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Familial Factors Predicting Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence in African American Adolescents

Cassandra Clarke-Williams
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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Familial Factors Predicting Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence in African American

Adolescents

by

Cassandra Clarke-Williams

MS, McDaniel College, 2009

MA, University of Baltimore, 2006

BS, York College, City University of New York, 2001

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Counselor Education and Supervision, Trauma, and Crisis Specialization

Walden University

August 2017

Abstract

Teen dating violence is more prevalent among African Americans than any other racial group in

the United States leading to serious health consequences for victims. However, limited data

exists on how African American adolescents' attitudes and perceptions regarding dating violence

are formed, and whether they are influenced by family members. The purpose of this

nonexperimental correlational study was to determine whether nonverbal or verbal

communication from family members predicted adolescents' attitudes and perceptions toward

dating violence. Survey data from 84 African American men and women ages 18 to 24 were

collected using the Normative Beliefs About Aggression Scale, the Acceptance of Couple

Violence Scale, the Revised Family Communication Patterns Questionnaire, and a demographic

questionnaire. Although past studies have shown that communication related to dating violence

is important because it is essential to adolescents understanding and finding ways of coping with

violence, this study could not confirm that conversation orientation, conformity orientation,

discussion of dating violence, conversation types, facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct

verbal communication were significant predictors of approval of aggression. In future research,

conducting a mixed methods study or using a larger age range could provide more understanding

about adolescents' attitudes and perceptions related to dating violence. Additionally, research on

behaviors outside of the modes of communication measured in this study, is warranted. This

study contributes to social change by helping to fill a gap in the research literature pertaining to

African American teen dating violence and attitudes toward approval of aggression. Future

researchers can use the results of this study to help formulate new research on this topic.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my family for their unwavering love and support throughout this life-changing journey. To Antwan, my husband, thank you for always believing that I can do anything in this world, even when I may not have believed it was possible. Thank you for stepping up to cook, clean, wash clothes, and take our children to their practices, games, and wherever else they needed to go in my absence. I appreciate and love you very much! To my children, Anthony, Alan, and Aaron, thank you for sacrificing your entire life so that I can have an education. I literally have been in school for your entire lives. I hope that you understand how important this was for me and that I have inspired you to go after your dreams regardless of how impossible it may seem. There is nothing that you cannot achieve in this life. I am living proof! I don't tell you enough how much I love you guys. I truly have the best sons in this entire world.

A special dedication goes to the best mother in the world, my mother, Gloria Clarke. Thanks for always asking about my dissertation and motivating me to finish. There were times when you wanted it so bad for me. Thank you for your love, support, and prayers. It made a huge difference in this journey. I love you so, so much! To my grandma, Pearlie Flood, who let me know on countless occasions how proud she was of me. She really makes me feel like a superstar. I love you and thank you because I think you ROCK! To my father, Danny Clarke, and grandma, Marion Clarke, I wish you both were here to share this special occasion with me. I love and miss you so much!

This is for you, Jayson! In honor of your life, I will educate as many adolescents as I can about dating violence situations. I love and miss you, mato face!

Last, I want to thank Lynda and Robert Scott for being my second set of parents and Brandie for being my little sister. Lynda, thank you for encouraging me to go to college. If it had not been for you, I probably would have never stepped foot into a college. Thanks for believing in me…it only takes one person to believe in you and the possibilities are endless.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Study

The United States has a number of health concerns, and teen dating violence is one that has proven to be widespread among adolescents, particularly among the African American population (Martin, Houston, Mmari, & Decker, 2012; Temple & Freeman, 2011; Thomas et al., 2012). Teen dating violence can have repercussions well into adulthood, including health issues such as alcoholism, violent behaviors, depression and anxiety, promiscuity, eating disorders, and suicide (Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2014a; DoSomething.org, 2014; Martin et al., 2012). According to a 2011 survey by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC, 2012), 9% of high school students reported experiencing physical abuse in an intimate relationship in the previous 12 months. This equates to nearly 1.5 million high school students. Nearly half of adolescents in the United States fall victim to sexual, physical, verbal, or emotional dating violence (DoSomething.org, 2014, Gray, R.H., 2012, & Liz Claiborne, 2009). Female adolescents and women ages 16 to 24 years are 3 times more likely than any age group to be abused by an intimate partner (DoSomething.org, 2014, & Gray, R.H., 2012). According to the Break the Cycle (2010), 35 states either will not issue or do not specify whether they will issue an order of protection against an abuser who is a minor. Break the Cycle also reported that in six states, minors cannot obtain, there are restrictions to obtaining, or it is not specified whether they are permitted to obtain an order of protection against their abuser.

In reviewing the literature, I found that a wealth of information exists on victimization and perpetration, but a dearth of information exists on adolescents'

perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence and on what familial influences contribute to this phenomenon, if any. Many researchers have demonstrated that exposure to violence via family, community, interparental, and parent-child relationships is linked to aggressive behaviors (Foshee, Bauman, & Linder, 1999; Jouriles, McDonald, Mueller, & Grych, 2012; Kerley, Xu, Sirisunyaluch, & Alley, 2010; Narayan, Englund, Carlson, & Egeland, 2014; O'Keefe, 2005; Sunday et al., 2011). Other factors take place in families that have not been examined, such as verbal and nonverbal messages that adolescents receive or do not receive from those closest to them regarding dating violence. I intended to fill this gap in the literature by conducting this study.

Chapter 1 includes a discussion of what has been reported in the literature regarding adolescent dating violence, the purpose of the current study, the theoretical framework, and the nature of the study. In addition, I present the research question, hypotheses, definitions, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations. I conclude by describing the significance of the study.

Background

Teen dating violence continues to rise in the United States. According to results from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance conducted by the CDC (2011b), the overall rate of physical dating violence among teens increased from 8.8% in 1999 to 9.4% in 2011. Ali, Swahn, and Hamburger (2011) conducted a study on a diverse population of youth in an urban setting and found that 18.6% of males and 30.3% of females perpetrated physical dating violence, and 28.8% of females and 32.6% of males were victims of physical dating violence. Researchers have also shown that familial factors

have an influence on adolescents; however, what researchers have not addressed is how familial influences affect adolescents' perceptions of domestic or teen dating violence (Hays et al., 2011; Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012; Jouriles, McDonald et al., 2012; Temple, Shorey, Tortolero, Wolfe, & Stuart, 2013). According to Herrman (2009), youth perceptions of domestic violence must be reviewed to develop interventions that decrease domestic violence among teens. Temple et al. (2013) argued that focusing on the attitudes of adolescents about violence is the best approach to prevent teen dating violence. Khubchandani, Telljohann, Price, Dake, and Hendershot (2013) suggested that family environment, parents, siblings, peers, school staff, and the family physician influence adolescent behavior, but did not provide any specifics as to how. In addition, parenting styles (CDC, 2012; Jouriles, Mueller, Rosenfield, McDonald, & Dodson, 2012), marital discord, and interparental violence (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012) have been linked to aggressive and violent behavior in adolescents (Withecomb, 1997).

The CDC (2014) indicated that parental influence is one of the risk factors for teen dating violence. Although these factors are a concern, most of the research regarding teen dating violence has addressed perpetration (Ali et al., 2011; Kaukinen, Gover, & Hartman, 2012), victimization (Ali et al, 2011; Kaukinen et al., 2012), harsh parenting styles (Jouriles, Mueller, et al., 2012), attitudes (Anderson et al., 2011; Jouriles, Grych, Rosenfield, McDonald, & Dodson, 2011), and health risk factors (Withecomb, 1997). The current study was needed to address the vague sense of familial influences on teen dating violence. A clearer understanding of familial influences can be used to tailor preventions and interventions. According to the CDC (2012), knowing that dating

violence is affecting a specific group of people in a certain area is not enough; knowing why this is happening is crucial to implement prevention and intervention programs.

Haglund, Belknap, and Garcia (2012) conducted a study on Mexican American teenage girls and discovered that parents warned the girls not to tolerate violence from their male counterparts. These Mexican American girls were able to formulate a perception based on their parent's reaction to domestic violence. However, it is unclear from the literature how African American adolescents' perceptions are being influenced regarding domestic violence, and whether family members are influencing those perceptions.

In some cases, dating violence begins as early as middle school; however, it starts to become a serious concern for high school students (CDC, 2012; Herrman, 2009; Temple et al., 2013). Exposure to violence is presumed to be a significant factor in perpetration and victimization in domestic violence. Research has shown that adolescents exposed to violence have increased levels of physical aggression (Ferguson, Miguel, Garza, & Jerabeck, 2011; Frey, Ruchkin, Martin, & Schwab-Stone, 2009; Moretti, Bartolo, Craig, Slaney, & Odgers, 2014; Temple et al., 2013). Additionally, Herrman (2009) noted teens reported having a hard time distinguishing domestic violence from joking around or being able to express behaviors that are representative of caring. Adolescents who are not exposed to domestic violence know the difference between harm, joking, and caring for someone (Frey et al., 2009).

Herrman (2009) expressed the challenges of combating violence when cultural, regional, familial, or communal norms perceive it as normal. Kerley et al. (2010)

suggested domestic abuse may be tolerated in the Thai culture because men have a superior status and have to maintain order. Researchers also observed that where people live is related to their belief system regarding domestic violence (Herrman, 2009; Martsolf, Colbert, & Draucker, 2012). In a regional study, Herrman found that Southern states in the United States have the highest rate of dating violence. This finding may be because of the traditional beliefs and tolerance to violence of men and women in these sections of the country (Herrman, 2009; Jouriles, Platt, & McDonald, 2009; National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth, 2013).

Henry and Zeytinoglu (2012) noted children raised in poor communities accept violence as the norm because of witnessing this type of aggressive behavior in their neighborhoods. Young girls who grow up witnessing violence may develop the belief that battery is an expected part of the relationship or marriage and is a demonstration of love (DeCraene, n.d.). Research has shown daughters who witness their mothers being abused are more likely to view violence as a necessary part of the intimate relationship and may show a higher tolerance for dating violence in the relationship (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 1997; Olsen & Fuller, 2010; Uthman, Moradi, & Lawoko, 2011). In addition, Temple et al. (2013) found girls who witnessed mother-to-father violence were more likely to perpetrate teen dating violence, and aggression was seen as normal and therefore was tolerated and accepted. Temple et al. further noted that mothers are influential and youths tend to normalize and model their mothers' actions. This provides one explanation of how young girls may normalize dating violence based on their mother's abuse.

A long history of dating violence exists in the United States (National Institute of Justice, 2017). Many studies have been conducted to understand this phenomenon. Although prior researchers have provided a wealth of information on perpetration and victimization, much is still not known about adolescents' perceptions of dating violence and what specific familial factors, if any, influence their attitudes. This study was needed to learn more about dating violence in an effort to develop specific types of prevention and intervention to alleviate this problem.

Problem Statement

Teen dating violence does not target a specific race, ethnicity, socioeconomic level, age range, or sexual orientation (Anderson et al., 2011). Although dating violence is a worldwide phenomenon that affects diverse populations, teen dating violence is more prevalent among African Americans than any other racial group in the United States (CDC, 2011a; Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012; Herrman, 2009; Jouriles et al., 2009). Teen dating violence is a societal issue (Herrman, 2009) and considered a serious public health concern (Ali et al., 2011; Jouriles et al., 2011; Sutherland, 2011). Because of the frequency and serious consequences of aggression in dating relationships within the African American community, counseling professionals have a compelling reason to better understand dating violence (Arriaga & Foshee, 2004; Jouriles, McDonald, Garrido, Rosenfield, & Brown, 2005).

Family plays an intricate role in adolescent growth and development, and intrafamilial violence has a profound effect on adolescents (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012). How adolescents perceive their parents' relationships could influence their perceptions

and behaviors within their own relationships. Herrman (2009) suggested it is critical to know how African American teens understand domestic violence to combat this issue. Henry and Zeytinoglu (2012) also noted how crucial it is to be aware of a teen's conceptualization and the community in which the adolescent lives. Few researchers have explored adolescent perceptions of dating violence (Hays et al., 2011) and African American perceptions in particular (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore verbal and nonverbal familial influences that might predict African American adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence. Obtaining information on what African American adolescents know about this phenomenon will help those in the counseling profession and related fields identify faulty thoughts or misconceptions in this area. The outcomes of the study may lead to misconstrued attitudes and perceptions African American adolescents have regarding dating violence being repaired through educational prevention and intervention programs. By participating in such programs, African American adolescents may learn the warning signs and consequences of teen dating violence, and learn what it means to be in a healthy relationship. Results may also be used to include the family in the educational process when developing prevention and intervention programs.

Research Questions

1. Do familial factors of communication predict African Americans' attitudes toward domestic violence?

To answer the research question, I formulated three hypotheses. I used each hypothesis to assess all of the familial communication factors simultaneously. These communication factors included conversation orientation, conformity orientation, and specific forms of dating violence communication with the family. I assessed each of these factors for a collective relationship with one of the three perceptions of dating violence. I operationalized the three perceptions of dating violence using the Normative Beliefs about Aggression Scale (NOBAGS) and the Acceptance of Couple Violence (ACV) scale. Perceptions included general approval of aggression, approval of retaliation, and acceptance of couple violence. Because I formulated each hypothesis to assess every form of communication relating to the specific perceptions of dating violence, one hypothesis was constructed for each subscale of violence perception. The following directional alternative hypotheses addressed these three perception subscales by comparison with familial factors of communication.

$H_0 1$: The familial factors of communication about dating violence do not predict general approval of aggression.

$H_a 1$: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence predict general approval of aggression.

$H_0 2$: The familial factors of communication about dating violence do not predict approval of retaliation.

$H_a 2$: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence predict approval of retaliation.

$H_0$3: The familial factors of communication about dating violence do not predict

acceptance of couple violence

H_a3: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence

predict acceptance of couple violence.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical orientations I used to inform this study were social learning theory (Bandura, 1971) and the ecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Both are developmental lifespan theories used to explain the development of behavior, perception, and personality. These theories also explain how an adolescent's environment can affect that development.

The premise of social learning theory is that people learn through observation or through direct experience (Bandura, 1971). Bandura (1971) posited that through observation individuals learn the different consequences associated with certain behaviors. Individuals begin to formulate thoughts about favorable behaviors and use these as a compass to direct their future actions (Bandura, 1971). Bandura asserted that individuals learn through modeling, and this type of learning can be intentional or unintentional. Moreover, observational learning and modeling play a role in individuals' behaviors, judgments, and the formulation of cognitions (Bandura, 1971). Bandura also posited that people mimic modeled behaviors. Parenting is the most influential factor in a child's social development (Huinink et al., 2010). Behavior that is modeled could help to explain how adolescents' perceptions are formulated according to what their parents say or do not say, or what is witnessed or not witnessed in reference to domestic violence.

Bandura (1963) postulated that children's personality patterns stem from modeled behavior from the parents. Bandura also stated this modeled behavior is not only limited to parents. However, the beginning years of children's lives are spent mostly with their families, making the family influential in the development of adolescents.

Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological model of human development is based on how aspects of a child's environment affect how the child grows and develops. Bronfenbrenner (1994) avowed that in the early stages of life and beyond, "human development is facilitated through interactions between an active, ever-growing biopsychological human being and the people, objects, and symbols in his or her immediate environment" (p. 38). Bronfenbrenner further noted this interaction occurs during a long period of time and on a consistent basis in order to be effective. Family has a primary influence on the child's development and growth. This developmental growth process is guided and supported through five socially organized subsystems: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). The microsystem helps to explain the dynamics of the child's developmental growth and how the family becomes influential in this process (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Bronfenbrenner postulated the microsystem is a dual interaction between the child and environment; it is not one paradigm influencing the other. The ecological model of human development informed this study because of the emphasis on the different systems that influence a child's life. Bronfenbrenner (1994) asserted human development cannot be understood without considering the entire ecological system in which growth occurs.

Nature of the Study

I used a nonexperimental quantitative research design to determine whether verbal and nonverbal communication styles predict adolescents' attitudes or perceptions toward dating violence. Because I focused on the relationship between several numerically measured psychometric constructs, quantitative research was appropriate (see Pallant, 2010). I sought to discover whether families verbally communicated their feelings about dating violence as measured by the conversation orientation and conformity orientation of the Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP) Questionnaire. I also analyzed unfavorable nonverbal communication in the form of facial expressions and hand gestures by asking specific questions relating to this on the demographic sheet. The dependent variable was adolescents' perceptions of dating violence. General approval of aggression, approval of retaliation, and acceptance of dating violence were measured using the NOBAGS and ACV scales. I attempted to determine whether there was a statistical association between several types of conversation regarding dating violence and measurable attitudes toward domestic violence.

I conducted this correlational study using three multiple regression analyses to determine whether a statistically significant relationship existed between several measures of familial conversation factors and three distinct dependent variables, all of which represented an attitude toward domestic violence. One regression analysis was conducted for each dependent variable. Three questionnaires were used to collect data: the NOBAGS (Huesmann, Guerra, Miller, & Zelli, 1992), the ACV scale (Foshee, Fothergill, & Stuart, 1992), and the RFCP questionnaire (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick 1990).

