feel, the more likely they will be to respond to the students' opinions and make changes which will impact the college community.

Dating violence is a comprehensive and still relatively new issue to be brought to the attention of collegiate administrators and undergraduate students across the United States. Taboo topics such as this are not often discussed among peers and are often viewed as "personal problems" to be dealt with by the individual. The purpose of this study was to shed light on

dating violence and to draw attention to this crime which haunts most college campuses. The more students begin to talk about crimes such as dating violence, the better chance they will have to stand up against these crimes and actually do something about them. Undergraduate students traditionally have four years to take in all the collegiate world has to offer them and no student should be kept from savoring all they can from their institution because of a crime such as dating violence. It is time collegiate administrators and students alike take a harsher stand against this senseless crime and take back their right to an education without fear and shame.

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Appendix A

Introduction

      Thank you for participating in this research study. My name is Patrice Gibson and I am a Senior Criminology major at Lynchburg College. This research is being conducted for my Seniors Honors Project in partial fulfillment of the Westover Honors Program. I am conducting a study entitled "Dating Violence on the College Campus: Exploring Student Perception and Awareness." The purpose of this research study is to explore student perception of dating violence and focus on students from small colleges and universities in the central and southwest part of Virginia. Your participation in this research study is expected to last no more than 15 minutes. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and if at any point you wish to no longer participate, you may exit the survey. The survey itself consists of an informed consent agreement and questions regarding demographic information and your perception and awareness of dating violence on your campus. Information regarding what to do if you have questions or become upset or bothered during or as a result of your participation in this study is provided on the following page in the informed consent agreement.

Appendix B

Informed Consent Agreement

Project Title: Dating Violence on the College Campus: A Study of Student Perception of Prevalence and Policy in Regards to Dating Violence on Campuses in Southwestern and Central Virginia

Purpose: The purpose of this research study is to explore student perception of dating violence and focus on students from small colleges and universities in the central and southwest part of Virginia. Furthermore, this study will build upon a base measure of student perception of the crime alone in order to look at the students perceptions' of school policies and procedures in regards to dating violence. While numerous studies have been done on dating violence, this thesis research study seeks to look into specific colleges and universities (Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Sweet Briar College, Hampden Sydney College, and Bridgewater College) and how their students are affected by dating violence. Anticipated findings of this research seek to better the understanding of student needs in regards to dating violence for these campuses. Beyond that, this study hopes to broaden the literature on dating violence and how it impacts students in this specific geographic region.

Participation: You are being asked to participate in this study because you are 18 years old or older and are a currently enrolled undergraduate student at Lynchburg College, Randolph College, Bridgewater College, Sweet Briar College, or Hampden-Sydney College. This study will take place online through an anonymous survey provided via Google Forms. You will be asked to answer a brief survey on your perception of dating violence on the college campus and on your individual schools' policies regarding this crime. You will not be asked to self-identify as a victim or be asked any identifying information. This survey merely gauges student perception of dating violence in order to better understand this crime as it relates to these specific schools.

Time Required: Your participation is expected to take about 15 minutes of your time.

Risks & Benefits: There are less than minimal foreseeable risks associated with the completion of this study; however, if you become upset while or as a result of completing this questionnaire, you are responsible for seeking assistance and you are to contact the Counseling Center on your campus and/or your primary care physician. For Lynchburg College students, the Counseling Center is located on the terrace level of Hundley Hall and can be reached via phone at 434-544-8616. For Randolph College students, the Counseling Center is located in the Terrell Health and Counseling Centers building behind campus and can be reached via phone at 434-947-8158. For Bridgewater College students you may contact Counseling Services by email at Randy Hook (rhook@bridgewater.edu) or Amy Ghaemmaghami (aghaemma@bridgewater.edu), or you may call Health Services at 540-828-5384. For Sweet Briar College students, counseling appointments may be made by calling Deborah Mays at ext. 6140. For Hampden-Sydney College students, the Wellness Center is located at 204 College Road and can be reached via phone at 434- 223-6167.The study is expected to benefit you by expanding your knowledge of what constitutes dating violence and how to recognize it, In addition, the study is expected to

benefit each of these five college campuses by providing them with a better understanding of how dating violence affects their students and how to better implement policies and education in the future in order to further prevent this crime.

Compensation: There is no compensation for participation in this study.

Voluntary Participation: Please understand that participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason, without penalty. You also have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without penalty. If you want to withdraw from the study please exit the survey at any time. The student researcher and/or any of the faculty research sponsors have the right to not include your survey responses in the study if it is determined that the responses have been falsified or the survey was completed by an individual who is under the age of 18 or not a currently enrolled undergraduate student at one of these five colleges.

