

**Sexual Coercion Among Year 11 and Year 12
High School Students**

by

Ashraf Dashlouty BSc

**This thesis is presented for the degree of
Master of Science
at The University of Western Australia.**

School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health

March 2008

Abstract

Adolescence is a time of accelerated physical and sexual growth, and many students become sexually active before they finish secondary schooling. Unfortunately, many adolescents and young adults experience sexual coercion in their intimate relationships. Sexual coercion is defined broadly as verbal or physical pressure to engage in sexual activity. This study sought to examine sexual coercion experiences of Year 11-12 high school, male and female students in their peer dating and relationships. Before retrieving such information, a modified Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) questionnaire was designed. This was named the Adolescent Dating and Relationship Survey (ADRS) which, subsequently, was examined by experts in the area, and validated via a pilot study using 30 university students.

Thirdly, the study administered the ADRS to 341, Year 11 and Year 12 students to examine how they responded to their sexually coercive experiences. The participants were actively engaging in relationship behaviours, with nearly 50% of the females and 70% of the males reporting a relationship with a partner of the same age. However, significantly more females dated older partners and, conversely, more male students were involved with younger partners. The female students tended to have longer relationships than the males, especially for relationships of 9 to 12 months or longer. Participants did not report sexual coercion experiences via threat or blackmail, nor were the males threatened with a weapon. The most frequently cited forms of coercion by both female and male students were: made to feel guilty, being plied with alcohol and/or other drugs, being pressured by begging and/or arguing, and being lied to. However, the female students reported being physically restrained significantly more than the males. As a group they responded to these sexually coercive acts via all forms

measured except the males, who did not resort to either fighting off or yelling. Talking about the experience later was the response commonly reported by the students. Further, female students responded to sexual coercion by saying either, “Stop” or “No Further”, or pulling away, or by leaving the scene significantly more than the males. However, many female and male participants reported responding to sexual coercion by doing nothing at all.

Acknowledgments

This research project could not have been completed without the continued support and cooperation from my family, friends, colleagues and supervisors. I would like to acknowledge the following people for their contribution during this project and express my deepest appreciation of their experience, and gratitude for their patience.

My sincere gratitude goes to my parents and friends for their interest, enthusiasm, motivation, patience and support.

I am indebted to the School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health, UWA for granting me the resources to conduct my research. Furthermore, I sincerely thank a range of supervisors who assisted me with my research, Professor Bob Eklund, Mr Nick Randall, Dr Paul Heard and Professor Brian Blanksby.

Finally, and most importantly, this study could not have been completed without the voluntary involvement of the students and staff from the schools which participated in the project. My sincere thanks and appreciation goes to you all for your involvement.

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Chapter 1: The Problem

Introduction

Adolescence is a time of accelerated physical and sexual growth. Erickson (1963) described adolescence as an age of exploration, and one of the main contexts in which this exploration takes place is in sexual and romantic relations (Kroger, 2000; Peterson, 2004). In Australia, research suggests that the average age when people are first engaging in sexual intercourse is at 16-years (Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society, 2003). Indeed, almost 50% of adolescents will have sexual intercourse before completing high school (Dunne, Donald, Lucke, Nilsson & Raphael, 1993; Lindsay, Smith & Rosenthal, 1997). When sexual experiences are manifested in a positive manner, the event can enhance the well-being of the individuals involved. If the experience is negative, which often occurs in cases of sexual coercion, a great harm can be perpetrated upon the recipient.

Sexual coercion broadly can be defined as verbal or physical pressure to engage in sexual activity. Individuals who are sexually coerced as adolescents or young adults tend to score higher on measures of depression and anxiety (Gidycz & Koss, 1989; Miller, Monson & Norton, 1995), are more likely to suffer poor social adjustment and increased sexual dysfunction (Nadelson, Notman, Jackson & Gornick, 1982). Also, they are more likely to report problems at school, have a greater involvement in risk-taking behaviours, and experience more health complications (e.g., sexually transmitted infections) than those not sexually coerced (Noell, Rhode, Steeley & Ochs, 2001). Young people who have experienced sexual coercion and date violence, are also more likely to attempt suicide and have suicidal thoughts (Ackard & Neumark-Sztainer,

2002). It has been reported that women who had experienced any form of sexual coercion were associated with poorer psychological, physical and sexual health (de Visser, Rissel, Richters & Smith, 2007). Given these findings, and the revelation that children enter into relationships and undertake physical intimacy at increasingly earlier ages (Burack, 1999), sexual coercion in teenagers is fast becoming an area of concern for parents and health education personnel.