The NOBAGS is a 20-item scale used to measure an individual's perceptions or beliefs about aggression under different types of provocation. The instrument has two subscales that can be used separately—the 8-item General Approval Aggression subscale and the 12-item Approval of Retaliation Aggression subscale—or used together as the 20-item total approval of aggression. Both subscales were used in this study.

The ACV scale is an 11-item scale used to measure male to female violence, female to male violence, and the general acceptance of dating violence. The ACV scale does not have subscales, and respondents select strongly disagree, disagree, strongly agree, or agree to the questions. The RFCP questionnaire is a 26-item Likert scale used to assess children's perceptions of their parent's orientation toward including the child's input in family communication. The RFCP questionnaire has two subscales: Conversation Orientation (15-item subscale) and Conformity Orientation (11-item subscale). In conjunction with the three aforementioned surveys, I used a conversation about dating violence questionnaire to collect specific data related to participants' childhood experience and nonexperience with domestic violence.

The participants completed the surveys using the online survey host site Survey Monkey. Correlation and multiple regression analyses were used to analyze and interpret the data. These statistical procedures were used to determine the extent to which familial communication is associated with adolescents' perceptions of domestic violence. Examining the familial influences is consistent with Bandura's (1971) theory that humans learn through observation and Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological model of human

development, which postulates that children are influenced by the various subsystems within their ecological systems.

Definitions

African American or Blacks: People having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa, including people who reported their race as Black, African American, Negro, or SubSaharan or Afro-Caribbean in the U.S. Census Bureau (CDC, 2010).

Communication style: Communication style is the characteristic way a person sends verbal, para verbal, and nonverbal signals in social interactions; this style shows how a person relates to people and the way his or her message is received (Bakker-Pieper & de Vries, 2013).

Dating violence: Dating violence is violence committed by a person who is, or has been, in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. This type of relationship is determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (a) length of relationship, (b) type of relationship, and (c) the frequency of interactions between the persons involved in the relationship (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014a).

Domestic violence: Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control of another intimate partner. It can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions, or threats of actions, that influence another person. Examples include intimidating, manipulating, humiliating, isolating, frightening, terrorizing, coercing, threatening, blaming, hurting, injuring, or wounding someone (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014b).

Family communication: Family communication is the way verbal and nonverbal information is exchanged between family members (Virginia Cooperative Extension, 2009).

Intimate partner violence (IPV): Intimate partner violence is physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy (CDC, 2014b). For the purpose of this study, IPV referred to physical aggression.

Nonverbal communication: Nonverbal communication is communicating via facial expressions, body movement, and gestures (Herring, 1990).

Physical violence: Physical violence is the intentional use of physical force with the potential for causing death, disability, injury, or harm. This includes, but is not limited to, scratching, pushing, shoving, throwing, grabbing, biting, choking, shaking, slapping, punching, burning, weapon use, use of restraints, or use of body size or strength against another person (CDC, 2014b).

Threats of physical or sexual violence: This is when a person uses gestures or weapons to communicate the intent to cause death, disability, injury, or physical harm (CDC, 2014b).

Verbal communication: Verbal communication is communicating with words and is supported by, or modified by, nonverbal behavior (Johnson, 1999).

Assumptions

I assumed that all participants would answer each survey question in a truthful manner. Second, I assumed all participants met the requirements for participation. A last

assumption was that each participant interpreted the question as it was intended and no one misunderstood the questions, which would have caused him or her to wrongfully respond.

Delimitations and Scope

A delimitation of this study was that only African American women between the ages of 18 and 24 years were eligible to participate. This impeded my ability to make a generalization from the sample to the general population. Another delimitation was the use of African American women within an online university's participation pool, or those who voluntarily responded to a flyer posted in the supermarket, recreation center, church, or library in the Northeast region of the United States. I selected African American women for this study because of the prevalence of dating violence among individuals in this ethnic group (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012; Raiford, Wingood, & Diclemente, 2007).

Limitations

Quantitative research has been criticized for a lack of depth, as can be found in qualitative designs (Masue, Swai, & Anasel, 2013). In addition, the response rate of quantitative online surveys and the inability to address intricate issues requiring detailed discussion are limitations of this design (Fincham, 2008; Masue et al., 2013; Sivo, Saundrs, Chang, & Jiang, 2006). Another limitation was participants' self-report data, which may have resulted in participants not accurately remembering past events or telescoping events that occurred at one time as if they occurred at another time. In the introduction letter, I addressed the importance of participants answering the survey questions as honestly as possible. For questions in which participants did not remember

the answer, they had the option of selecting "I do not remember." Another limitation to this study was those refusing to participate or those not fully completing the survey. In the introduction letter, I encouraged participants to complete the entire survey because of the risk of an incomplete survey not being included in the results. The final limitation in this study pertained to the number of surveys used to collect data. I used four surveys to collect data, which may have caused the time needed to complete all of the questions to be too long for some participants. The high number of survey questions may have prevented the participants from elaborating on responses.

Two types of biases may have occurred in this current study: omission and inclusion. Omission bias occurs when certain groups are omitted from the sample. Omission bias was an issue in the current study because of specific racial, ethnic, and age groups being omitted. I exclusively assessed African American women between the ages of 18 and 24. Because of the exclusion of other races, ethnicities, and age groups, findings are not generalizable to other groups. Inclusion bias occurs when samples are selected for convenience. Inclusion bias resulted from the use of convenience sampling to select women from an online university's participation pool. Using participants from an online university was easier for me because of the participants' prior agreement to participate in any active research design. In addition, posting fliers at local supermarkets, churches, recreation centers, and libraries in the Northeast region in the United States to increase the participants in the sample was intended to strengthen the generalizability of the findings and combat the inclusion bias.

Significance of Study

This study was beneficial to the counseling profession, related fields, school districts, adolescents, family members, and policymakers because of the influence that domestic and dating violence has on African American adolescents. The results from the study have the potential to evoke social change by providing information regarding the attitudes and perceptions that African American adolescents have toward dating violence and whether the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns with family members influenced their attitudes and perceptions toward this phenomenon. Through this study, I provided information regarding how to educate adolescents about dating violence. If adolescents are educated about dating violence, this could change how dating violence is viewed, addressed, reported, and tolerated by adolescents. In addition, I provided information regarding how family members are communicating with adolescents, how verbal and nonverbal messages may be perceived, and whether those messages are influencing adolescents' attitudes toward dating violence. The results of this study may influence social change by providing information for counselors and service providers who educate adolescents and parents on dating violence.

Dating violence concerns counselors who work with adolescents because of the negative consequences associated with this phenomenon (Hays et al., 2011), which threaten this population's physical and behavioral health (Hays et al., 2011; Temple et al., 2013). The more counselors understand adolescents' perceptions of dating violence, the more likely they will be able to help clients make a positive change. Hays et al. (2011) mentioned how important it is for counselors to understand the experiences of

adolescents to promote early interventions. The findings of this study results may also inform policymakers of the need for prevention, intervention, and educational programs and health care services for potential victims and survivors of dating violence. Temple et al. (2013) suggested that secondary prevention programs could challenge youth's notions of whether violence is normal or acceptable in relationships.

The results of this study also serve to increase counselors' multicultural competency when working with this specific population. Multicultural competence is crucial to the counseling profession, and all counselors need to be informed when culture-specific information becomes available. According to Ahmed, Wilson, Henriksen, and Windwalker Jones (2011), counselor education programs need to provide training that will promote the development of culturally competent counselors in an effort to meet the needs of an expanding and culturally diverse society. The Council for Accreditation of Counselors and Related Educational Programs (2016) requires counselors-in-training to demonstrate an awareness of culturally diverse groups, both nationally and internationally. Multicultural training is embedded in both master's and doctoral level educational programs. Moreover, multicultural awareness training cannot stop after graduate school; counselors have to be aware of events affecting various cultures, which is why the information from this study may contribute to multicultural competency.

This information benefits not only the counseling profession, but also other professionals within and outside of the school system, such as social workers, nurses, psychologists, and educators. Each of these professional groups provides a service to adolescents and treats victims of domestic violence. These professionals should have

awareness of African American adolescents' perceptions of domestic violence because of the serious nature of this phenomenon. Nurses need information pertaining to teen dating violence and the associated risk factors because of the number of encounters that these professionals have with adolescents. Nurses and school counselors servicing children and adolescents in Grades K–12 within the school system are not prepared to handle cases of teen dating violence, although they may be the first point of contact following a dating violence episode (Herrman, 2009; Khubchandani, Price, et al., 2012; Khubchandani, Telljohann, et al., 2013).

Summary

In Chapter 1, I provided background information on dating violence and how it is prevalent among African American adolescents and the consequences of this phenomenon. The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to determine whether familial influences in the form of verbal and nonverbal communication patterns predict African American adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence. I also included the problem statement that outlines the serious health concern and the importance of family in adolescents' developmental growth. I explained the rationale for the nonexperimental correlational design, and described social learning theory and the ecological model of human development as the theoretical framework for the study. In addition, I presented the research question, hypotheses, definitions, assumptions, delimitations, limitations, and significance of the study.

In Chapter 2, I restate the problem and purpose of this study. I also describe how each of the two theories in my theoretical framework related to this study. I then outline

the literature search strategy and provide an extensive review of the current literature

relating to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and dating violence.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Teen dating violence is so prevalent that on January 31, 2011, President Obama declared the month of February as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. President Obama suggested the public get involved in this initiative to help teens in dating violence situations or prevent them from becoming a victim of dating violence abuse. The President also noted his administration would work in conjunction with advocacy agencies, schools, and communities to change teens' attitudes toward dating violence. Adolescents' attitudes toward dating violence may be a potential factor in becoming involved or succumbing to dating violence. Understanding how teens formulate these notions about dating violence will help counselors, educators, policymakers, parents, and adolescents understand and prevent continual occurrences of dating violence.

NoMore.org (2013) is an online organization that started a campaign to educate the public about domestic violence and sexual assault. NoMore.org has since joined forces with several nonprofit organizations and the U.S. Department of Justice to combat this issue. The No More project had a symbol designed to raise awareness and call for action to end domestic violence and sexual assault. A number of commercials using famous actors, actresses, and athletes shed light on this phenomenon. This is an indication that teen dating violence, intimate partner violence, and domestic violence are a significant problem because of the amount of advertising used to educate the public. Major organizations support No More in hopes to gain the support of Americans nationwide in an effort to end domestic violence and sexual assault.

In this study, I examined whether familial factors predict adolescent African Americans' attitudes toward domestic violence. Family plays an important role in adolescent development, and parents' relationships could influence children's perceptions and behaviors within their own relationships. Teens' exposure to parental IPV is strongly correlated with perpetration of dating violence (Jouriles, Muller, et al., 2012). In addition, parenting styles, marital discord, and interparental violence have been linked to aggressive and violent behaviors in adolescents (Withecomb, 1997).

Although dating violence is a worldwide occurrence that affects diverse populations, teen dating violence is more prevalent among African Americans than any other racial group (CDC, 2011a; Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012; Herrman, 2009; Jouriles et al., 2009). Teen dating violence is a societal issue (Herrman, 2009) and is considered a serious public health concern (Ali et al., 2011; Jouriles et al., 2011; Sutherland, 2011). Because of the frequency and serious consequences of aggression in dating relationships within the African American community, counseling professionals have a compelling reason to better understand dating violence (Arriaga & Foshee, 2004; Jouriles et al., 2005). The purpose for this current study was to learn more about this phenomenon by examining adolescents' attitudes and perceptions toward dating violence and determining whether familial factors are associated with those perceptions. The familial influences I examined were verbal and nonverbal messages that adolescents may receive from family members.

Foshee et al. (2011) stressed teen dating violence is accompanied by severe consequences such as binge eating, cigarette smoking, marijuana, substance abuse,

antisocial behavior, depression, suicide ideation, physical injury, and medical treatment. Banyard and Cross (2008) noted consequences of dating violence were similar to those found in studies of adult sexual assault and IPV, including higher rates of eating disorders, suicidal thoughts, and decreased mental and physical health (Banyard & Cross, 2008). Experiences with family violence also resulted in a lower grade point average for boys and girls (Banyard & Cross, 2008). Dating violence victimization was associated with negative school attitudes and outcomes and higher depressed moods, suicidal thoughts, and substance use (Banyard & Cross, 2008). Victimization influenced educational outcomes because depressed moods and substance abuse adversely affected academic performance (Banyard & Cross, 2008).

The most insidious problem, according to Toews, Yazedjian, and Jorgensen (2011), is that those who had been exposed to family violence consider this behavior to be normal or acceptable within their dating relationship. Toews et al. examined adolescent mothers' perceptions of how conflict resolution strategies in their relationships changed after participating in a skill-based relationship education program. The population for this study consisted of 199 primarily Hispanic adolescent mothers (87% Hispanic, 7% Black, 3% White, and 3% biracial) who participated in 23 focus group interviews in Texas and were between the ages of 14 and 18 (Toews et al., 2011). These mothers' narratives revealed surprisingly candid descriptions of both psychological and physical abuse.

Literature Search Strategy

I conducted an extensive search to gather peer-reviewed journals and articles by searching databases across various disciplines. The databases and search engines I used to locate articles and journals pertaining to teen dating violence were Academic Search Complete, Educational Research Complete, ERIC, Google, iSEEK, JSTOR, Mental Measurement Yearbook, Oxford Journal, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS, PsycINFO, PsycTEST, Research Starters Education, and SocINDEX. I also retrieved literature from the Google Scholar search engine and national domestic or teen dating organizations such as Joyful Hearts Foundation, Love Is Respect, Break the Cycle, No More, and Liz Claiborne. In addition, I retrieved literature from federal agencies including the CDC, National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Adolescent Health, and the National Conference of State of Legislature. The key terms I used to search for articles were *dating violence*, *African American dating violence*, *African American adolescents perception of dating violence*, *African American teen dating violence*, *familial influence on African American dating violence*, *attitudes about dating violence*, *dating violence among African American adolescents*, *African American attitudes toward dating violence*, and *how do African American adolescents formulate perceptions about dating violence*.

Theoretical Orientation

Two theories guided the study: the ecological model of human development and social learning theory. Both theories helped me explain the underlying mechanisms at work behind how dating violence is perpetuated among individuals, cultures,

communities, and families. The theories also provided a lens for me to examine further repercussions of dating violence as well as the origin of violent behaviors.

Ecological Model of Human Development

According to Bronfenbrenner's (1992) ecological systems theory, an individual's development is shaped by the environment and can be divided in to five levels: (a) microsystem, (b) mesosystem, (c) exosystem, (d) macrosystem, and (e) chronosystem. The microsystem refers to direct contact with those closest to the individual and includes work, school, day care, or home (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). Relationships in this system are bidirectional or dependent on reciprocation. This level is also the most influential of all five. The mesosystem includes interconnected microsystems such as a student's parents communicating with his or her teachers (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). The exosystem does not involve the individual as an active participant, but still affects the individual. An example would be a child's parent being laid off. This would make the parent's employer part of the exosystem of the child. The macrosystem refers to the cultural environment of the individual and all other systems that contribute to that macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1992).

A social ecological systems model positions the family as the immediate environment surrounding the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). The theory can be adapted for continuing emotional, cognitive, and social development. For example, microsystem relationships affect the individual directly on a day-to-day basis. Bronfenbrenner (1986) discussed the strong influence of the home environment and parental behaviors of both adoptive and biological parents when the children of

intelligent biological parents were placed in the homes of highly advanced adoptive parents. These adoptive children had a mean IQ that was 20 points higher than the biological parents, of adoptive men whose biological or adoptive father had no criminal record but had their own criminal record was at 12%. However, if both fathers had a criminal record that number rose to 36% of adoptive men in the study having a criminal record. The adult adoptee's whose mother had a criminal record and had a criminal record themselves were those that spent some time in an institution or foster care prior to being adopted. In all incidences, the child's familial background, and adulthood occupation and educational accomplishments showed a significant association to the strong influence of their environment. Although the focus of the current study was not occupation and educational attainment, a connection exists between the child's familial background and what happens when the child reaches adulthood. Researchers have linked dating violence during early to mid-adolescence and the intertransmission to adulthood in IPV (Antle, Sullivan, Dryden, Karam, & Barbee, 2011; Giordano, Johnson, Manning, & Longmore, 2014; Lee, Reese-Weber, & Kahn, 2013).

Bronfenbrenner (1986) discussed studies conducted with twins who were reared apart but raised in similar environments and had the same IQs. Bronfenbrenner also discussed a study conducted on first-born girls whose mothers had a high rate of interaction via verbal communication and differentiated stimulation with infants. There was not only an increase in the child's performance a few years later, but Bronfenbrenner also argued the mothers of these children were more likely to continue to communicate verbally and stimulate the child as the child got older. Children raised in homes or

classrooms that allowed them increased opportunity for communication and decision-making later showed higher initiative and independence in high school and also received higher grades (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Family influence was much more significant than classroom environment, although school influence was more dramatic and created change in children, especially for students from families that did not emphasize communication in the home or the child's participation in decision-making. These influences of family and school processes were more effective than those influences attributable to socioeconomic status or race (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

Social Learning Theory

According to Bandura's (1971) social learning theory, psychological functioning relies on continuous reciprocal interaction between the behavior and environmental conditions. Direct, vicarious, symbolic, and self-regulatory processes play a role in learning and mediating information from the environment (Bandura, 1971). Direct processes refer to learning as it happens to the individual; vicarious processes refer to learning through observing others learn and learning from their experiences; symbolic and self-regulatory processes refer to anticipating representational mechanisms or consequences and making an informed decision. Bandura also contended that although behavior can be shaped into new patterns by rewarding and punishing consequences, people learn through models and cultural context such as language; mores; vocational activities; familial customs; and educational, religious, and political processes. Because trial and error can be costly and risky, learning vicariously through models affords individuals maximum information without needless errors.