Confidentiality: Your individual privacy will be maintained throughout this study. In order to preserve the anonymity of your responses, your information will be assigned a code number. The list connecting your name to this number will be kept in a locked file. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, this list will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report. In order to preserve the confidentiality of your responses, no names, email addresses, addresses, social security numbers, or other personally identifiable information will be used, recorded, or linked in any way to participants' responses. Signed informed consent agreements, research data, and any codes linking research data with subject names must be kept for at least 3 years in a locked room located at 500 Westwood or Dr. Kready's Office on the Lynchburg College campus.

Whom to Contact with Questions: If you have any questions or would like additional information about this research, please contact me, Patrice Gibson, at 804-627-2858, 1501 Lakeside Dr, Box 3099, Lynchburg, VA 24501, or Gibson_p@students.lynchburg.edu. You can also contact my faculty research sponsor at Dr. Sharon Foreman Kready, 1501 Lakeside Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24501; 434-544-8327; or kready.s@lynchburg.edu. You may also contact my Westover Honors Program thesis advisor Dr. Laura Kicklighter at 434-544-8851, 1501 Lakeside Dr., Lynchburg, VA 24501, or kicklighter@lynchburg.edu. The Lynchburg College Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Subjects Research has approved this project. You may also contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Sharon Foreman Kready at Lynchburg College at 434.544.8327 or irb-hs@lynchburg.edu with any questions.

Agreement: I understand the above information and have had all of my questions about participation in this research study answered. By checking the box below I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study described above and verify that I am 18 years of age or older.

This is an electronic survey; please print this screen to retain a copy of this consent document for your records.

The Lynchburg College Institutional Review Board has authorized waiver of documentation of consent since this form is the only record that would link you to the study. Check the box below in lieu of providing your name. By checking the box you are

acknowledging that you have read and agree to the terms listed above and that you are consenting to your participation in this study.

Appendix C

Demographics

Please fill out the following demographic information to the best of your ability.

Age: _____

Gender:
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female
   ☐ Transgender
   ☐ Prefer not to answer

Year in School:
(As defined by your credit hours)
   ☐ Freshman (First-Year)
   ☐ Sophomore
   ☐ Junior
   ☐ Senior

Major(s): _____

School:
   ☐ Lynchburg College
   ☐ Randolph College
   ☐ Bridgewater College
   ☐ Sweet Briar College
   ☐ Hampden-Sydney College

Appendix D

Perception and Awareness of Dating Violence on Your Campus

In the following section you will be asked questions on your perception and awareness of dating violence on your campus. These questions are solely based on perception and not on your own personal experiences. In this section there are open-ended questions and multiple choice questions.

1. When you think of dating violence, what types of violence come to mind?

_____

_____

_____

2. Which of the following do you think is the most common form of dating violence that students experience on your college campus?

   □ Physical Abuse
   □Sexual Abuse
   □ Emotional/Psychological Abuse
   □ Neglect
   □ Other: _____

3. In your opinion, what could be done to help prevent dating violence on your campus?

_____

_____

_____

The next set of questions is scale questions. You will be presented with a statement about your perception or awareness of dating violence on your college campus and educational programs and policies provided by your institution. For each question, you will answer on a scale of 1 to 5 whether you strongly agree or strongly disagree with the presented statement. For each scale, 1 is considered strongly disagreeing and 5 is considered strongly agreeing with the statement.

4. The majority of perpetrators of dating violence on my campus are males.

   1   2   3   4   5
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

5. The majority of perpetrators of dating violence on my campus are females.

   1   2   3   4   5
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

6. A dating relationship can only be considered violent if physical abuse is used.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

7. A dating relationship can only be considered violent if sexual abuse is used.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

8. I feel dating violence is prevalent on my college campus

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

9. Dating violence is not as serious as domestic violence.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

10. It is important that colleges implement educational programs to improve dating violence prevention.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

11. I feel at risk of becoming a victim of dating violence while at college.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

12. I feel well educated by my college about what constitutes dating violence.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

13. I feel well educated by my college about what to do if I feel victimized in a dating relationship or if I know someone who is being victimized by their dating partner.

     1   2   3   4   5

(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

14. I fear becoming a victim of dating violence while at college.

     1   2   3   4   5

(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

15. My college offers adequate educational programs regarding dating violence on my college campus.

     1   2   3   4   5

(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

16. My school has implemented adequate policies governing dating violence on my college campus.

     1   2   3   4   5

(Strongly Disagree)   (Strongly Agree)

Appendix E

Debrief

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study!