Investigations into adolescent sexual coercion have been stimulated by research examining sexual coercion in adults, and especially in young adult experiences during post-secondary school education (Jenkins & Aube, 2002; Koss, 1993; Koss, Gidycz & Wisniewski, 1987; Menard, Nagayama Hall, Phung, Erian Ghebrial & Martin, 2003; Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987; Patton & Mannison, 1995a). These studies have revealed that the prevalence of sexual victimisation is greater than originally thought. Also, the conditions associated with coercive events were perpetrated more broadly and more commonly than any narrowly defined group of sex-role stereotypes. For example, early reports of sexual coercion tended to detail that substantial threats were only to females by a minority of “disturbed” men who sought out “vulnerable” women to victimise. Even though such threats are real, and need to be taken seriously, it appears that the focus of that common stereotype is too narrow. Hence, the issue requires closer examination.

It is of concern that females are more likely to be victimised by a friend, partner or family member than by a complete stranger (Abbey, Ross, McDuffie & McAuslan, 1996; Burkhart & Fromuth, 1991; Burkhart & Stanton, 1988). Gross, Winslett, Roberts and Gohm (2006) found boyfriends perpetrated 41% of reported coercive attacks, friends (29%) and acquaintances (21%). Only a few experiences involved an unknown

person. Similarly, Simon (1996) reported that individuals who are close to the victim perpetrate 60% of all rapes.

Since the threat of rape to females is more likely to occur via people of trust, the focus should be towards providing community and educational resources rather than only targeting stranger-threat. In Australia, two peer educating projects have been initiated; in Western Australia - The Domestic and Dating Violence Peer Education Project for High School Children and, in South Australia - The Hear Me Out Project for young adults. These were designed to raise awareness about family and domestic violence, teen dating violence, and the support services that are available for people who have witnessed or experienced abuse. One of the foci for these projects is in addressing the potential threat from family, friends and close acquaintances, along with the potential threat from strangers. Preliminary findings from these projects indicate that they are helping in raising awareness in adolescents and young adults of many forms of abuse.

The Sexual Experiences Survey (SES)

In an attempt to investigate sexual aggression and victimisation outside the legal system, Koss and Oros (1982) developed the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES). The aim was to provide greater revelation of hidden or unreported sexual assaults. One important feature of the SES was that it allowed the notion of sexual coercion to be examined. Thus, Koss and Oros (1982) were able to examine the events from a broader platform rather than only physical assault. Individual components such as verbal pressure, lying and the use of physical violence were integrated into the continuum of sexual experiences. More recently, the SES has been extended to cover even more

obscure issues such as obsessive relational intrusion and stalking (Spitzberg & Rhea, 1999).

Using the SES, Koss et al. (1987) undertook one of the largest investigations into sexual coercion and dating violence. Their results revealed that 53.7% of young adults have experienced some form of sexual coercion. The highest victimisation rates occurred between 16 and 19 years of age, but experiences occurred in participants as young as 14 years of age. Patton and Mannison (1995b) examined sexual coercion within young adults in Queensland. They revealed that some respondents reported coercive events occurring when 13 years of age. That sexual coercion occurs consistently within populations above 18 years of age has been shown repeatedly (Byers & Lewis, 1988; Koss & Oros, 1982; Menard, Nagayama Hall, Phung Erian Ghebrial & Martin, 2003; Patton & Mannison, 1995a). However, investigations into the occurrence of coercion in younger age groups were not as extensive (Jackson, Cram & Seymour, 2000).