In addition, with social learning theory, Bandura (as cited in Foshee, Bauman, & Linder, 1999) postulated aggression is learned by observing the behavior of others. Those in higher status positions or those perceived as more competent or powerful tend to be mimicked, and parents in particular tend to be mimicked by their children (Foshee et al., 2013). Children who observe parents using violence can internalize an entire script for that behavior (Foshee et al., 2013). Not only do children observe the violent behavior, but they also observe the emotional triggers for violence as well as the circumstances and consequences of that violence (Foshee et al., 2013). Because violence is a powerful means of coercion, children who observe violence may view it in terms of its positive consequences (Foshee et al., 2013). Therefore, according to social learning theory, children of violent parents are more likely to use violence because they have observed positive consequences of their parents' use of violence (Foshee et al., 2013).

Literature Review

In the literature review section, I address teen violence, which is a significant problem nationally and particularly among African Americans who are prone to being victimized (Williams, Ghandour, & Kub, 2008). Preventing teen dating violence can be accomplished by promoting awareness and by fostering communication between adolescents and the adults who support them, such as parents, teachers, and counselors (Giordano et al., 2014). Examining adolescents' beliefs and perceptions toward dating violence is also key to prevention (Giordano et al., 2014). It is critical to study teen dating violence because researchers found it is accompanied by severe consequences that include suicide ideation, binge eating, substance abuse, antisocial behavior, depression,

physical injury, and medical treatment (Foshee et al., 2013). Banyard and Cross (2008) noted consequences of dating violence were similar to those found in studies of adult sexual assault and IPV. Dating violence victimization was also associated with negative school achievement (Banyard & Cross, 2008). According to Toews et al. (2011), what makes treatment and prevention difficult is that those who have been exposed to family violence consider this behavior to be normal. Those who are not taught proper conflict resolution and communication skills are more likely to engage in dating violence, and adolescents who are inexperienced in dating do not understand what defines healthy relationships (Toews et al., 2011).

Dating Violence

According to Antle et al. (2011) and Sullivan, Erwin, Helms, Masho, and Farrell (2010), African American youth have a disproportionately high rate of victimization and perpetration of teen dating violence with at least 14% reported being abused compared to 7% of Caucasian youth (Williams et al., 2008). The National Conference of State Legislature (2014) and the Women of Color Network (2008) also found African American and Hispanic adolescents have reported having a higher rate of teen dating violence compared to their Caucasian counterparts. Wood (2014) noted African American adolescents have a higher chance of experiencing dating violence than Caucasians. According to these findings, African American adolescents are experiencing a higher rate of teen dating violence than some other ethnic groups, and more information is needed to understand this phenomenon.

The current trend in the literature is victimization and perpetration and how it is passed along from adolescence to adulthood when interventions are not in place. According to the CDC (2011), women were more likely to over-report and accept blame, whereas men underreport and deny their aggression. Women were more likely than men to experience some form of domestic violence (CDC, 2011a). Women were also more likely to stay in an abusive relationship because of financial dependence.

Researchers suggested antisocial behaviors contributed to or were linked to dating violence (Lavoie et al., 2002; Lohman, Neppl, Senia, & Schofield, 2013). According to Muller, Journiles, McDonald, and Rosenfield (2012), teens who have been identified with an antisocial disorder had a higher commonality with dating violence than teens who have not been diagnosed with antisocial behavior. Muller et al. (2012) argued if teen dating violence was understood, this behavior could be prevented. Muller et al. found dating violence perpetration may lead to beliefs more accepting of such violence. Muller et al. determined how participants came to accept violence. Looking deeper into the cause of this acceptance, the researchers examined the influence of family on adolescent's perceptions. The researchers examined the environmental contributions that shape adolescents' beliefs and understanding behind this phenomenon.

The acceptability of violence must stem from somewhere (Muller et al., 2012). Teens may change their beliefs to justify perpetration, or perpetration may reinforce existing beliefs about dating violence (Muller et al., 2012). According to Muller et al. (2012), the Hispanic culture has been linked with dating violence acceptability; however, this contradicts a study with Mexican females whose parents forbid them to date males

who would engage in dating violence (Haglund et al., 2012). According to Muller et al., it is possible that African American adolescents' beliefs about acceptability derived from their experiences as well. Muller et al. also noted more research needed to be conducted to determine the factors that predict beliefs about acceptability of dating violence in African American teens.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

According to Nomore.org, 12.7% of individuals were physically abused, raped, or stalked by their partners in one year, which is the equivalent to the population of those in both New York and Los Angeles. This rate amounts to 24 people per minute. Many researchers have shown teen dating violence leads to adulthood IPV (Antle et al., 2011; Lohman et al., 2013). The struggle is to prevent the occurrence of teen dating violence, which will reduce both teen violence and adult IPV. Lohman et al. (2013) noted substance abuse, early sexual engagement, and the numbers of sexual partners a person had has been linked to IPV. Lohman et al. used data from the Iowa Youth and Families Project, which focused on psychological IPV in both emerging adulthood (19–23 years) and adulthood (27–31 years), through self and partner ratings of violence and observational data in a sample of rural, nonHispanic White families. The results showed exposure to parent-to-child psychological violence during adolescence was a predictor of IPV into adulthood.

Lohman et al. (2013) found parenting has a crucial role in the development of IPV. Moreover, the Lohman et al.'s findings did not support intergenerational transmission of violence. The researchers identified risk factors associated with IPV, such

as parent-to-adolescent psychological violence, mother-to-adolescent and father-to-adolescent hostility, family stress exposure, and lack of resources. Interparental violence is a direct predictor of teen dating violence (Antle et al., 2011). Lohman et al. also found parenting has a crucial role in the development of IPV. According to Lohman et al. (2013), other studies tend to obscure patterns where partners both perpetrate violence toward a partner and experience victimization; whereas, Lohman et al. tested models where victimization and perpetration were assessed separately through self-reports and models. The researchers created a dyadic couple variable of IPV using a combination of self, partner, and observation reports. The samples used in this study were rural and few were minority families (approximately 1% of the sample). Therefore, all of the participants were Caucasian. The families that participated were primarily lower middle or middle class, making Lohman et al.'s study less generalizable to urban or diverse populations. In the present study, I addressed a different gap in literature by covering a different demographic of African American adolescents. However, because the population was from many geographical locations, involved individuals with varied socioeconomic status, and examined both genders, it might be generalizable to other geographical, socioeconomic, and diverse contexts.

According to Halpern-Meekin, Manning, Giordan, and Longmore (2013), relationships with conflict tended to have more physical and verbal abuse and were often caused by the lack of skills to properly handle erupting conflict. Halpern-Meekin et al. used data from the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study with a random sample of 1,321 students registered for the seventh, ninth, and 11th grades in Lucas County, Ohio,

which is a metropolitan area largely consisting of the city of Toledo. This study incorporated samples of African American and Hispanic youths. The researchers examined whether relationship "churning" was associated with more serious conflict, such as physical violence or verbal abuse (Halpern-Meekin et al., 2013). This churning referred to unstable, breakup-reconcile patterns of the relationships of young adults. Halpern-Meekin et al. found that churners (those in on-off relationships) were twice as likely to report physical violence as those who were stably together or stably broken up, and half as likely to report the presence of verbal abuse in their relationships. Because Halpern-Meekin et al. examined the African American population, the results support this present study by demonstrating that a behavioral pattern of conflict and resolution exists among relationships that tend to become violent.

According to Campbell, Dworkin, and Cabral (2009), survivors of sexual assault within an IPV relationship had a heightened chance of suffering from depression, PTSD, and anxiety. Younger, more educated African American women tended to blame themselves less after rape than those African American women who were older (Campbell et al., 2009). African American women who were raped, and who did not have a college education and had a meager amount of resources to help ameliorate their negative outlook about themselves, struggled (Campbell et al., 2009). In addition, because of cultural beliefs, older women were more accepting of violence against them as compared to younger women, who denounced this behavior, because older women were raised in a time when violence was more socially acceptable (Campbell et al., 2009). Campbell et al. also stated African American women's reasoning for being sexually

assaulted was associated with being sexually loose. African American women felt they were more susceptible to being sexually victimized than Caucasian females were (Campbell et al., 2009).

Foshee et al. (2011) created violence profiles based on whether adolescents used violence against both peers and dates; against dates but not peers; against peers but not dates; or against neither peers nor dates. The researchers also examined whether risk or protective factors from the listed domains (individual characteristics and behavior, peers, family, school, and neighborhood) based on social learning theory or social control theory were affiliated with the violence profiles. The participants included adolescents in Grades 8–10 from schools in three nonmetropolitan counties.

According to Foshee et al. (2011), both boys and girls who perpetrated violence on dates and peers used a higher rate of violence than those in the dates only or peer only profiles. Those in the profile who included violence against both date and peers also had a higher rate of risky behaviors and protective factors than those in peer only and the neither group. The results also showed girls perpetrated the highest rate of violence in the dates and peers profile and were twice as likely to be in the date only profile. Although girls were present in more than one profile, boys reported more violence and had the most severe induced violence compared to girls. Peer social control displayed a stronger protective factor against both kinds of violence for boys more than girls. Also, boys more than girls had stronger risk factors in the area of family conflict and school models of deviant behavior when it came to peer and dating types of violence. Girls more than boys

had a stronger protective factor in school bonding when it came to using both dating and peer violence.

According to Foshee et al. (2011), those whose friends perpetrated violence had a less likely chance of using both dating and peer violence. This means that just because a friend perpetrated violence does not mean that another friend would perpetrate violence. Foshee et al. also suggested that friend dating violence had some influence on adolescents modeling dating violence, but not peer violence. This raised the chances of the adolescent being in the dating violence only category versus being in the dating and peer violence category. Foshee et al. noted school bonding had the opposite effect on boys than it did on girls. School bonding increased the likelihood that boys would be in both the dating and peer violence profile. Last, Foshee et al. found that boys and girls who employed dating and peer violence displayed significant levels of anger and anxiety, exhibited increased alcohol and marijuana use, and witnessed more family, peer, school, and neighborhood examples of aggression.

Family Influence

McCloskey (2013) tested the presumption that intergenerational transmission of violence was organic and a common aftermath of early exposure to child abuse, IPV, or neighborhood violence. The researcher conducted a study on women and their daughters and found that mothers who were sexually abused had daughters who were more likely to be sexually abused and experienced dating violence as adolescents. Through this 10-year longitudinal study, McCloskey examined 150 mother-daughter pairs looking at gender-based abuse across three generations. Forms of gender-based abuse included child sexual

abuse, witnessing IPV against mothers, and IPV or dating violence in adolescence or adulthood. Daughters were interviewed at ages 9, 14, and 16 years old (McCloskey, 2013). Regression analyses revealed if the grandmother was abused by her husband, her daughter was more likely to be abused in childhood and as an adult. The findings demonstrated multiple forms of gender-based abuse in research and practice illuminate complex family dynamics. For this reason and because of the complexity and nuance in patterns of abuse, examining adolescents' perceptions, as in the present study, is key because it often reveals subtle aspects of abuse as well as patterns of belief that predict future outcomes of abuse. Future research is needed to examine more patterns of belief and behavior so that prevention can be implemented before violence occurs.

Giordano et al. (2014) examined parental influences, specifically parent dating attitudes, and the associated behaviors during the adolescent period. The researchers looked at whether dating violence and the parent's negativity or cautiousness about dating violence contributed to, or were associated with, the young adult's report of experiencing IPV when parental factors and other controls were introduced. Giordano et al. suggested determining a parent's attitude regarding his or her adolescent's dating experience to assess whether the parent wants to delay dating or whether the parent approves of dating. Giordano et al. noted parents were more restrictive with females rather than males, which is associated with heightened parent-child conflict. Giordano et al. further discussed that parent-child conflict about dating models poor effective communication and respect, which is likely to be displayed in the adolescent's intimate relationship.

Another common theme is that some adults have negative reactions when adolescents try to confide in them (Gallopin & Leigh, 2009). Giordano et al. (2014) found similar results with parent's negative involvement in their teen's dating experience. However, negative reactions or interactions are ineffective and can lead to IPV and deter teens from reporting dating abuse. Therefore, how adults respond to adolescent dating violence is a critical factor. Teens not only feared adult's reactions, they also feared judgment, public humiliation, and being viewed as weak (Giordano et al., 2014). Teens were also worried about how others would view them if this information were known and others' perceptions of them overshadowed their safety. According to O'Keefe (2005) and Gallopin and Leigh (2009), the participants stated that they would inform a friend before telling their parents and telling a parent would strictly depend on the relationship, home environment, and dating rules. The participants also stated confiding in a teacher or counselor would depend on the level of trust that the two shared (Gallopin & Leigh, 2009). An essential part of building a relationship is communication and how parents communicate with adolescents influenced how adolescents react when faced with a dating violence situation.

Antle et al. (2013) taught the Love U2, a healthy relationship curriculum to low-income, high-risk youth and also found that those adolescents whose parents experienced physical and sexual abuse increased an adolescent's risk of dating violence as an adolescent. This program was funded by a federal grant and consisted of training using seven modules on healthy relationship patterns and communication skills. An eighth module addressed dating violence directly.

Researchers found a connection between mothers and parents being physically or sexually abused and their daughters or children being involved in teen dating violence (Antle et al., 2013). In this study, Antle et al. collected data from 233 participants through measures of training and relationship outcomes pre- and post-training. These participants included 140 females and 93 males. From these participants, 167 were African American, 44 were Caucasian, and 16 participants were from other racial groups (Antle et al., 2013). The participants came from 10 zip codes from the most economically and socially disadvantaged areas of metropolitan Louisville, Kentucky. Participants participated in three different programs based on their setting. One program was the Love U2 Relationship Smarts program for high school students and consisted of 12 modules that were 60–90 minutes each. The Positive Adolescents Choices Training program involved middle school students who participated in 37 sessions, and the Youth Relationship Project involved high-risk youth in a community setting that consisted of 18 sessions (Antle et al., 2013).

Participants experienced high levels of training satisfaction, significant increases in relationship knowledge, and self-efficacy related to conflict resolution. Antle et al. (2013) measured participant training satisfaction to determine how useful or enjoyable the participants found the program. They also experienced a significant improvement in attitudes toward couple violence in the desired direction. The researchers found that a brief relationship education program could produce positive change in relationship knowledge and reduce in relationship violence. This study is relevant to adolescent perceptions of IPV particularly because it included African American adolescents and

showed that through an intervention and education, it is possible to change behavior. If programs like these placed emphasis on perception, a precursor to actual behavior, then they could perhaps be even more effective in not only treating violent behavior, but also preventing it.

Lee et al. (2013) noted mother-to-child, father-to-child, sibling perpetration, and sibling victimization were predictors of dating perpetration among young adults. In this study, the definition of violence included physical and psychological aggression (Lee et al., 2013). Mother-to-child and father-to-child aggression predicted sibling perpetration and victimization. Also, sibling perpetration and father-to-child aggression predicted dating violence perpetration (Lee et al., 2013). This study included a sample of undergraduate students of 392 women and 89 men, who completed an Internet survey. Lee et al. found adult attachment to be an important predictor of dating violence perpetration, but this association between attachment and dating violence affected men and women differently (Lee et al., 2013). In young adult dating relationships, attachment anxiety was positively related to physical dating violence perpetration for women, but not for men (Lee et al., 2013).

Toews et al. (2011) stated those who were not taught proper conflict resolution and communication skills tended to engage in dating violence. In addition, adolescents are deficient, inexperienced, and do not comprise the understanding as it relates to healthy relationships. According to Towes et al., adolescents are too young to fully understand the complexities of being in an intimate relationship, which doubles females' chances of being in a dating violence situation. Adolescent females may perceive this

type of relationship as a sign of being in love because they are inured to the normalcy of exposure to violence.

Also according to Toews et al. (2011), school-based programs are ineffective because they do not have sufficient time for sessions to affect behavior. However, some of these programs were able to affect attitude toward dating violence and behavioral intentions. Toews et al. devised a program called Strengthening Relationships that focused on adolescents who were expecting a baby or for those who were already parents. This program emphasized conflict resolution, communication, and relationship expectations. According to Toews et al., the adolescent population was selected because of their susceptibility to dating violence and their inability to cope with stress from pregnancy and parenthood. Toews et al. proposed these expecting adolescent mothers have issues with conflict resolution and communication based on those around them and the observable consequences. This may prompt individuals to use similar tactics in their own conflict resolution strategies, which may reinforce specific behaviors, especially if a particular outcome is achieved.