Your responses will be very helpful in my efforts to better understand perception and awareness among college students in this region related to dating violence. Also, I plan to share these findings with your institutions -- so your contributions have the potential to impact change.

If you became upset or uncomfortable by answering any of these questions, please reference the informed consent portion of this survey in order to receive instructions for mental health/counseling referrals at your institution.

If you would like a copy of the findings from this study, please feel free to email your request to me at Gibson_p@students.lynchburg.edu.

Again, thank you so much!

-Patrice Gibson

Appendix F

Email Introduction

"My name is Patrice Gibson and I am a Senior Criminology major at Lynchburg College. I am conducting a research study for my Seniors Honors Project in partial fulfillment of the Westover Honors Program. My study is entitled "Dating Violence on the College Campus: Exploring Student Perception and Awareness." Your participation in this research study is expected to last no more than 15 minutes. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and if at any point you wish to no longer participate, you may exit the survey. Information regarding what to do if you have questions or become upset or bothered during or as a result of your participation in this study is provided in the informed consent agreement. Please click the link below to take the survey. The survey will be available from (dates varied for each institution and the survey was run for one week at each institution)"

Appendix G

Institutional Review Board Approvals

Bridgewater College approval received on 12/09/2013 from Dr. Jill Lassiter, Chair, approval number: 13-030.

Hampden-Sydney College approval received on 12/04/2013 from Dr. Jennifer Vitale, Chair, no approval number provided.

Lynchburg College approval received on 11/12/2013 from Dr. Sharon Foreman Kready, Chair, approval number: LCHSA1314050.

Randolph College approval received on 11/21/2013 from Dr. Julio Rodriguez, Chair, no approval number provided.

Sweet Briar College approval received on 11/13/2013 from Dr. Robin Davies, Chair, no approval number provided.

Appendix H

Table 1.

Frequency Distribution of Survey Demographic Information (n=277).

Variable	Number	Percent*
Gender:		
Male	56	20.1
Female	217	78.6
Transgender	2	0.7
Prefer Not to Answer	1	0.4
Year in School:		
Freshman	75	26.9
Sophomore	61	21.9
Junior	67	24.0
Senior	73	26.2
School:		
Lynchburg College	83	29.7
Randolph College	76	27.2
Bridgewater College	41	14.7
Sweet Briar College	58	20.8
Hampden-Sydney College	19	6.8
Type of School:		
Coed	200	71.7
Single-Sex	77	27.6

*Percentages rounded.

Table 2.
Open-Ended Responses to "When you think of dating violence, what types of violence come to mind?" by School (n=277).

Lynchburg College
1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Verbal Abuse

Bridgewater College
1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Rape

Hampden-Sydney College
1. Physical Abuse
2. Rape
3. Verbal Abuse & Psychological
   Abuse

Randolph College
1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse

Sweet Briar College
1. Physical Abuse
2. Verbal Abuse
3. Emotional Abuse

Table 3.
Frequency Distribution of Responses to "Most Common Form of Dating Violence on Your
Campus" (n = 277)

Variable	Number	Percent*
Physical Abuse	12	4.3
Sexual Abuse	60	21.7
Emotional/Psychological Abuse	188	67.9
Neglect	12	4.3
Other	5	1.8

*Percentages rounded.

Table 4.
Open-Ended Responses to "In your opinion, what could be done to help prevent dating violence on your campus?" by School (n=277).

Lynchburg College
1. Education
2. Awareness
3. Resources

Bridgewater College
1. Education
2. Awareness
3. Bystander Intervention

Hampden-Sydney College
1. Education
2. Awareness
3. Harsher Penalties

Randolph College
1. Awareness
2. Education
3. Empowerment/Support
   Groups & Harsher Judicial
   Process/Consequences

Sweet Briar College
1. Education
2. Awareness
3. Instilling Confidence in Women/Empowerment

Table 5.
Descriptive Analysis of Student Perception by Type of School (n=277).

Variable	Coed Schools (n=200)		Single Sex Schools (n=77)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence*	2.04	0.45	2.17	0.56
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus**	2.47	1.09	2.23	0.89
Should Programs & Polices be Available**	4.29	0.92	3.92	1.11
Fear of Victimization**	1.92	1.10	1.79	1.05
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies**	2.71	1.03	2.88	0.93

*Variable was measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being an overall lack of understanding of dating violence and 5 being an overall adequate understanding of dating violence.