Adolescence is a time when individuals form the behavioural foundations of partner interaction (Furman, 2002). They also are experiencing major physical, social, emotional and hormonal changes, and it is hard to form relationships sympathetic to the needs of both partners (Patterson, 1996). In conjunction with the challenges of adolescence, approximately 60% of individuals have experienced pre-marital sexual intercourse by the age of 19 (Goldman & Goldman, 1982). Individuals who participate in sexual relations during these times could benefit from education programs aimed at providing updated information regarding possible consequences, ethical considerations and tools to support their desired choices. In Australia, schools play a significant role in developing attitudes and decision-making skills (Milton, 2004; Milton & Berne, 2003).

It would seem appropriate to provide information regarding typical adolescent sexual experiences to assist young people in weaving a successful pathway through this experimental phase of human inter-relationships. In Western Australia, the Womens Council for Domestic and Family Violence WA, in conjunction with the Family Domestic Violence Unit, initiated The Domestic and Dating Violence Peer Education Project in 2007 to address such a need for high school students in Years 9, 10 and 11. However, information is needed about the prevalence of sexual coercion in both males and females to help formulate the most relevant programs of assistance.

Defining Sexual Coercion

Sexual coercion is a broad term that encompasses a diverse range of experiences and behaviours. As a consequence, defining sexual coercion has been difficult. Many definitions were developed specifically for a particular research function. Some researchers constructed their specific definitions based on the characteristics of the acts being examined. As examples, sexual coercion has been defined as: (a) the desire of a male to gain coital access from a rejecting female, during which physical coercion is undertaken (Kanin, 1967); (b) unwanted sexual contact and unwanted intercourse (Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987); (c) “anything where the female feels or believes she is being pressured into having sex or doing anything she doesn’t want to do” (Biglan, Noell, Ochs, Smolkowski & Metzler, 1995; p. 556); (d) any situation in which one person uses verbal or physical means (including the administration of drugs or alcohol, with or without the other person's consent) to obtain sexual activity against consent (Adams-Curtis & Forbes, 2004); and (e) being forced or frightened into unwanted sexual activity (de Visser et al., 2007). For a more detailed summary of other definitions please refer to Craig (1990).

Other definitions have been constructed from legal foundations. An example of such a definition is “sexual intercourse where the man compels [a woman] to submit by force or by threat of imminent death, serious bodily injury, extreme pain or kidnapping, to be inflicted on anyone” (Estrich, 1987; p. 58-59). Legal statutes even have evolved to the point of “non-consensual penetration of an adult or adolescent obtained by physical force, by threat of bodily harm, or when the victim is incapable of providing consent because of mental illness, mental retardation or intoxication” (Simon, 1996).

The specificity of the various research and legal definitions has resulted in many discounting the diversity of sexual coercion behaviour. As a result, some legal codes have been developed to cover broader area of assaults and to account for the various methods used (with a non-specific gender).

In the light of the specificity of the above definitions and the general focus of this research, the following definition was devised,

“Sexual coercion is a behaviour in which an individual intends and attempts to undertake a sexual interaction (i.e., sex play or sexual intercourse) with another individual using the elements of either force, threat, or any form of manipulation (e.g., alcohol, other drugs or mistruths), without the consent of the other individual.”

Note that this definition incorporates the purposeful want or intent, which has rarely been considered in past definitions. Intent of an event can occur in one of two ways - either prior to the occurrence of an event, or as soon as consent is revoked or halted during the event. The determination of intent can be very difficult. Nonetheless, it needs to be included to differentiate purposeful actions from innocent miscommunications and/or token resistance. Token resistance has been reported as being when an individual, historically a female, says no but means yes. Even though

some females have reported use of token resistance (e.g., Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988), the issue needs further examination as it can be easily taken out of context. One individual's signal for not continuing might not be recognised or acknowledged by the other individual. Thus, it is possible that there are just as many comfort levels of sexual progression as there are individuals involved in sexual activity.