Toews et al. (2011) found that adolescent mothers' conflict resolution skills improved for the better after participating in the educational program and in some cases, the participants rubbed off onto their partners. This successful participation in the program prompted a change in their attitudes and behaviors. According to Toews et al., jealousy sparked much of the conflict within these intimate relationships. The participants also admitted to using the same tactics as their family members used to resolve their conflict resolution issues. This program made the participants aware of negativity within

their relationship; however, it was not enough for some to make a positive change in behaviors. For those who were unable to make a behavioral change, Toews et al. suggested these participants needed additional time to gain confidence using the newfound skill, and the dearth of confidence may be the reason for the behavioral changes not occurring. This 12-week program was unable to compete with life-long exposure or learned patterns. Toews et al. found family influence tended to be pervasive and difficult to change, which is why adolescent perceptions of IPV can provide more information about future behavior than trying to change behaviors already learned in adulthood. In addition, if adolescents can critically examine their learned behavior, then they may have a better chance of controlling it.

According to Hines and Saudino (2002), IPV is generational and it is usually those adolescents who have been exposed to violence within their families or witnessed interparental abuse who resort to violence in adulthood. In addition, adolescents who were disciplined through physical punishment were at a higher risk of using violence within their intimate partner relationship as adults. Hines and Saudino also reported the same type of violence that adolescents witnessed in their home was replicated in their own personal intimate partner relationships where violence was used. Family violence remains a strong predictor for IPV (Hines & Saudino, 2002). According to Hines and Saudino, the biggest deficiency with social learning theory as it applies to intergenerational transmission of violence is that it is nonpredictive in identifying who will and will not perpetrate violence. It is not uncommon for those who have experienced abuse to not perpetrate violence and those who have not experienced violence to

perpetrate violence. Hines and Saudino postulated those children who witness violence could develop violent tendencies, but not act on those tendencies unless violence has a purpose for them in adulthood. In addition, intervening factors can divert negative experiences with violence and can dissolve this cycle of violence through counseling, emotional support from caring adults, understanding abuse, and engaging in satisfying relationships. According to Hines and Saudino, adults who were abused as children used that abusive relationship with their parents to formulate a lens for other relationships in their lives in which they evoked responses as adults from others based on the template of behavior they were taught at home.

Hines and Saudino (2002) also noted exposure to violence within the family contributed to individual's acceptance of violence and heightened the chances of being a victim or perpetrator. These researchers reported according to social learning theory, intergenerational transmission of family violence was based on environmental factors; moreover, genetics could also have played a role. Hines and Saudino further stated a combination of environmental factors and genetics provided the highest risk for aggressive behaviors to occur. Behavioral geneticists postulated genetically influenced behaviors tended to run within families and the closer people were in relation, the more likely they were to behave in the same manner (Hines & Saudino, 2002). In following what behavioral geneticists have found, it is clear that adolescents adopt some of their perceptions and attitudes from their family members based on dating violence. In looking at genetics and environmental factors, identical twins were more alike than fraternal twins were, and adoptees were more like their biological parents than adoptive parents

were, as it related to behavior. Although researchers have studied behavioral genetics, research pertaining to dating violence in this area is inconsistent because of extreme behaviors attached to this phenomenon, such as homicide, assault, and rape. Hines and Saudino noted dating violence could be genetic, even though the environment was not shared. This does not purport that the environment is not pivotal to behavior, but rather shows resemblance in familial genetics.

Hines and Saudino (2002) also argued when chagrin and conflict were resolved through violence, this was the result of adolescents who witnessed violence being rewarded within their family as a child. In addition, children deemed violence fitting in romantic relationships because they observed this behavior repeatedly in the home to diminish stress, anger, and to control others. Children growing up in this type of environment never learned appropriate ways to resolve family issues throughout life.

Family Communication Patterns

According to Foshee et al. (2013), family is a source of information and values. However, family can be a downfall if parents lack communication skills and awareness as it relates to their adolescent children. Communication is a crucial aspect within the family and a trend that yields significant results (Foshee et al., 2013). Bronfenbrenner (1986) showed that those children who came from families and classrooms where they were able to communicate openly and participate in decision-making were later able to take initiative and exuberated independence upon entering high school. Bronfenbrenner also noted a study conducted on mother's communicative interactions at home. The child's school stated that those working mothers who were able to maintain high levels of

communication with their children made their children more competent than their counterparts whose mothers worked fewer hours or were stay-at-home moms (Bronfenbrenner, 1986).

Kelly et al. (2002) conducted a study to determine the relationship between family communication patterns and reticence. In this study, adolescents who had lower communication hesitation attributed this hesitation to the following factors, a higher degree of conversation, encouragement to share ideas within the family, the least amount of shyness, and willingness to communicate. In the same study, parents who participated in teaching adolescents about their emotional feelings tended to raise children who successfully interacted with friends, had less behavior problems, engaged in less violent acts, and were resilient in times of stress and completing tasks (Kelly et al., 2002). Adolescents who did not receive emotional attention within their families were reticent and lacked the ability to cope with negative emotions (Kelly et al., 2002). Adolescents who were reticent also came from families where communication was nonexistent. In these families, parents did not communicate their feelings, so children were not expected or encouraged to discuss their feelings. Although the home is supposed to be an inviting environment where it is safe to share emotional feelings, reticent children had difficulty communicating, which prevented them from developing coping skills and learning how to deal with negative emotions (Kelly et al., 2002).

Harper et al. (2012) also found adolescents were heavily influenced by communication in their home environment. This qualitative study was conducted on African American female adolescents between the ages of 15–17. The goal of the study

was to determine the messages received from immediate and extended family members in terms of dating attitudes, norms, and behaviors. The results showed that adolescents learned about relationships most commonly from family, friends, peers, partners, school, or media, and the messages perceived from these sources tended to be usually conflicting. With these mixed messages being projected, adolescents were not able to formulate concrete perceptions or a foundation of what constitutes a healthy relationship. According Harper et al., it is necessary to have knowledge of the position family members have in formulating healthy dating behaviors and the type of messages perceived by adolescents from family members. Harper et al. also noted mothers and siblings of the participants in the study provided the largest diversified type of messages of all immediate and extended family members. However, Harper et al. stated it was no surprise that mothers and siblings had the largest influence on the participants. This finding is in accordance with Bronfenbrenner's proximal processes within the microsystem, which stated constant interactions on a regular basis during a long period of time affect a child's development.

Harper et al. (2012) also showed that a father's influence was equivalent to aunts, uncles, and cousins. Fathers were influential, but not as much as mothers and siblings. Fathers were influential with males only in the area of displaying appropriate behaviors when it concerned dating relationships and for females only regarding their level of commitment in the relationship. According to Harper et al., the messages received from family members aided in shaping and bolstering male and female views regarding how to feel, behave, and comprehend events. The results from Harper et al.'s study two familial messages surfaced in this research design. The first message shaped the participants'

ideas pertaining to gender roles in dating relationships and indicated that when initiating

a date, males should be aggressive and that females should be passive. The second

familial message suggested males were primarily the perpetrators of dating violence and

that females were usually the victims. Harper et al. suggested these haphazard messages

could be misleading and cause males who are recipients of violence to not report violent

incidents against them. These messages could also lead females to believe that males are

the only perpetrators and perpetrating violence against males is harmless.

Community, Culture, and Violence

Lambert, Nylund-Gibson, Copeland-Linder, and Ialongo (2010) stated

adolescents witnessed high rates of community violence and often suffered numerous

negative physical and mental health consequences. Youth exposed to community

violence often exhibited increased aggression, had conduct problems, had depressive and

anxious symptoms and problems with concentration, and symptoms of posttraumatic

stress (Lee et al., 2010). Youth exposed to community violence also showed increased

academic problems, suicidal thoughts, and physical injuries (Lee et al., 2010). Because of

the severity of these consequences, increased interest exists in understanding youth risk

for initial exposures and repeated exposures to community violence (Lee et al., 2010). In

addition, the frequency, type, severity, and timing of youth community violence exposure

determined the type of symptoms adolescents experience (Lee et al., 2010). Youth who

experienced violence intermittently may have had different symptoms from youth who

had chronic exposure (Lee et al., 2010).

According to Jain, Buka, Subramanian, and Molnar (2010), more than 32 million men and women have had some experience with IPV in the United States alone. Jain et al. noted dating violence within adulthood is ubiquitous. In addition, victimization is at 26% for those between the ages of 18–24, and physical abuse follows with a rate of 25–30%. Jain et al. reported college women had a rate of 25% of perpetration, while college men had a 10% rate of perpetration, and the perpetration rate skyrocketed for African American college women at 48%. According to Jain et al., collective efficacy has been affiliated with combating social issues in neighborhoods: community violence, child abuse, adolescents and firearms, mental health issues, and IPV. Collective efficacy refers to a community that has cohesiveness and the residents join forces for the betterment of the neighborhood. Jain et al. used longitudinal data on 633 urban youths age 13–19 at baseline and the data from their neighborhoods collected by the Project on Human Development in Chicago neighborhoods. The researchers assessed for collective efficacy in these neighborhoods to determine its effect on dating violence victimization and perpetration on young adults. The researchers found collective efficacy had a prominent influence on victimization than it did for perpetration because of the cohesiveness of the community and their willingness to assist a victim and nonwillingness to assist a perpetrator. Collective efficacy had no bearing on perpetration. In addition, Jain et al. also concluded the higher the collective efficacy, the less likely males were to perpetrate in low- to mid-level poverty neighborhoods. On the contrary, of those living in the poorest neighborhoods with higher levels of collective efficacy, males had a heightened contingency to perpetrate dating violence.

According to Gallopin and Leigh (2009), the adolescents in their study confirmed teen dating violence was more prevalent than adults would imagine. In addition, Gallopin and Leigh also have shown that the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) community reported higher occurrences of dating violence. Adolescents in Gallopin and Leigh's study did not agree with abuse, unless it involved self-defense or protection of family members. In addition, some stated acceptability was based on the context of what was acceptable. Herrman (2009) reported teens not being able to distinguish between playing or joking around and dating abuse. This misconstruction of interactions between adolescents left them vulnerable to dating violence. According to O'Keefe (2005), acceptance of violence was the strongest belief when inflicting dating violence. In Gallopin and Leigh's (2009) study, adolescents stated males used more physical abuse than females and if females hit a male, then they believed he must have provoked her. Several researchers have found females to have a higher rate of perpetration than males (Hamel, 2012; Williams et al., 2008).

Relationships mean the world to teens (Giordano et al., 2014). Teens have stated that they would help a friend in a dating violence situation; however, it highly depended on the type of relationship between the two (Giordano et al., 2014). Adolescents in the LGBTQ community had varying views regarding who to turn to for help (Gallopin & Leigh, 2009). The LGBTQ community expressed feeling discriminated against by police officers and felt police officers were willing to help them for this reason (Gallopin & Leigh, 2009). On the contrary, nonLGBTQ teens expressed the police had other important matters upon which to attend (Gallopin & Leigh, 2009). However, some

participants stated the police were not willing to help those living in certain neighborhoods with specific names and age ranges, referring to those of African American descents living in urban areas (Gallopin & Leigh, 2009).

Communication is essential to adolescents understanding and finding ways of coping with violence, and examining how adolescents communicate is key to understanding their coping patterns (O'Keefe, 2005). Social learning theorists asserted the lack of skills, problem-solving, anger management, and communication lead to violence as a way to solve problems (O'Keefe, 2005). Through communication, parents can play a crucial role in preventing violence or facilitating treatment (Giordano et al., 2014).

Adolescent Perceptions

According to Antle et al. (2011), older adolescents and young adults within high school and community college age range were the targeted groups for relationship education programs. Based on two studies by Antle et al. (2011) on African Americans and on high-risk youth, results showed effective behavioral change in dating violence when communication was a part of the program. Based on this evidence (Antle et al., 2011), an attitudinal change can be effective in a few sessions, but to see a behavioral change, more than five sessions must occur, along with effective communication skills.

Adolescents' perceptions of dating violence were important because these perceptions informed their dating decisions, defense mechanisms, and may have influenced whether they sought help. Adolescents are a vulnerable group because their inexperience with intimate relationships leaves them susceptible to dating violence,

which is especially heightened during the adolescent years. This time is when teens try to

discover who they are and where they fit in (Love & Richards, 2013). Using adolescents'

perception of IPV was also beneficial in developing interventions and prevention

methods. According to Love and Richards (2013), youth believed technology encouraged

dating violence because the perpetrators had the ability to monitor cell phone activity as

well as other ways of checking on their intimate partner. Technology also increased the

chances of controlling behaviors occurring and was often hidden from adults. For their

study, Love and Richards used focus groups with 25 male and female youth between the

ages of 15–19 whose race was primarily African American. Using open-ended responses

by adolescent participants, the researchers aimed to understand African American youths'

perceptions of IPV among their peers, the dynamics of help-seeking behaviors, and what

services youth perceived as most helpful in prevention and treatment of adolescent IPV.

The female participants in this study indicated whenever they witnessed a couple

fighting, this was not deemed a serious incident and was considered playful, especially if

the female was laughing in response to the aggression displayed by the male. The female

participants also stated they had the ability to tell the difference between playing and

IPV. However, the participants in the study also had mixed feelings regarding under what

circumstances they would report an incident of IPV. Females reported that they would

confide in a close friend, sister, or mother. They also reported that they would not confide

in their fathers because of the fear of revenge their fathers may seek on the abuser. Some

females reported they would never confide in anyone because the abuser may retaliate

against that person. The female participants also stated they feared having a tarnished image once others learned of the IPV incident.

In this same study, all the participants affirmed they would not confide in school resource officers, with the exception of two (Love & Richards, 2013). Most participants reported they would not disclose information to school counselors. The participants believed school counselors were ill equipped to handle relationship issues. In addition, most participants, with the exception of two, felt teachers could not be confided in for the same reasons school counselors were not trustworthy. Participants also feared teachers would not keep the incident confidential (Love & Richards, 2013).

According to Love and Richards (2013), participants openly shared their lack of knowledge about available services that would assist victims of IPV. The participants also shared that having access to a mentor would serve as a helpful resource for youth. In addition, female participants believed hearing from a woman who was a victim of IPV would be helpful (Love & Richards, 2013).

In a similar study, Stader (2011) analyzed what adolescents believed regarding the frequency of dating violence, which may have coincided with personal experience of dating abuse. This may have influenced their beliefs regarding whether dating violence was a normal occurrence and may have negatively influenced their perception of a healthy relationship. Stader also noted the same point as Love and Richards (2013)— because of their lack of experience with dating relationships, adolescents may not fully comprehend the abusive behavior their boyfriend or girlfriend displays. Stader confirmed a school district's failure to address dating violence could lead to the district being held

responsible for adolescents in dating violence relationships under a few different legal stipulations: Title IX, 42 USC 1983, and state tort law. Under Title IX, a student can claim that the school district failed to attend to the dating violence problem if it resulted in a hostile educational environment because of the abuser's behavior. Under 42 USC 1983, the student can make a constitutional claim that the school district failed to protect and bereaved the student of his or her right to be safe. According to the state tort law, students can claim emotional distress was inflicted upon them because of the negligence on behalf of the school district. Last, Stader also noted bullying can be another form of dating violence and a student could possibly claim that the school district intentionally was inattentive to dating victimization. Stader further noted dating violence occurs through cyber-bullying and little research exists regarding dating violence through this platform, even though it occurs more often than many realize.

Martin et al. (2012) stated the danger adolescents are subjected to include fatalities at the hands of their partners. According to Martin et al. adolescents' intimate partners were responsible for approximately 44% of homicides inflicted on female youth. Martin et al. (2013) further noted adolescents have difficulty determining the difference between love, flirting, and playing, and may confuse violence with being a normal part of the relationship. This qualitative study included four focus groups from urban African American adolescents aged 13–24 who were recruited from an urban adolescent clinic's community outreach partners. When participants were interviewed, they claimed to know about being in an abusive relationship, but dating violence was the least reported type of violence (Martin et al., 2012). This contradiction left questions regarding whether

adolescents were as knowledgeable about dating violence as they claimed. Martin et al. also noted males were less inclined to seek help from outside resources, while females were more inclined to seek professional help. Some of the participants expressed wanting to communicate with survivors of abuse to help them understand the relationship dynamics.

Interpersonal Violence and Adolescent Victims as Adults

Many researchers have noted childhood and adolescent exposure to IPV predicted violence in adulthood in these same individuals (Cornelius, Shorey, & Beebe, 2010; Hines & Saudino, 2002; Narayan et al., 2014). Cornelius et al. (2010) determined what communication variables were considered deleterious in marital relationships, especially those marriages where violence was prevalent. According to Cornelius et al., those participants who reported physical aggression also reported having meager communication skills within their relationships. Of the 173 undergraduate participants in this study, 80% were female. The researchers recruited participants through the introductory psychology research pool at a large, public, mid-western university (Cornelius et al., 2010).

Cornelius et al. (2010) found physical aggression was present in the relationship prior to marriage. This confirmed findings in studies previously mentioned dating violence that occurred during adolescence was likely to continue into adulthood, which is why adolescents need to be educated about the long-term effects of IPV. Cornelius et al. used Gottman's (1999) model of marital conceptualization. Individuals were assessed on adaptive and maladaptive communication variables and relationship aggression.