**Variables were measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being a strong disagreement with the variable and 5 being a strong agreement with the variable.

Table 6.
T-Test Results for Differences in Student Perception by Type of School (n=277).

Variable	T Statistic	P-Value
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence	-1.728	0.087
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus	1.845	0.067
Should Programs & Polices be Available	2.790	0.006
Fear of Victimization	0.863	0.389
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies	0.316	0.178

Table 7.
Descriptive Analysis of Student Perception by School (n=277).

Variable	Lynchburg College (n=83)		Randolph College (n=76)		Bridgewater College (n=41)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence*	2.05	0.50	2.03	0.47	2.06	0.32
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus**	2.56	1.00	2.53	1.24	2.17	0.92
Should Programs & Polices be Available**	4.38	0.88	4.29	0.95	4.10	0.93
Fear of Victimization**	1.75	0.91	2.22	1.29	1.67	0.93
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies**	2.84	1.03	2.57	1.12	2.70	0.83

Variable	Sweet Briar College (n=58)		Hampden-Sydney College (n=19)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence*	2.06	0.53	2.46	0.56
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus**	2.22	0.90	2.76	0.87
Should Programs & Polices be Available**	4.12	1.03	3.32	1.16
Fear of Victimization**	1.84	1.06	1.63	1.03
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies**	2.82	0.97	3.08	0.77

*Variable was measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being an overall lack of understanding of dating violence and 5 being an overall adequate understanding of dating violence.

**Variables were measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being a strong disagreement with the variable and 5 being a strong agreement with the variable.

Table 8.
ANOVA Results for Student Perception by School (n=277).

Variable	Results
Overall understanding of dating violence	$F(4,264) = 3.094$, p = 0.016
Prevalence of dating violence on campus	$F(4,268) = 1.803$, p = 0.129
Should programs be available	$F(4,270) = 5.093$, p = 0.001
Fear of victimization	$F(4,272) = 2.072$, p = 0.021
Adequacy of offered programs and policies	$F(4,269) = 1.311$, p = 0.266

Table 9.
Descriptive Analysis of Student Perception by Gender (n=273).

Variable	Male (n=56)		Female (n=217)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence*	2.27	0.54	2.01	0.43
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus**	2.15	1.01	2.45	1.04
Should Programs & Polices be Available**	3.79	1.17	4.30	0.89
Fear of Victimization**	1.63	0.99	1.94	1.08
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies**	2.92	0.89	2.69	1.02

*Variable was measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being an overall lack of understanding of dating violence and 5 being an overall adequate understanding of dating violence.

**Variables were measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being a strong disagreement with the variable and 5 being a strong agreement with the variable.

Table 10.
T-Test Results for Differences in Student Perception by Gender (n=273).

Variable	T Statistic	P-Value
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence	3.340	0.001
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus	-1.945	0.053
Should Programs & Polices be Available	-3.044	0.003
Fear of Victimization	-1.972	0.050
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies	1.528	0.128

Table 11.
Descriptive Analysis of Student Perception by Type of School and Gender (n=273).

Variable	Coed Female (n=159)		Single-Sex Female (n=58)		Coed Male (n=37)		Single-Sex Male (n=19)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Overall Understanding of Dating Violence*	1.99	0.39	2.06	0.52	2.21	0.54	2.41	0.53
Prevalence of Dating Violence on Campus**	2.54	1.07	2.21	0.89	2.16	1.15	2.12	0.60
Should Programs & Polices be Available**	4.37	0.82	4.10	1.02	3.95	1.19	3.41	1.06
Fear of Victimization**	1.95	1.08	1.91	1.12	1.68	1.07	1.50	0.79
Adequacy of Offered Programs & Policies**	2.65	1.04	2.80	0.98	2.85	0.95	3.09	0.73

*Variable was measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being an overall lack of understanding of dating violence and 5 being an overall adequate understanding of dating violence.

**Variables were measured on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being a strong disagreement with the variable and 5 being a strong agreement with the variable.

Table 12.
ANOVA Results for Student Perception by Type of School and Gender (n=273).

Variable	Results
Overall understanding of dating violence	$F(3,261) = 1.234$, $p = 0.001$
Prevalence of dating violence on campus	$F(3,265) = 2.896$, $p = 0.043$
Should programs be available	$F(3,268) = 5.985$, $p = 0.000$
Fear of victimization	$F(3,269) = 1.632$, $p = 0.235$
Adequacy of offered programs and policies	$F(3,266) = 1.295$, $p = 0.272$