Finally, it is important to note that the definition does not implicate either gender as a perpetrator or a victim. This is an important issue as sexual coercion can happen to males as well as females (Clements-Schreiber, Rempel & Desmarais, 1998; Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988). Research has found that females commit sexually coercive acts against males (Russell & Oswald, 2001; Simon, 1996). Hence, the structure of this definition allows for the inclusion of all unwanted sexual interaction behaviours that can occur within adolescent relationships.

To conclude, the general focus of the current research was on how adolescents responded to their sexually coercive experiences as little is known about this aspect. More specifically, previous research has reported that friends, partners and family members perpetrate most sexual victimisation events (e.g., Burkhart & Fromuth, 1991). However, the current study chose to focus on sexual coercion experiences in the context of peer dating and peer relationship events of adolescents rather than stranger and/or family experiences. Additionally, given the dearth of research concerning males as victims of sexual coercion, another focus was to examine the unwanted sexual experiences of male adolescents. A considerable amount of knowledge exists regarding the victimisation of females. However, scant attention has been accorded to males as victims of sexual coercion.

Statement of the Problem:

The purpose of this research was to examine the incidence of sexual coercion in adolescents via a 3 step process. First, the SES was modified to develop an ADRS and gain approval from experienced experts in the field. Secondly, the ADRS was piloted on a group of University undergraduates and some younger secondary school students to ensure clarity of the questions. Thirdly, having developed an appropriate test instrument, the major focus of the project was carried out; namely, to examine sexual coercion within the dating relationships of Year 11 and 12 high school students.

More specifically, the study examined:

- the number of dating relationships in the students sampled
- the duration of these dating relationships
- the age difference between the dating partners
- the number of sexually coercive experiences experienced and,
- the victims response/s to their sexually coercive experiences

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Previous research has described the prevalence of sexually coercive events (Koss et al., 1987; Lottes & Weinberg, 1996), the possible consequences from such experiences (Nadelson et al., 1982), the various factors that may contribute to coercion, and theories supporting the explanations given (Biglan, 1996; Craig, 1990; Oswald & Russell, 2006). This review covers briefly the literature examining the incidence and prevalence of sexual coercion in adolescents and young adults. Also, it contains literature examining the outcomes of sexual coercion, the attitudes of adolescents toward sexual coercion, some of the risk factors enhancing the likelihood of sexual coercion, the victim reactions to sexual coercion, and some of the educational programs and interventions that have been implemented to help adolescents. Finally, several theories of sexual coercion are examined.

Prevalence of Sexual Coercion

Sexual coercion rates were first sourced from the criminal justice system (Ellis, 1989). While this would seem to be a suitable process, others have questioned the results. For example, Koss et al. (1987) questioned the rape figures of 87,000 incidents for the United States of America reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1985. They believed that this figure represented as little as 10% of the total actual offences. Indeed, Ellis (1989) found that victimisation surveys recorded a rate that was 300-400% higher than that reported by the U.S. Bureau of Justice statistics.

The discrepancies in the number of incidents recorded between the criminal justice data and those of Koss et al. (1987) could arise from the different methods used to gather information. Often, the questions in crime surveys allow victims to infer that

their experiences must have occurred within the context of a violent crime. Secondly, the stigma attached to the term rape, and a lack of common understanding as to what constitutes sexual coercion, can affect the levels of coercion reported.

For instance, women are more likely to acknowledge an event as rape when the perpetrator was not their partner, or if force was used to obtain intercourse (Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger & Halvorsen, 2003). Experiences are often not acknowledged as rape if they involve a boyfriend or partner, or the female was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or the act involved digital or oral penetration. Similarly, women are also less likely to report sexual coercion by a friend and more likely to report such acts by a stranger. If the same behaviours are perpetrated by an acquaintance, a number of acts which meet the definition of sexual coercion often are not always perceived as such by the victim (Koss, 1992).