Gottman's model identified several behaviors particularly indicative of distress in relationships. One of these behaviors was gridlock, or unreasonable demands, unwillingness to compromise, and physical and emotional withdrawals from conversations. Another was the four horsemen, or a downward spiral of responses: when Partner 1 criticized Partner 2, Partner 2 became defensive, which in turn meant Partner 1 became defensive, sarcastic, or hostile in return to Partner 2 defensiveness. Eventually, Partner 2 withdrew or stonewalled the conversation. This was also the end-stage of relationship dissolution. Another problem behavior according to Gottman's model was flooding, or negative communication behaviors that included feeling overwhelmed, both emotionally and physiologically, in addition to the inability to process information or actively participate in problem-solving discussions. Harsh start-up was also a problem behavior highly correlated to physical and psychological aggression. Repair attempts were a part of this model as well. These repair attempts were exhibited by a reduction in negative comments, and included use of humor and taking breaks between conflict episodes. Accepting influence was also part of Gottman's model and was determined by the partner's perception of mutual influences on the other partner.

According to Cornelius et al. (2010), the results for dating couples showed some similarities to marital couples in terms of the previously mentioned communication variables. One of the hypotheses Cornelius et al. assessed was whether the communication variables would be able to predict violence categories. The results showed physical perpetration was the single most common predictor of flooding. The four horsemen was also a significant predictor of physical and psychological

victimization and perpetration. Last, repair attempts were found to be a significant predictor of psychological victimization and physical victimization.

Also examining the effect of IPV into adulthood, Sunday et al. (2011) conducted a study to determine whether Caucasian young adults between the ages of 23–31, whose parents physically abused them when they were adolescents, would physically or verbally assault their intimate partners. This longitudinal study included 67 abused and 78 nonabused adults (of an original sample of 198 adolescents). The results from this study showed those with a background in abuse had a highly significant rate of intimate partner physical violence and verbal aggression than the nonabused participants by the time they reached adulthood.

Sunday et al. (2011) noted double as many of the abused participants acted in physical violence as both the perpetrator and victim compared to nonabused participants. Sunday et al. showed nearly 28% of the participants who perpetrated or were victimized because of exposure to violence while in a dating relationship had almost identical percentages as a similar study by Riggs and O'Leary (1996), who found a 30% rate. The slight decrease in this study confirmed not much of a difference has been made to end dating violence. Sunday et al. stated although women are more likely to suffer severe injuries, they instituted physical aggression as frequently as males. However, in the study, the violence reported by the participants was not severe and medical assistance was not needed, nor was anyone criminally prosecuted when compared to previous study findings (Sunday et al., 2011). Sunday et al. further noted couples who were married or conjugate had a positive predictor to perpetrate physical violence. In addition, a background in

alcohol use was a significant predictor of physical violence victimization and perpetration.

According to Narayan et al. (2014), reciprocal adolescent aggression within close relationships may lead to reciprocal dating violence in early adulthood. In this study, exposure to IPV in early childhood also predicted dating violence perpetration and victimization in early adulthood. Narayan et al. examined adolescent conflict with families, best friends, and dating partners as mediators of interparental violence in early childhood (0–64 months) to dating violence perpetration and victimization in early adulthood (age 23). The participants included 99 males and 83 females who were primarily Caucasian and African American drawn from a larger prospective study of high-risk mothers, who were ages 12–34 (Narayan at al., 2014).

Narayan at al. (2014) hypothesized relational conflict would partially mediate exposure to interparental violence in early childhood and predicted dating violence perpetration and victimization with a significant direct effect from exposure to interparental violence to dating violence. The study showed adolescents who have relational conflict with best friends tend to exhibit dating violence perpetration. These findings demonstrated the notable role friends and peers play in adolescents' lives and the link between early childhood and early adulthood relationship involvement. Narayan et al. also concluded significant indirect effects of exposure to interparental violence existed, which lead to dating violence victimization and perpetration by way of life stressors and externalizing behaviors. These events can transfer to adulthood and have a

spiral affect by directly affecting externalizing behaviors, and then affecting life stressors and dating violence.

Narayan et al. (2014) suggested the significant prediction of conflict between best friends being a link to dating violence perpetration could possibly be because both parties share coercively aggressive behaviors. Although conflict between best friends did not significantly predict dating violence victimization, life stressors, having a younger mother, and male gender did predict dating violence victimization.

Summary

As seen in this review of literature, teen violence is a significant problem and African Americans are especially prone to being victimized and to becoming perpetrators, as 14% of African American adolescents reported being abused compared to 7% Caucasian adolescents (Williams et al., 2008). Based on research, the best way to prevent teen dating violence is to promote awareness and to foster communication between adolescents and the adults who support them, such as parents, teachers, and counselors (Giordano et al., 2014). Understanding adolescents' beliefs and perceptions regarding dating violence is also key to prevention (Giordano et al., 2014). Based on the ecological model of human development and social learning theory, children learn social skills and emulate their environment, including their attitudes toward dating violence; therefore, it is key that adolescents have enough verbal and familial support to prevent or cope with their exposure to violence (Bandura, 1971; Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Foshee et al., 2013). Adolescents' perceptions of violence are essential because this mediates their

choices, how they cope if they become victims, and how they disseminate information regarding violence to their peers (O'Keefe, 2005).

In Chapter 2, I discussed IPV among adolescents and adults. According to Jain et al. (2010), dating violence within adulthood is ubiquitous, but this is especially a problem for African American adolescents. The National Conference of State Legislature (2014) and the Women of Color Network (2008) reported African American adolescents have the highest rate of teen dating violence, compared to their Caucasian counterparts. According to Wood (2014), African American adolescents have an increased chance of experiencing dating violence, as compared to Caucasians. Limited knowledge exists regarding adolescents' perceptions of IPV, and in particular African American adolescents' perception of IPV. In addition, according to Muller et al. (2012), more research needs to be conducted to examine how beliefs predict the acceptability of dating violence in African American teens. Therefore, the within this present study I addressed this gap in the literature.

In chapter three, I will detail the correlational, nonexperimental quantitative research design I used to determine whether familial influences, such as verbal and nonverbal communication, predicted adolescents' attitudes or perceptions toward dating violence. The population for the present study was African American young adults, ages 18–24, who attended an online university and those that voluntarily responded to a flyer displayed in supermarkets, recreation centers, churches, or libraries who live in a Northeast region in the United States.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this study was to determine whether familial factors predict

African American adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence.

Obtaining information regarding what African American adolescents know about this

phenomenon in an effort to identify faulty thoughts or to fill in the gaps may help

counseling professionals better understand the attitudes and perceptions of African

American teens regarding dating violence. In this chapter, I describe the research design

and approach, as well as the population of interest. I also explain procedures used during

recruitment, data collection, and analysis. I close with a description of the threats to

internal and external validity and ethical concerns, with emphasis on strategies used to

mitigate potential harms.

Research Design and Rationale

I used a nonexperimental correlational design to determine whether verbal and

nonverbal communication styles predict adolescents' attitudes or perceptions toward

dating violence. The predictor variables included several forms of verbal and nonverbal

communication including conversation orientation, conformity orientation, hand gestures,

facial expressions, and direct verbal communication. The outcome variables were

adolescents' perceptions of dating violence. Perceptions of dating violence were

represented by general approval of aggression, approval of retaliation, and acceptance of

couple violence. Because I examined the relationship between numerically measured

psychometric constructs, the quantitative approach was appropriate (see Pallant, 2010). I

conducted this correlational study using three regression analyses to examine the

relationship between several familial factors and three dependent variables, each of which represented an aspect of attitudes toward domestic violence.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was African American young adults between 18 and 24 years of age. To gather an approximate sample representative of this population, I used a convenience sampling procedure. I included African American young adults from a voluntary participation pool from an online university, and those who live in the Northeast region of the United States. I chose this sampling method because it was inexpensive and the subjects were readily available. The student population at the online university was approximately 55,000 students with 41% White, 37% Black, 7.3% Hispanic/Latino, 7.4% Unknown, 3.5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2.0% Multiracial, and 0.5% American Indian at the time of the study. The students' ages ranged from 23 years old to 60 years of age. In addition, 77.2% female students and 22.8% male students attend the university.

The sampling method was not random because I did not randomly select the participants; rather, they chose to be included in the participant pool. Results may be generalizable to the African American population because the online university is an international university with a geographically diverse population. I calculated the sample size of African American young adults using G*Power (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2012) with an effect size of $f^2 = .15$. The results indicated a sample of 77 participants to achieve satisfactory power for the current study. I selected a medium

effect size because a medium effect is typically expected when no research suggests

otherwise (Cohen, 1992). I was unable to find a study similar to the current study.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Before beginning any procedures for recruitment, I gained full Institutional

Review Board (IRB) approval to collect data for this study. The IRB approval number is

02-05-16-0222890. The online university created a researcher's account and a user's

manual to assist me in posting my study into the participation pool system. Members of

the participation pool could log into this system to see what research studies they may be

interested in participating in. African American male and female were solicited from the

online university's database. These individuals received details of the study, contact

information, and the hyperlink that directed them to the survey host site (SurveyMonkey).

Participants were reminded in the email that they could contact me at any time with

questions or concerns. Upon arrival at SurveyMonkey, the host site for the survey,

participants were presented with an informed consent form and asked to provide

informed consent electronically. If participants did not provide informed consent, they

were automatically directed to a disqualification page thanking them for their time.

Participation was voluntary and participants could elect to discontinue the survey at any

time prior to completion.

After the required number of participants had completed a sufficient amount of

the survey for the data analysis (i.e., they all had provided data to compute the study

variables), I reviewed the number of participants who had provided complete and useable

data. I did not reach the minimum sample size when incomplete responses were

accounted for; therefore, I left the online survey open, but no more participants were

obtained through the online university. This led to my seeking approval from the IRB to

post flyers in various supermarkets, recreation centers, churches, and libraries in an urban

city in the Northeast United States to garner additional participants. The requirements for

these participants were the same as those obtained from those attending the online

university. It was through this method that the number of participants needed to complete

the data collection process was complete.

Sample Size Requirement

I used G*Power Version 3.1.7 to calculate a sample size for the analyses.

Regression analyses require different sample sizes based on the number of independent

variables in a model, estimated power, expected size of effect, and proposed alpha level.

The generally accepted power used to determine sample size is .80, and a medium effect

is typically used when no research suggests otherwise (Cohen, 1992). Because I planned

for all three regressions to include the same independent variables, each regression

required the same sample size. For a regression with three independent variables, a power

of .80, and an alpha of .05, 77 participants were required to determine significant

relationships of medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$). I ceased data collection when the number

of useable responses totaled 77. I exceeded this minimum requirement initially so that

data cleaning did not result in a sample smaller than the suggested size.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

In this study, I examined whether family communication, specifically

communication pertaining to dating violence, correlated with attitudes toward domestic

violence. I measured family communication about dating violence using the Revised Family Communication Pattern Scale and a 10-item demographic questionnaire. Attitudes toward aggression were represented by three constructs including general approval of aggression and approval of retaliation aggression (both measured by the NOBAGS), as well as general dating violence acceptance.

Demographic Survey

This was a simple survey to gather demographic information such as gender, socioeconomic status, age, location, and ethnicity. In addition, I created seven questions to address conversations about dating violence. I used age and ethnicity to ensure participants met the requirements for eligibility. If a participant indicated that he or she was younger than 18, older than 24, or did not identify as African American, I removed that participant for not meeting inclusion criteria. The variables of gender, age, location, and socioeconomic status were then used to describe the demographic composition of the sample.

Gender was considered nominal, with options for male, female, and other. Participants had the option to further explain their gender with an open-ended response. I gathered age as continuous data, where participants were asked to indicate their exact age in years. Socioeconomic status was gathered as an ordinal variable with average household income indicated by ordered categories. Location was also nominal, and the survey asked participants to reply with their country of origin. Those within the United States indicated their state of residence. Appendix A contains the entire demographic survey.

For the purpose of this study, I added seven items to the demographic survey to gather additional information regarding whether participants had experienced any forms of communication regarding dating violence with their parents or other family members. The RFCP was not designed to gather specific details regarding the types of communication parents used; therefore, I included this second section with the demographic survey (see Appendix A). I did not develop these items with the intention to measure psychometric properties or provide a valid measurement of any concept. Instead, I used this demographic sheet to ask a series of questions to discover whether participants recalled receiving information about dating violence through any of the forms of communication. This process helped me to determine the types of communication about dating violence that occurred, or did not occur, and determine whether these types of communication were associated with the adolescent's perceptions of dating violence. Because the goal was not to measure any validated psychometric properties, a pilot test was not required. However, my mentor reviewed the questions to assess face validity. Changes to the questions were made based on my mentor's recommendation.

One section of the demographic sheet asked participants to consider times they had communicated with their parents or other family members about dating violence before responding. Questions pertaining to specific instances of communication centered on three main types of communication: facial expression, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication. Each response was binary (yes or no) and indicated whether participants recalled any instance of each type of communication about dating violence. The final score was a summation of all three types, with possible scores ranging from 0 if

participants reported none of the three types, to 3 if participants reported all three types of communication. I used conversation orientation, conformity orientation, discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication as predictor variables in the following aggression analysis.

Revised Family Communication Pattern Questionnaire

Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) developed the RFCP scale (see Appendix B). The RFCP is a self-report questionnaire used to assess an individual's perception of family communication. The RFCP has two subscales: Conversation Orientation and Conformity Orientation. The Conversation Orientation is a 15-item subscale in which the family's climate is assessed to determine how freely members were encouraged to participate in family conversations on different topics. On the Conversation Orientation subscale, items included statements such as "My parents like to hear my opinion, even when I don't agree with them," "My parents often ask my opinion when the family is talking about something," and "In our family, we often talk about our feelings and emotions." Conformity Orientation is an 11-item subscale in which characteristics of attitudes, beliefs, and values are assessed. The Conformity Orientation subscale includes statements such as "My parents sometimes become irritated with my views if they are different from theirs," "My parents often say things like, 'my ideas are right and you should not question them,'" and "My parents often say things like 'there are some things that just shouldn't be talked about.'" Based on the Cronbach's alpha, the internal consistency was $\alpha = .92$ for the Conversation Orientation subscale and $\alpha = .82$ for the Conformity Orientation subscale (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990).

The RFCP had strong test-retest reliability using a sample of 72 adolescents assessed 3 weeks following initial assessment. Test-retest coefficients for conformity orientation averaged close to a perfect $r = 1.0$, while the Conversation Orientation subscale had test-retest coefficients ranging from $r = .73$ to $r = .93$. I used conversation orientation, conformity orientation, discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication were used as predictor variables in the following aggression analysis.

Normative Beliefs About Aggression Scale

Huesmann and Guerra (1997) developed the NOBAGS (see Appendix C). The NOBAGS is an instrument used to measure perceptions and beliefs pertaining to aggression when provoked during specified and nonspecified conditions. The NOBAGS has two subscales, which can be used separately or combined. The first subscale is an 8-item composite score referred to as the General Approval Aggression Scale. The second is a 12-item subscale referred to as the Approval of Retaliation Aggression Scale. The 4-point Likert-type scale ranges from 1 (it's perfectly ok) to 4 (it's really wrong). Questions 1–12 are gender based and used to assess how the adolescent feels about boy on boy, boy on girl, girl on boy, and girl on girl aggression. The participants answered questions such as "Do you think it is wrong for the boy to hit her?" "Do you think it is OK for the girl to hit him back?" "Do you think it is wrong for the girl to scream at him?" and "Do you think it is Ok for John to scream at him?" Questions 13–20 are used assess how the adolescent feels about aggression in general. Participants responded to statements such as

"In general, it is wrong to hit other people" and "If you're angry, it is OK to say mean things to other people."

Researchers have found this assessment to have an internal consistency of $\alpha = .90$ on average, and a 1-year stability test-retest coefficient of $r = .39$ on a sample of children ranging in age from nursery school to college age (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997). The internal consistency corresponds with an excellent degree of reliability (George & Mallery, 2010). In addition, the test-retest coefficient may be interpreted as a medium strength correlation between measures taken from two time points 1-year separated (Cohen, 1992). As such, the NOBAGS is a proven valid and fitting instrument to measure general approval of aggression and approval of retaliation aggression. I used these variables as outcome variables in the aggression analysis.

Acceptance of Couple Violence

Foshee, Fothergill, and Stuart (1992) developed the ACVS to assess adolescent's acceptability of couple violence (see Appendix D). The ACVS is an 11-item assessment on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). Thus, higher scores indicate a high level of acceptance, and low scores indicate a low level of acceptance. The scale has three subscales: the Acceptance of Male on Female Violence, the Acceptance of Female on Male Violence, and the Acceptance of General Dating Violence. Participants taking this survey answered questions, such as "a boy angry enough to hit his girlfriend must love her very much," "Violence between dating partners can improve the relationship," Girls sometimes deserve to be hit by the boys they date," and "Boys sometimes deserve to be hit by girls they date."

Foshee, Fothergill, and Stuart (1992) conducted an analysis to examine the reliability and validity of the ACVS to determine if it would be suitable for students in Grades 8 and 9 to assess their views on violence within dating relationships. Researchers have found this assessment to have an internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of $\alpha = .73$ on average ($\alpha = .74$ for male on female, $\alpha = .71$ for female on male, and $\alpha = .73$ for general acceptance) on a sample of students in Grades 8 and 9 (Foshee et al., 1992). This measure of internal consistency corresponds with an acceptable degree of reliability (George &Mallery, 2010). As such, it is a proven reliable and fitting instrument to measure acceptance of couple violence through the subscales of Male on Female Violence, Female on Male Violence, or overall General Dating Violence. I used these variables as outcome variables in the aggression analysis.

Data Analysis Plan

I collected data from African American male and female between the ages of 18–24 who attended an online university and who live in the Northeast region of the United States. I entered data into SPSS Version 22.0 for Windows. Prior to analysis, I used this software to clean and organize the data. I first assessed the data for any participant with largely missing data, or for those who elected to leave the survey early. If a participant did not provide enough responses to contribute to the calculation of one or more of the research variables (i.e., are missing each item used in the calculation of a scale), they were ineligible for use in the analyses, as each variable was required for use in the proceeding regression analyses (Pallant, 2010). I continued the data collection process

until 84 participants successfully completed the survey in its entirety, following the data cleaning process.

Next, I calculated composite scores as instructed in each instrument's scoring guide. Finally, I calculated standardized scores for each instrument's resultant variable. Standardized scores represent the number of standard deviations a variable lies from the average score on that variable. I considered any participants with variable scores 3.29 or more standard deviations from the average as outliers, and I removed these participants from the dataset (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012).

When I was able to create a final dataset and all outliers or participants with missing responses were removed, I then calculated demographic information as means, standard deviations, frequencies, or percentages as appropriate. I calculated means and standard deviations for any continuous variables of interest, such as age or scale scores from each assessment. I calculated frequencies and percentages for any nominal variables of interest, such as gender (Howell, 2010). The descriptive portion of the results describes the spread of responses within the sample, as well as the demographic layout to determine how well the findings may be externally valid to the population of interest.

Research Question

Do familial factors of communication predict African Americans' attitudes toward domestic violence?

To assess the research question, I formulated three hypotheses. Each of these hypotheses were designed to examine all of the familial factors of communication simultaneously; however, each hypothesis is focused on a distinct attitude toward

domestic violence. These attitudes act as the dependent variable in each hypothesis test, and include general approval of aggression and approval of retaliation (both measured by the NOBAGS), and acceptance of couple violence, (measured by the ACV scale). In each hypothesis test, identical familial communication factors were examined and included conversation orientation, conformity orientation, and discussion of dating violence with parents. The following directional alternative hypotheses addressed these attitudes by comparison to the familial factors of communication.

H_01: The familial factors of communication about dating violence will not predict the general approval of aggression.

H_a1: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence will predict the general approval of aggression.

H_02: The familial factors of communication about dating violence will not predict approval of retaliation.

H_a2: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence will predict approval of retaliation.

H_03: The familial factors of communication about dating violence will not predict acceptance of couple violence

H_a3: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence will predict acceptance of couple violence.

To examine each of the research hypotheses, I conducted three multiple linear regressions. One multiple linear regression was conducted for each hypothesis. In each regression, identical independent variables were entered into the equation. The

independent variables represent familial factors of communication, and include

conversation orientation and conformity orientation (as measured by the RFCP), which

are both continuous. The independent variables also represented 10 specific topics of

dating violence conversation, measured by a demographic portion of the assessment and

dichotomous in nature.

The dependent variables were different for each regression analysis; general

approval of aggression was used as the dependent variable to test Hypothesis 1, approval

of retaliation was the dependent variable to test Hypothesis 2, and acceptance of couple

violence was the dependent variable to test Hypothesis 3. I measured both general

approval of aggression and approval of retaliation using the NOBAGS, and measured

acceptance of couple violence using the ACVS. All three dependent variables were

continuous in nature. The multiple linear regression is the appropriate analysis when the

researcher aims to determine statistically significant relationships between several

continuous or dichotomous level independent variables and one continuous dependent

variable (Pallant, 2010).

Multiple linear regression analysis uses the F test to determine if the set of

independent variables collectively predict values for the dependent variable. If the

predictive model is significant, as indicated by the F test, the R^2, or multiple coefficient

of correlation, is reported to indicate the amount of variance in the dependent variable

accounted for by the set of independent variables (Stevens, 2009). For a significant

model, I used t tests for each independent variable to determine each predictor's extent of

prediction (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). For any predictors determined to be significant

by the *t* tests, unstandardized beta coefficients (*B*) were interpreted to explain the relationship between the predictor variable and the dependent variable. For a significant predictor, a single unit increase in the independent variable corresponds to an increase or decrease in the dependent variable equal to the *B* value (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012).

Before conducting the analysis, I assessed the assumptions of the multiple linear regressions. A regression is calculated under the assumption that the data are normally distributed around the regression line, that data are similarly represented along the regression line (i.e., homogeneously spread), and that predictor variables are not too highly correlated (Pagano, 2009). These assumptions are normality, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity, respectively. To assess the assumption of normality, I created and visually interpreted a normal P-P plot. I assessed the assumption of homoscedasticity by visual interpretation of a standardized residual plot. I assessed the absence of multicollinearity by examination of variance inflation factors (VIFs). If an independent variable has a calculated VIF of 10 or higher, it is too highly correlated with one or more of the other independent variables and should be removed or combined with the correlated variables (Stevens, 2009).

Threats to Validity

In this current study, external validity was a threat. I used a convenience sampling design. This convenience sampling design posed a threat to external validity because the population in this study was African American young adults between the ages of 18–24. Because of this restriction on racial characteristics and location, I recommend future research be conducted on groups with the same and unlike characteristics in other

geographical environments, settings, or locations. In addition, the results of this study can only be generalized to those who share the same racial ethnicity as the participants in this study.

Although I gathered participants from a limited setting, this population's geographical location is unlimited because of the online university being an international institution. Potential existed to have participants from many geographical locations, socioeconomic status, and genders. In addition, I gathered participants from the Northeast region of the United States. This population's location was more refined and varying socioeconomic status and genders. As such, results of this study were expected to have a significant degree of external validity.

No foreseeable vital threats to internal validity existed regarding the instrumentation. Researchers had rigorously shown each of the instruments to have high degrees of internal consistency and test-retest reliability. However, the possibility existed that participants may have responded to the assessments in a manner shaped by their desire to adhere to social desirability. This was not expected to be a major harm, as the instrument's high measures of validity and reliability suggest.

To address the issue of selection bias, I evaluated demographic information from the sample to determine if any relevant factors were overly represented. For example, if a disproportionate amount of the participants fell into a specific socioeconomic group, this was assessed against the known population demographics. Any large deviations from the expected demographic spread of the population were noted as a limitation. Demographic information for the final selected sample was provided with the results so that readers

understood where the data originated and was able to view this relative to any population.

Further, I evaluated research variables for univariate outliers to determine any

participants who had qualities uncharacteristic of the majority of the sample (Howell,

2010). Because the research was not based on a repeated measure design, issues of

maturation, regression toward the mean, and experimental mortality were not present

(Pagano, 2009). In addition, the survey host site was formatted such that participants

could only respond once per IP address. While this did not prevent participants from

responding more than once using multiple computers, it was a safeguard to protect

against repeat responses.

Ethical Procedures

The Walden University IRB reviewed and approved this study prior to data

collection. The IRB approval number is 02-05-16-0222890. All participants

electronically received an informed consent prior to participation in the surveys. This

indication of informed consent conferred their agreement to participate or not participate;

those who did not provide informed consent were not able to view the survey. The

informed consent form provided information that explained the participants' rights,

confidentiality, and the procedures for this study. Participants were notified of their right

to withdraw at their own discretion, the risks and benefits of their participation, and my

role and responsibility as the researcher. Participants were also assured that no

identifying information would be collected, and that responses were entirely anonymous.

Potential risks of participation were minor and included the chance of becoming

uncomfortable with the survey questions. Potential benefits included a contribution to the

body of knowledge regarding perceptions of domestic violence and what familial factors may be linked with improved attitudes of domestic violence, as well as the opportunity to view the final results upon request. Because data collection occurred anonymously at the participant's convenience at any location with Internet access, no risks existed aside from the aforementioned associated with data collection.

Data were saved to a flash drive for ease of access and protection. When in use, the data were accessed on the researcher's home computer directly from the flash drive. When not in use, data were protected in a locked filing cabinet. Only myself and my committee had access to the data. Data will be retained at the researcher's residence in the locked filing cabinet for 5 years, as required by the IRB. At the end of the 5-year retention period, the data will be destroyed by permanent deletion and reformatting of the flash drive.

Summary

I posed this quantitative correlational study to determine to what degree familial communication about dating violence predicts attitudes toward domestic violence using quantitative psychometric measures. To gather these psychometric attitude scores, participants from the online university and those who live in the Northeast region of the United States responded to an online survey. After gathering and cleaning responses, I presented demographic information to describe the final sample and correlational analyses conducted on the resultant data. In this chapter, I outlined these procedures and addressed the potential threats to validity and ethical procedures, with an emphasis on remedies for any possible harm.

In chapter 4, I will provide the results of the analyses outlined in Chapter 3, with demographic information, analytic results, and tabulation of all data for ease of interpretation and organization. I also include the data collection process, description of the sample, and the results of the data analysis. In chapter 5, I will provide the interpretation of the findings, limitations of the study, and any future recommendations for this study. Last, in Chapter 5 I will discuss the effect of positive social change associated with this study.

Chapter 4: Results

In the United States, dating violence is a health concern that has proven to be widespread among adolescents, especially African Americans (Martin et al., 2012; Temple & Freeman, 2011; Thomas et al., 2012). Dating violence can have repercussions well into adulthood contributing to a number of health issues and concerns such as alcoholism, violent behaviors, depression and anxiety, promiscuity, eating disorders, and suicide (CDC, 2014a; CDC, 2016; Martin et al., 2012). In 2011, nearly 1.5 million high school students reported experiencing physical abuse in an intimate relationship in the past 12 months (CDC, 2012). Prior to the current study, limited information existed regarding adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence, and whether familial factors predicted dating violence perceptions.

The purpose of the current study was to determine whether verbal and nonverbal familial factors predict African American adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence. I begin this chapter with a description of the preanalysis data cleaning as well as a description of the participant characteristics. In addition, I provide a summary and detailed analysis of the results, followed by a brief chapter summary.

Data Collection

I uploaded the survey to SurveyMonkey, and the survey was posted in the educational institution's participation pool database where registered participants could opt to participate in the study or not. The survey was posted in February 2016. The response rate from this pool was low ($n = 8$), so I developed a secondary participant recruitment method using flyers. Following IRB approval to post flyers at supermarkets,

churches, community centers, and libraries in the Northeast region of the United States in May of 2016, I collected data from this second pool of participants, which included 78 responses in June, 43 responses in July, and a single response in August. A total of 130 participant responses were included in the initial data set. Two of these participants did not provide informed consent and were removed from the data set, resulting in a sample of 128. These 128 survey responses were then subjected to data cleaning to determine the final sample.

Preanalysis Data Cleaning

The original sample consisted of 128 survey responses, which I assessed for outliers based on the guidelines recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2012) in which standardized scores are created and examined for values falling beyond ±3.29 standard deviations from the mean. Based on these guidelines, no outliers were found. Survey responses were also assessed for significant portions of missing responses; 33 cases were found and removed. Furthermore, I removed 10 cases for not meeting the inclusion criteria for age (i.e., younger than 24). The final sample consisted of 84 survey responses.

To conduct the regression analyses, I needed to calculate composite scores. The variable representing conversation orientation was created from the mean of Items 1 to 15 on the RFCP conversation orientation subset. The variable representing conformity orientation was created from the mean of Items 1 to 11 on the RFCP conformity orientation subset. These two scales had possible values ranging from 1 to 5. Acceptance of male on female violence was created using the mean of ACV scale Items 1, 3, and 4. Acceptance of female on male violence was created from the mean of ACV scale Items 5,

6, and 8. Acceptance of general dating violence was represented by the mean of AVC scale Items 2, 7, 9, 10, and 11. General approval of aggression was created from the mean of NOBAGS Items 13 through 20. Approval of retaliation was represented by the mean of NOBAGS Items 1 to 12. Finally, the score for total approval of aggression was created using the mean of NOBAGS Items 1 to 20. This series of scales had possible values ranging from 1 to 4.

Descriptive Statistics

In the final sample of 84 survey responses, most participants were female ($n = 55$, 65.5%), had a household size of three individuals ($n = 22$, 27.2%), and had either a high school diploma or a GED ($n = 50$, 60.2%). A total of 33 (39.7%) had a higher level of education, and one did not indicate an education level. The average age of the participants was 21.01 years ($SD = 2.10$), with an average annual income of $13,127.74 ($SD = \$16,042.48$). The participants had an average conversation orientation of $M = 3.42$ ($SD = 0.79$) and an average conformity orientation of $M = 3.27$ ($SD = 0.61$). Compared to the other scales of dating violence acceptance, participants had a low acceptance of male on female violence ($M = 1.38$, $SD = 0.74$), a low acceptance of female on male violence ($M = 1.51$, $SD = 0.86$), and a low acceptance of dating violence in general ($M = 1.46$, $SD = 0.74$). Conversely, participants showed a relatively higher approval of general aggression ($M = 3.6$, $SD = 0.46$), retaliatory aggression ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.59$), and total approval of aggression ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 0.46$). Table 1 presents the frequencies and percentages of categorical data. Tables 2 and 3 present the means and standard deviations of continuous data.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages for Demographic Information

Variable	*n*	%
Gender		
Male	29	34.50
Female	55	65.50
Household Size		
1	11	13.60
2	17	21.00
3	22	27.20
4	16	19.80
5	7	8.60
6	7	8.60
7	1	1.20
Education		
High school or GED	50	60.20
Bachelor's degree	30	36.10
Master's	3	3.60
Missing (no response)	1	1.20

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for Demographic Information

Variable	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Age	18.00	24.00	21.01	2.10
Annual Income	$0.00	$60,000	$13,127.74	$16,042.48

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations for Scale Scores

Variable	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
Conversation Orientation	1.47	5.00	3.42	0.79
Conformity Orientation	1.27	4.73	3.27	0.61
Acceptance of Male on Female Violence	1.00	4.00	1.38	0.74
Acceptance of Female on Male Violence	1.00	4.00	1.51	0.86
Acceptance of General Dating Violence	1.00	4.00	1.46	0.73
General Approval of Aggression	2.00	4.00	3.60	0.45
Approval of Retaliation	1.83	4.00	3.07	0.59
Total Approval of Aggression	2.15	4.00	3.30	0.46

Detailed Analysis

Hypothesis 1

$H_0 1$: The familial factors of communication about dating violence do not predict the general approval of aggression.

$H_a 1$: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence predict the general approval of aggression

This hypothesis was assessed using a multiple linear regression in which the outcome variable was general approval of aggression and the predictor variables included conversation orientation, conformity orientation, discussion of violence with parents, specific topics of dating violence conversation (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication.

Prior to analysis, I assessed the assumptions of the multiple linear regression. I examined the assumption of normality through visual interpretation of a normal P-P plot. Figure 1 indicates the data generally followed the normality line, and therefore the

assumption was met. I assessed the assumption of homoscedasticity by visual interpretation of a standardized residual scatterplot. Figure 2 indicates the data appeared randomly distributed, indicating the assumption was met. I assessed the absence of multicollinearity by examination of variance inflation factors (VIFs). No VIF was higher than 10 (VIF = 1.22 to 2.71), the threshold suggested by Stevens (2009), indicating the assumption was met.
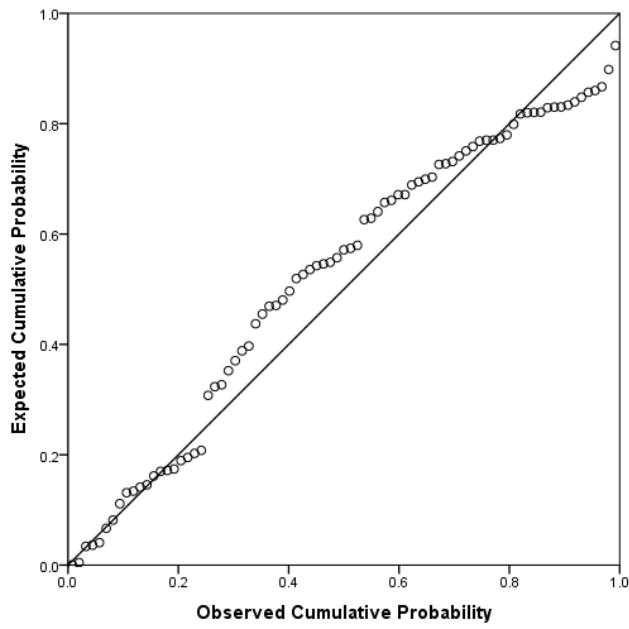
Figure 1. Normal P-P plot for the regression predicting general approval of aggression.
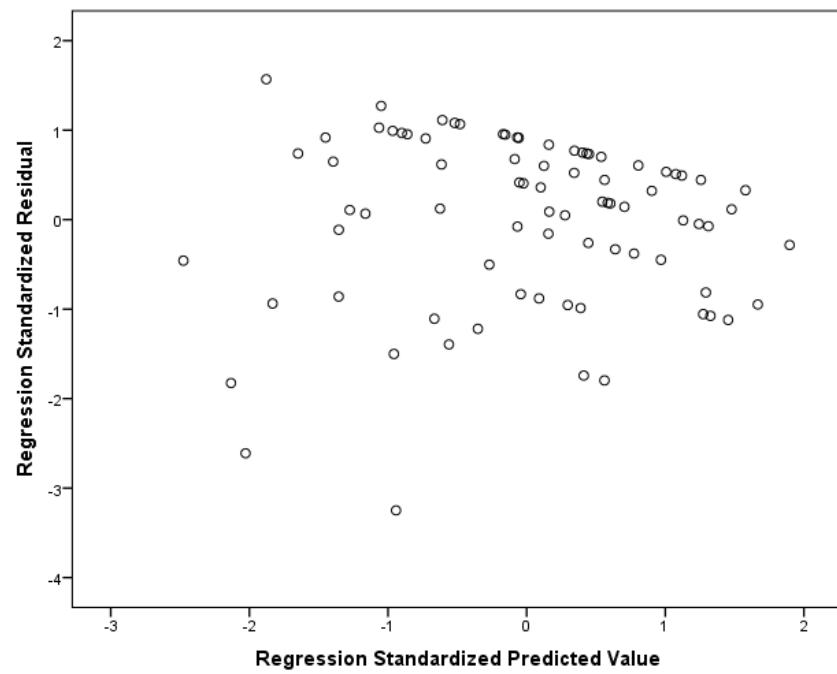
Figure 2. Scatterplot of the residuals for the regression predicting general approval of aggression.