This under-representation in reporting has encouraged more studies outside the criminal system in order to provide a more accurate view of the prevalence of sexual coercion. Researchers have asked wider sections of the community about such experiences instead of just analysing the minority who had come forward. This method allows for specific questions to be asked which more effectively capture experiences of sexual coercion, but which are not labelled thus by the victims. It also provides a less threatening platform whereby victims can reveal their experiences. Such studies have revealed sexual coercion rates of 83% (Kanin & Parcell, 1977), 54% (Koss et al., 1987), 42% (Patton & Mannison, 1995a) and 27% (Gross et al., 2006).

Hence, sexual coercion as a form of abuse appears to be more prevalent than that found by focusing upon information gleaned from the justice system. This discrepancy could, in part, be due to the capturing of the sexual coercion behaviours perpetrated by

acquaintances as well as capturing those behaviours perpetuated by strangers. Sexual coercion perpetrated by a stranger has been defined as: non-consensual sexual interaction between two individuals who did not know each other prior to the event. On the other hand, acquaintance sexual coercion is: non-consensual sexual interaction between individuals who have some type of prior relationship before the event (Marx, Van Wie & Gross, 1996). Sexual coercion by an acquaintance can be broken down further into sub-classifications such as marital, professional and dating. It should be noted that victims of sexual coercion have reported knowing the perpetrators in 80% of cases (Koss, Dinero, Seibel & Cox, 1988), while 90% of women who reported being raped knew the men who raped them.

As part of the Minnesota Student Survey, Ackard and Neumark-Sztainer (2002) investigated the prevalence of date violence and rape in a sample of 81,247 students. The Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning administered the state wide survey, to assess health related experiences and attitudes among adolescents in the 6th, 9th and 12th grades. In relation to date violence and rape, the survey was administered to 9th and 12th grade students only. A high percentage of the students were in the 9th grade (i.e., 60%), and approximately 90% were white. Of the sample group, 589 females (1.4%) and 471 males (1.2%) reported having been raped while on a date. The impact of these experiences was significant with more than 50% of those who reported experiencing date violence and rape, also attempted suicide and were more likely to report repeat victimisation. However, from a sexual coercion perspective, the study examined only a narrow category within the area; namely rape, and this may have limited the representation of prevalence rates.

Koss et al. (1987) attempted to build on previous research that had revealed substantial levels of sexual coercion on a national scale. They administered surveys to 6159 people enrolled at 32 separate institutions of tertiary study across the United States of America. This attempted to make the research as representative of the higher education population as possible. Each participant was administered the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES; Koss & Oros, 1982). The SES assesses different forms of sexual coercion such as arguing, use of power, use of threat, sexual contact, sexual coercion, attempted rape and rape. It also assesses the forms of coercion reported by the perpetrator. Koss et al. (1987) found that 53.7% of female participants had experienced some form of sexual coercion, and that 25.1% of males reported using some degree of sexual aggression. For females, figures were then broken down into the areas of sexual contact (14.4%), sexual coercion (11.9%), attempted rape (12.1%) and rape (15.4%). Koss et al. (1987) found that the rate of rape determined in their investigation was 10-15 times that of the current National Crime Statistics. A strength of this investigation was that it examined various types of coercion such as continual arguments, the use of power, sexual assault and attempted sexual assault. Despite providing useful information regarding sexual coercion, it could have been a weakness that the focus was on females as victims and males as perpetrators.

Incidence of Sexual Coercion in Adolescents and Young Adults

Rates of sexual coercion experienced during adolescence vary considerably. Sexual victimisation has been reported as low as 12% (Hall & Flannery, 1984). Bergman (1992) found that approximately 20% of students reported experiencing sexual coercion. Of these, 15.7% were female students and 4.4% were male students, in years 9 to 12 of high school. Figures also have been reported as many as 76.9% of females

and 67.4% of males having experienced at least one instance of unwanted sexual activity (Jackson et al., 2000). Cecil and Matson (2005) investigated levels of sexual coercion in adolescent African American women, and differences in psychological health and family dysfunction. They reported only 23.4% of women had never been victimised. The study reported that 33.7% experienced sexual coercion, 10.8% experienced attempted rape and 32.1% were raped. Therefore, a total of 76.6% of all the females reported some form of sexual coercion.