The results of the regression were not significant, indicating that collectively, conversation orientation, conformity orientation, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication did not predict approval of general aggression, $F(10, 70) = 1.03$, $p = .429$, $R^2 = .13$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .00$. Because significance was not found in the general model, the individual predictors were not examined further. The null hypothesis was not rejected. Table 4 shows the outcomes of this analysis.

Table 4

Regression of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication on General Approval of Aggression

Source	B	SE	β	t	p	VIF
(Constant)	2.88	0.58	-	4.97	.000	-
Conversation orientation	0.01	0.08	.02	0.16	.875	1.57
Conformity orientation	0.08	0.10	.10	0.83	.411	1.20
Parent discussion	0.32	0.15	.34	2.13	.037	2.03
Parent to parent discussion	0.01	0.12	.01	0.07	.946	1.14
Perception of parental influence (yes versus no)	-0.15	0.12	-.17	-1.29	.203	1.44
Television, movies, or entertainment	0.03	0.21	.02	0.14	.887	1.21
Body language	0.04	0.12	.04	0.34	.736	1.33
Facial expression	0.21	0.16	.23	1.27	.208	2.68
Hand gestures	-0.29	0.16	-.32	-1.74	.087	2.71
Verbal communication	0.02	0.15	.02	0.17	.869	1.22

Note. $F(10, 70) = 1.03$, $p = .429$, $R^2 = .13$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .00$.

Hypothesis 2

$H_0 2$: The familial factors of communication about dating violence do not predict approval of retaliation.

$H_a 2$: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence predict approval of retaliation.

I tested this hypothesis using a multiple linear regression in which the dependent variable was approval of retaliatory aggression. The predictor variables were conversation orientation, conformity orientation, and discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication. Prior to this analysis, I assessed the assumptions. A normal P-P plot showed the data closely followed the normality line, indicating the assumption of normality was met (see Figure 3). A scatterplot of the residuals showed a random pattern,

indicating the assumption of homoscedasticity was met (see Figure 4). VIF scores ranged

from 1.13 to 2.75, indicating no multicollinearity was present.
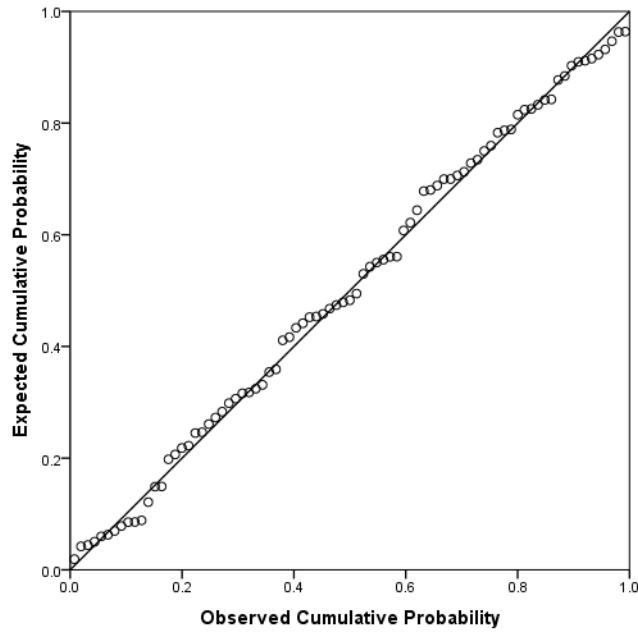
*Figure 3.* Normal P-P plot for the regression predicting approval of retaliatory aggression.
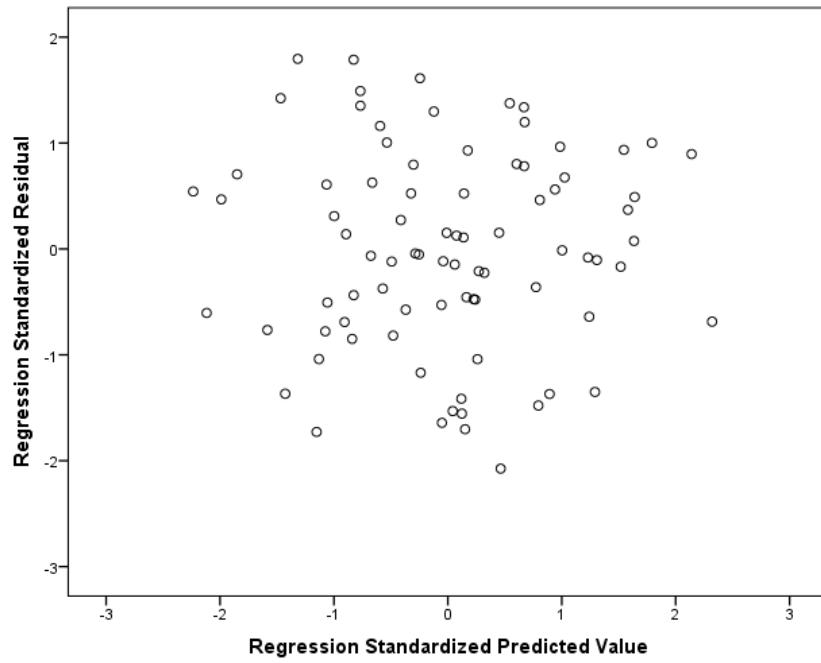
Figure 4. Scatterplot of the residuals for the regression predicting approval of retaliatory aggression.

The results of the analysis were not significant overall, indicating the predictor variables did not collectively predict levels of approval of retaliatory aggression, $F(10, 72) = 0.74$, $p = .685$, $R^2 = .09$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = -.03$. Because the overall model was not significant, the individual predictors were not examined further. The null hypothesis was not rejected. Table 5 shows the details of this analysis output.

Table 5

Regression of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication on Approval of Retaliatory

Aggression

Source	B	SE	β	t	p	VIF
(Constant)	2.81	0.73		3.85	.000	
Conversation orientation	0.15	0.10	.20	1.47	.146	1.45
Conformity orientation	0.08	0.11	.08	0.70	.484	1.13
Parent discussion	0.14	0.20	.11	0.71	.479	2.03
Parent to parent discussion	0.08	0.15	.06	0.49	.625	1.13
Perception of parental influence (yes versus no)	-0.04	0.16	-.03	-0.23	.820	1.46
Television, movies, or entertainment	-0.32	0.26	-.15	-1.23	.225	1.24
Body language	0.00	0.16	.00	-0.02	.982	1.35
Facial expression	0.11	0.22	.09	0.51	.610	2.69
Hand gestures	-0.21	0.22	-.17	-0.94	.352	2.75
Verbal communication	-0.14	0.19	-.09	-0.71	.480	1.21

Note. $F(10, 72) = 0.74$, $p = .685$, $R^2 = .09$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = -.03$.

Hypothesis 3

$H_0 3$: The familial factors of communication about dating violence do not predict

acceptance of couple violence.

$H_a 3$: One or more of the familial factors of communication about dating violence

predict acceptance of couple violence.

I addressed this final hypothesis using a multiple linear regression. The dependent

variable corresponded to acceptance of general dating violence. The predictor variables

corresponded to conversation orientation, conformity orientation, and discussion of

dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and

direct verbal communication. Prior to this analysis, I assessed the assumptions. A normal

P-P plot showed the data generally followed the normality line, indicating the assumption

of normality was met (see Figure 5). A scatterplot of the residuals showed a mostly

random pattern, indicating the assumption of homoscedasticity was met as well (see

Figure 6). VIF scores ranged from 1.14 to 2.64, indicating no multicollinearity was

present in the data.
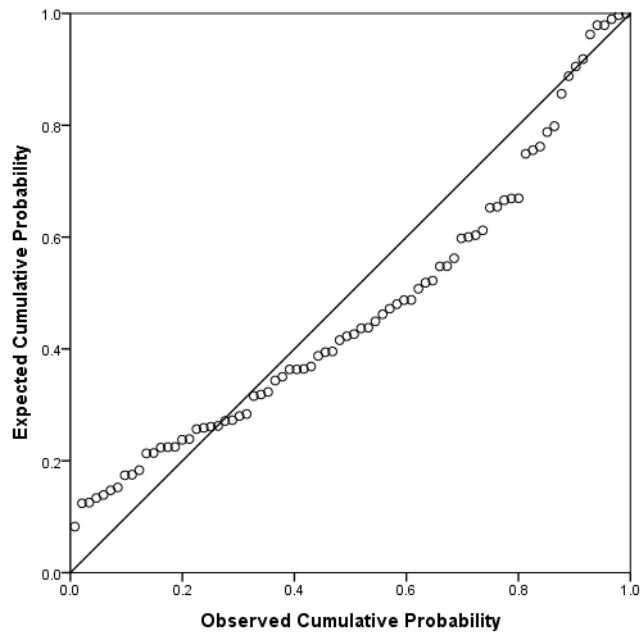
Figure 5. Normal P-P plot for the regression predicting acceptance of general dating violence.
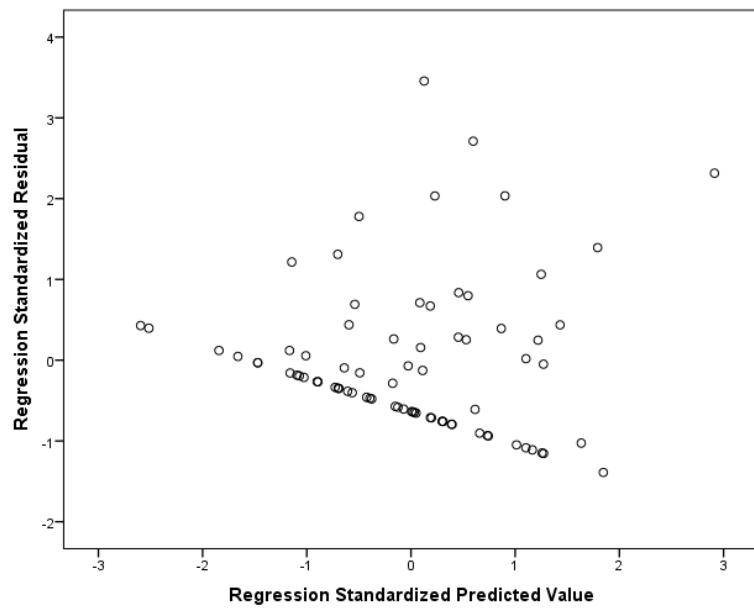
Figure 6. Scatterplot of the residuals for the regression predicting acceptance of general dating violence.

The results of the analysis were not significant, indicating the predictor variables do not collectively predict acceptance of general dating violence, $F(10, 67) = 1.29$, $p = .254$, $R^2 = .16$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .04$. As the overall model was not significant, the individual predictors were not examined further. The null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Table 6 shows the details of this regression.

Table 6

Regression of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication on Acceptance of General Dating Violence

Source	B	SE	β	t	p	VIF
(Constant)	0.72	0.95	-	0.75	.453	-
Conversation orientation	0.09	0.13	.10	0.70	.489	1.56
Conformity orientation	0.02	0.15	.02	0.15	.880	1.19
Parent discussion	-0.15	0.25	-.09	-0.60	.554	1.96
Parent to parent discussion	0.29	0.19	.18	1.51	.137	1.14
Perception of parental influence (yes versus no)	-0.15	0.20	-.10	-0.78	.436	1.40
Television, movies, or entertainment	0.55	0.34	.20	1.62	.111	1.21
Body language	-0.18	0.20	-.12	-0.91	.368	1.32
Facial expression	-0.21	0.26	-.15	-0.81	.422	2.59
Hand gestures	0.40	0.27	.27	1.50	.138	2.64
Verbal communication	-0.42	0.24	-.22	-1.78	.079	1.24

Note. $F(10, 67) = 1.29$, $p = .254$, $R^2 = .16$, $R^2_{Adjusted} = .04$.

Chapter Summary

My purpose in this chapter was to report the findings of the statistical analyses. First, a description of the preanalysis data cleaning detailed the processes used to obtain a final dataset from the initially collected raw data, along with descriptive statistics. The results suggested insufficient evidence existed to determine whether conversation orientation, conformity orientation, discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication were significant predictors of approval of general aggression, approval of retaliatory aggression, or acceptance of general dating violence. As such, the Null Hypotheses 1 through 3 could not be rejected. In the next chapter, I discuss these results in terms of the existing literature. In chapter 5, I will also discuss the strengths and limitations of the study, as well as any directions for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussions, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Teen dating violence has been found to have negative effects into adulthood and has also been associated with a number of health issues and concerns such as alcoholism, violent behaviors, depression and anxiety, promiscuity, eating disorders, and suicide (CDC, 2014a; CDC, 2016; Martin et al., 2012). Family plays an important role in adolescent growth and development. As a result, intrafamilial violence has a profound effect on adolescents (Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012). How adolescents perceive their parents' relationships could influence their perceptions and behaviors within their own relationships. The purpose of this nonexperimental correlational study was to determine whether verbal and nonverbal communication styles predict adolescents' attitudes or perceptions toward dating violence.

Summary of the Findings

In the study, 84 participants completed the RFCPQ; of the participants, 65.50% were women and 34.50% were men. All of the participants were African American with a median age of 21 years. The participants had a median average annual income of $13,127.74, 60% of the participants held either a high school diploma or GED, and the average household size was three people.

The results of this study indicate conversation orientation, conformity orientation, discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication were not significant predictors of approval of general aggression, approval of retaliatory aggression, or acceptance of general dating violence. I was unable to reject Null Hypotheses 1 through 3.

Interpretation of Findings

President Obama stated his administration would work with advocacy agencies, schools, and communities to change teens' attitudes toward dating violence (Obama, 2014). However, the results from the current study showed the attitudes toward dating violence of African American teens between the ages of 18 and 24 do not appear to be a concern. The results did not indicate whether these teens are at risk of being in a dating violence situation. Familial factors did not predict an increase in approval of retaliation, acceptance of violence, or general approval of aggression in dating violence. This study did not provide an answer to the question of what familial factors predict African Americans' attitudes toward domestic violence. However, it would be helpful to know who or what influences African American adolescents' attitudes and perceptions about dating violence. One option is peers. Another possible explanation of the findings is individuals between 18 and 24 years are less susceptible to their family's influences. In any event, dating violence is occurring on a daily basis, and because the data did not support that those influences exist does not eliminate the possibility that African American adolescents might be influenced by them. Knowing where they are getting their information regarding dating violence may help to better understand and prevent this phenomenon.

Numerous researchers and theorists have suggested that family is an important factor in adolescent development (Bandura, 1971; Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Foshee et al., 2013; Henry & Zeytinoglu, 2012; Lohman et al., 2013). Researchers have also suggested parents' relationships could influence children's perceptions and behaviors within their

own relationships (Hines & Saudino, 2002; Olsen & Fuller, 2010; Temple et al., 2013; Uthman et al., 2011). Results of the current study did not support this notion as it relates to African Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 years. For this reason, future researchers should explore understanding the parents' knowledge of the warning signs of dating violence and how to broach the topic with their children. In addition, future researchers should consider conducting a mixed methods approach using African American adolescents between 15 and 24 years old to expand the age range. Expanding the age range could provide more of an understanding about adolescents' attitudes and perceptions related to dating violence. In addition, expanding the age range will provide data on whether those in the earlier stages of adolescence are more strongly influenced by parents and family members than those in the upper stages of adolescence. According to Pickhardt (2010a), parents have less influence on adolescents than children; however, this does not mean that they do not have any influence. In addition, expanding the age may yield different results due to the developmental stages. Pickhardt (2010b) noted that during childhood, children adore their parents and want to be just like them. During adolescence, adolescents become critical and judgmental of their parents. During young adulthood, a self-evaluation process begins that looks back at parental influences in shaping their lives. This young adulthood stage is tricky because during this stage the individual begins to acknowledge the positive and negative influences and may choose to push the parents away (Pickhardt, 2010b). As noted, there is a cycle that takes place that can affect the influence that parents have on their children. This may explain why the findings from this study did not support parental and family influences on adolescent

attitudes toward dating violence. Lastly, future researchers can use the results to help formulate new research on this topic.

Bandura (1971) contended that although behavior can be shaped into new patterns by rewarding and punishing consequences, people learn through models and cultural contexts such as language; morals; vocational activities; familial customs; and educational, religious, and political processes. Bronfenbrenner's (1986) social ecological systems model positions the family as the immediate environment surrounding the individual. The results of the current study contradicted both conceptual frameworks because the attitudes and perceptions of dating violence of African American young adults who participated in this study were apparently not influenced by their parents or close family members.

Muller et al. (2012) found dating violence perpetration may lead to beliefs more accepting of such violence. Muller et al. determined how participants came to accept violence. Looking deeper into the factors associated with this acceptance, I examined the possible influence of family factors on adolescents' perceptions and attitudes toward dating violence. I examined the environmental contributions that shape young adults' beliefs and understanding behind this phenomenon and assessed the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns. The acceptance of dating violence must come from somewhere (Muller et al., 2012). I found that the verbal and nonverbal conversations that African American young adults had with their parents and close family members did not have any bearing on their attitudes and perceptions of dating violence, although researchers have

shown family to have the most profound influence on adolescents. Parents are especially important in adolescents' lives (Princeton University, 1991).

In Lohman et al.'s (2013) study, parenting played a crucial role in the development of IPV. Lohman et al. found IPV to be a behavioral pattern that individuals maintained across multiple relationships from early adulthood to adulthood. However, Lohman et al.'s findings did not support intergenerational transmission of violence. Lohman et al.'s findings were supported by findings from the current study in the sense that parental and family influence did not appear to be present. This does not eliminate the possibility of familial influences; it merely indicates that both studies did not support such influences.

One explanation as to why the current findings did not support prior research indicating a heavy influence from family is the possibility of adolescents being more heavily influenced by their peers. According to Scholastic (2008), as adolescents gain their independence, their peers tend to play a significant role in their lives. In addition, it is not uncommon for peers to influence adolescents to do things that are unfavorable to them (Steinberg, 2011). This may explain the stronger influence that peers may have had on young adults' attitudes and perceptions of dating violence.

Limitations of the Study

Most of the limitations of this study were elements of the research design and method. This study did not address complex issues using in-depth discussion; therefore, a limitation of the study was the absence of depth found in qualitative designs. This study did not provide rich description on key topic areas, which would have added to the

results. Future researchers studying this phenomenon may consider a mixed-methods approach.

A second limitation of this study was participants who did not complete the survey. If a participant did not complete the survey, then the data were not included in the analysis. Another limitation was the inability of participants to elaborate on their responses because of the survey being multiple choice. Participants were forced to choose one of the selected responses versus having the option to explain their answers. Also, there may have been times when more than one answer could be used to address the question or some questions needed further explanation. Further, participants may or may not have accurately remembered previous events or consolidated events that may have taken place at different times. In addition, participants may have subconsciously answered the questions dishonestly based on their interpretation of the purpose of the study.

Another limitation was the specific racial, ethnic, and age group targeted in the study. I assessed African American young adults between 18 and 24 years of age. I did not include individuals who were not African American. Self-selection bias may have occurred in this study because of the use of convenience sampling to select young adults from an online university participation pool. There was also a self-selection process in which participants from the Northeast region of the United States willingly participated based on responding to a flyer posted in supermarkets, recreation centers, churches, or libraries. Participants indicated their willingness to discuss dating violence. Findings did

not include data from individuals who were unwilling to discuss dating violence possibly because of their prior experience with dating violence.

Another possible limitation was the locations where I posted the flyers. In addition to using an online university participation pool, flyers were posted in supermarkets, churches, recreation centers, and libraries. This may have affected the type of individuals who chose to participate in this study. Because participation was anonymous, there was no way to determine whether most participants came from one location. As location can sometimes offer insight into an individual's environment, it would be helpful for future researchers to know if their participants are from an urban, suburban, or rural area. Participants' location might explain why the results were insignificant. Knowing the location, whether urban, suburban, or rural, could pinpoint a higher or lower rate of similar responses. Having information on the location can determine if those specific participants were from an urban, suburban, or rural area.

Recommendations

Recommendations for further research are based on the findings of this study and literature regarding whether verbal and nonverbal communication styles predict adolescents' attitudes or perceptions toward dating violence. According to the Census Bureau (2015), 4,931,074 African Americans between the ages of 18 and 24 years live in the United States. This is a large population, and more research is needed to study a larger, more diverse sample of this population. Such diversity could include geographical and socioeconomic factors. Although responses were received from 0.0017% of the selected population in the current study, a higher response rate is recommended to

confirm or disconfirm the findings of the current study. Expanding the inclusion criteria to African American adolescents between the ages of 15 and 24 years is another consideration. Expanding the age range could provide more accurate information about African American adolescents' attitudes toward dating violence. Results may be different for younger adolescents. Those in the earlier stages of adolescence are new to dating and may be more influenced by family factors than those in the later stages. Those in the earlier stages of adolescence may be oblivious to the severity and frequency of dating violence or may not understand what constitutes dating violence, whereas those in the later stages of adolescence may have some understanding of dating violence. Research that includes all levels of adolescence may provide a more accurate picture of what is going on with this population. Research with more male participants is also recommended to ensure sufficient representation. A qualitative or mixed-methods approach may contribute to an in-depth understanding of whether verbal and nonverbal communication factors influence adolescents' attitudes or perceptions toward dating violence.

Implications

The current study did not yield significant findings. However, the results may inform counseling professionals, related professionals, school district personnel, adolescents, family members, and policymakers that conversation orientation, conformity orientation, discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication were not found to be predictors of approval of general aggression, approval of retaliatory aggression, or

acceptance of general dating violence among African American young adults ages 18 to

24. Moreover, I did not address older African American adults' attitudes toward dating

violence. African American young adults ages 18 to 24 are a specific portion of the

population. Professionals who come into contact with this age group should collect data

on an individual basis to ensure young adults do not go untreated if they need assistance

with this problem. Although the current study results were not significant, this is not an

indication that prevention and intervention programs are not needed to assist with

problems related to dating violence. Educational programs are needed to ensure that

conversations about dating violence are taking place in home and at school. It is possible

that parents are unaware of the prevalence of dating violence within this age group and

need to be educated on the warning signs and how to broach the topic with their children.

The same might be true for adolescents, which is why prevention and intervention

programs need to be readily available. The outcome of this study has the potential to

effect social change because the results, though nonsignificant, may be used to inform

stakeholders that a different approach needs to be considered to understand how dating

violence is affecting the lives of African American adolescents. The findings of this study

may not only inform counselors and other stakeholders about adolescents' perceptions,

but may also indicate an unexplored factor that may be influencing adolescents'

perceptions.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicated conversation orientation, conformity

orientation, discussion of dating violence, conversation types (1 through 4), facial

expressions, hand gestures, and direct verbal communication were not significant

predictors of approval of general aggression, approval of retaliatory aggression, or

acceptance of general dating violence. Although the results were not significant, dating

violence continues to be a health concern and societal issue that must be addressed (Ali,

et al., 2011; Herrman, 2009; Jouriles et al., 2011; Sutherland, 2011). Dating violence

adversely affects lives and, in some cases, results in death. The number of adolescents

who experience or have experienced some form of dating violence is alarming. Research

efforts need to continue until prevention and interventions are put into place to save as

many lives from dating violence as possible. Raising awareness is the first step to ending

this problem.

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Appendix A: Demographic Questionnaire

What is your gender?

     Male ___

     Female ___

     Other ___ (Please feel free to specify)

Socioeconomic status:

Annual Income Level:

     $0-$20,000

     $21,000-$40,000

     $41,000-$60,000

     $61,000-$80,000

     $81,000-above

Educational Level:

     Doctorate

     Masters

     Bachelors (4 years)

     High School (9-12 or GED)

     Middle School (6-8)

What is your current age? ___

(Please respond in a whole number of years)

In what country do you currently live? _____

Where were you raised? _____

Conversations about Dating Violence

Please think back to any time you or another family member have discussed dating violence. What forms of communication did you use to discuss dating violence?

(Please check all that apply)

      Facial expression ___

      Hand gestures ___

      Direct verbal communication ___

Did your parent(s) or family members ever discuss dating violence with you? Yes or No

Did your parent(s) or family members ever use any nonverbal communication such as facial expressions, hand gestures or other forms of body language to suggest their thoughts and feelings about dating violence? Yes or No

Did you ever hear your parent(s) or family members discussing dating violence when you were not in the room? Yes or No

Do you believe that your attitudes and perception were influenced by your parent(s) or family members as it relates to dating violence? Yes or No

Did you and any of your family members ever watch a television, movie, or any form of entertainment that depicted dating violence? Yes or No

If so, did any of their body language indicate how they felt about dating violence? Yes No N/A

Appendix B: Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument

Instructions:

We would like to learn more about how you communicate in your family. Please use this scale to indicate your agreement with the following statements.

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree Strongly

1-----------------2---------------3----------------4----------------5

The Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument (Parent Version)

_____

Conversation Orientation

_____

1) In our family we often talk about topics like politics and religion where some persons disagree with others.

2) I often say things like "Every member of the family should have some say in family decisions."

3) I often ask my child's opinion when the family is talking about something.
4) I encourage my child to challenge my ideas and beliefs.

5) I often say things like "You should always look at both sides of an issue."

6) My child usually tells me what s/he is thinking about things.

7) My child can tell me almost anything.

8) In our family we often talk about our feelings and emotions.

9) My child and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.

10) I think my child really enjoys talking with me, even when we disagree.

11) I encourage my child to express his/her feelings.

12) I tend to be very open about my emotions.

13) We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day.

14) In our family, we often talk about our plans and hopes for the future.

15) I like to hear my child's opinion, even when s/he doesn't agree with me.

_____

Conformity Orientation
_____

1) When anything really important is involved, I expect my child to obey me without question.

2) In our home, the parents usually have the last word.

3) I feel that it is important for the parents to be the boss.

4) I sometimes become irritated with my child's views if they are different from mine.

5) If I don't approve of it, I don't want to know about it.

6) When my child is at home, it is expected to obey the parents' rules.

7) I often say things like "You'll know better when you grow up."

8) I often say things like "My ideas are right and you should not question them."

9) I often say things like "A child should not argue with adults."

10) I often say things like "There are some things that just shouldn't be talked about."

11) I often say things like "You should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad."

_____

Appendix C: Normative Beliefs About Aggression

This scale measures a child, adolescent, or young adult's perception of how acceptable it is to behave aggressively, both under varying conditions of provocation and when no conditions are specified. It can be administered individually or in groups. Respondents are asked to select the one choice that best describes their own ideas or experience.

The items are scored using the following 4-point scale:

It's perfectly OK = 4

It's sort of OK = 3

It's sort of wrong = 2

It's really wrong = 1

Retaliation Belief Questions

Suppose a boy says something bad to another boy, John.

1. Do you think it's OK for John to scream at him?

¦¦ It's perfectly OK ¦¦ It's sort of OK ¦¦ It's sort of wrong ¦¦ It's really wrong

2. Do you think it's OK for John to hit him?

¦¦ It's perfectly OK ¦¦ It's sort of OK ¦¦ It's sort of wrong ¦¦ It's really wrong

Suppose a boy says something bad to a girl.

3. Do you think it's wrong for the girl to scream at him?

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

4. Do you think it's wrong for the girl to hit him?

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

Suppose a girl says something bad to another girl, Mary.

5. Do you think it's OK for Mary to scream at her?

¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

6. Do you think it's OK for Mary to hit her?

¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

Suppose a girl says something bad to a boy.

7. Do you think it's wrong for the boy to scream at her?

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

8. Do you think it's wrong for the boy to hit her?

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

Suppose a boy hits another boy, John?

9. Do you think it's wrong for John to hit him back?

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

I. Attitude and Belief Assessments

Suppose a boy hits a girl.

10. Do you think it's OK for the girl to hit him back?

¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

Suppose a girl hits another girl, Mary.

11. Do you think it's wrong for Mary to hit her back?

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

Suppose a girl hits a boy.

12. Do you think it's OK for the boy to hit her back?

¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

General Belief Questions

13. In general, it is wrong to hit other people.

¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

14. If you're angry, it is OK to say mean things to other people.
¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

15. In general, it is OK to yell at others and say bad things.
¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

16. It is usually OK to push or shove other people around if you're mad.
¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

17. It is wrong to insult other people.
¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

18. It is wrong to take it out on others by saying mean things when you're mad.
¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

19. It is generally wrong to get into physical fights with others.
¦ It's really wrong ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's perfectly OK

20. In general, it is OK to take your anger out on others by using physical force.
¦ It's perfectly OK ¦ It's sort of OK ¦ It's sort of wrong ¦ It's really wrong

Appendix D: Acceptance of Couple Violence Scale

This assessment measures acceptance of couple violence. It has three subscales: male on female
violence, female on male violence, and acceptance of general dating violence.
Respondents are asked to circle the answer that corresponds with their beliefs.

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Agree
4 = Strongly agree

1. A boy angry enough to hit his girlfriend must   1 2 3 4
love her very much.

2. Violence between dating partners can improve   1 2 3 4
the relationship.

3. Girls sometimes deserve to be hit by the boys   1 2 3 4
they date.

4. A girl who makes her boyfriend jealous on purpose   1 2 3 4
deserves to be hit.

5. Boys sometimes deserve to be hit by the girls   1 2 3 4
they date.

6. A girl angry enough to hit her boyfriend must love   1 2 3 4
him very much.

7. There are times when violence between dating   1 2 3 4
partners is okay.

8. A boy who makes his girlfriend jealous on purpose   1 2 3 4
deserves to be hit.

9. Sometimes violence is the only way to express   1 2 3 4
your feelings.

10. Some couples must use violence to solve their   1 2 3 4
problems.

11. Violence between dating partners is a personal   1 2 3 4
matter and people should not interfere.

Appendix E: NIH Web-Based Training Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Cassandra Clarke-Williams** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 08/14/2015

Certification Number: 1813440
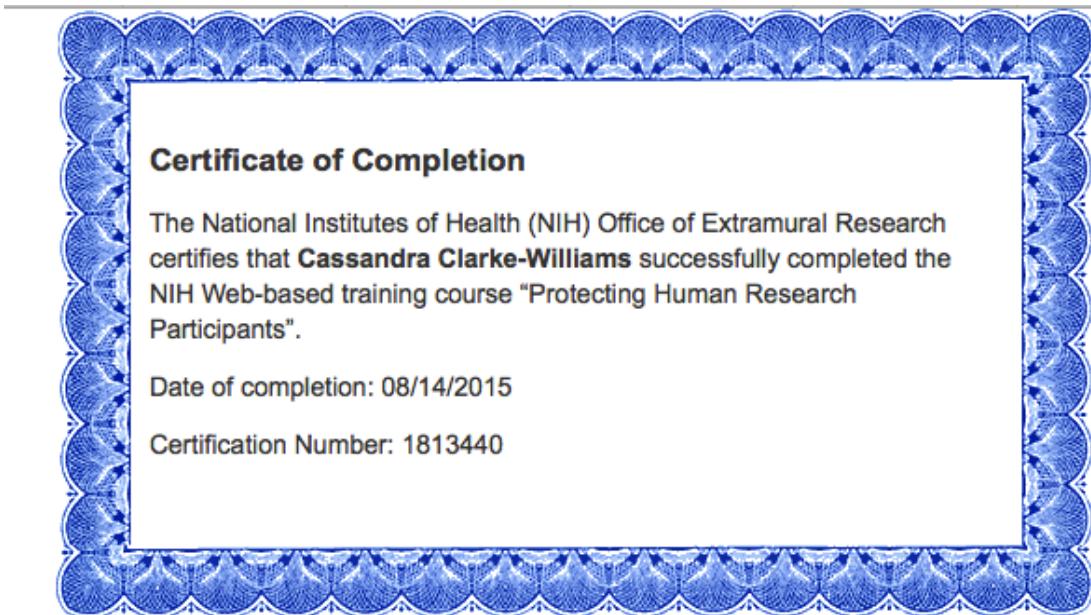
Appendix G: Research Information Flyer

Please Help Me Learn More About Verbal and Non-Verbal Conversations that May Occur Between Families On Dating Violence
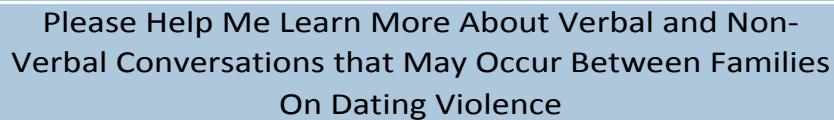
By taking 15minutes out of your busy schedule, you will be making a

HUGE difference in helping families improve their conversations on dating violence! Please consider participating in this important research!

In order to volunteer to participate in this research study, you must be:

- African American
- Between the ages of 18-24 years old

To participate, please visit the website listed below to begin!
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/22957MC

Cassandra Clarke-Williams, doctoral student in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at Walden University. If you have any questions, please contact me at (443) 621-7676 or email me at cassandra.clarke-williams@waldenu.edu. I am being supervised by Dr. Melinda Haley. If you have any concerns, please email her at Melinday.Haley@waldenu.edu. Walden University's approval number for this study is **02-05-16-0222890** and it expires on **February 4, 2017.**