Kilpatrick (1992) examined the long-range effects of child and adolescent sexual experiences to aggravated sexual assaults, and found that 54% of all rapes occur between the ages of 11 and 24 years, and that 43% of all perpetrators are males aged 25 years or younger. Taken together, these findings suggest that behaviours of this nature are occurring within young age groups.

Rickert, Wiemann, Vaughan and White (2004) examined the experiences of female attendees to the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Centre in New York. They found that about 30% of the sample reported at least one unwanted sexual experience within the last 12 months. They also examined a number of correlated risk factors with sexual coercion. Past physical aggression, both mild-to-moderate and severe, increased the risk of rape and attempted rape. Date specific behaviours and going to the perpetrator's house also increased the risk of being coerced. The risk of verbal sexual coercion was increased following past verbal aggression from a dating partner, a greater number of past dates, and going to the perpetrator's house. There seemed a divergence when the factor of alcohol and other drugs were examined. They revealed that alcohol use by the victim or perpetrator did not increase the risk of rape or attempted rape. This

appears to contradict previous findings related to the use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs in these situations (Menard et al., 2003; Wilson, Calhoun & McNair, 2002).

Erickson and Rapkin (1991) examined the unwanted sexual experiences among middle and high school youths. They found that 15% of high school students reported an unwanted sexual encounter. In general, more females than males reported that physical force was used (31% versus 8%, respectively). Both females and males reported drugs and alcohol were used in 26% of all unwanted sexual experiences. Male students were more likely to report that they regretted the experiences compared with female students. They also reported being pressured by their friends and peers more often than their female counterparts.

Patton and Mannison (1995a) examined the frequency of unwanted sexual experiences in female university students and the frequency of coercive acts by male university students. From 253 female and 92 male participants, they found that 42% of females had reported unwanted sex play or intercourse, and 26% of males reported perpetrating some form of sexual aggression. The females reported sex play frequencies in descending order, from high to low, as being under the influence of drugs/alcohol, partners so sexually aroused they could not stop, being lied to by their partner, arguing and being pressured, verbal threats to end the relationship, threats of physical force, and/or use of physical force.

The males reported less use of these forms of coercion, with no reports of using any form of threat and/or use of physical force. However, 18% of males reported saying things they did not really mean. A similar pattern was also reported for frequencies of sexual intercourse with the males reporting less use. Again, the highest percentage of utilisation was saying things they did not really mean (9%). Only 1% of

males indicated using a threat to end the relationship to initiate sexual intercourse. Forty-five percent of women reported that the male had misinterpreted the level of intimacy desired and 45% of males reported that the girl had misinterpreted the level of intimacy desired.

There was a consistent pattern of discrepancy between female and male students regarding the amount of sexual coercion when results of Patton and Mannison (1995a) were compared with those of Koss et al. (1987) and Gavey (1991). Specifically, these studies found that males tend to under-report the amounts of coercion when compared with the experiences of sexual coercion reported by females. Additionally, there was a discrepancy between the number of situations leading to unwanted intercourse and those who reported being raped. Despite experiencing what would legally be termed as rape, it appears that many females distinguish between unwanted sex and sex without consent. Rape appeared not to be seen as the same as unwanted sex with someone you know. Patton and Mannison (1995a) also found that the use of alcohol and other drugs was more extensive than that reported by either Gavey (1991) or Koss et al. (1987).

Patton and Mannison (1995b) examined the existence of sexual coercion in dating relationships of high school students. They found that 53% of females reported that the male had overestimated the level of intimacy desired and 45% of males reported that the female had underestimated the level of intimacy desired. This level of miscommunication was also reported by Koss and Oros (1982) (70% and 53%, for females and males, respectively). Females reported drugs and alcohol as having the highest frequency of occurrence, and threats of physical force the lowest. Male reported frequencies were lower except for offering continual arguments and pressure. Males acknowledged their own coercive behaviour less frequently than women acknowledged

its occurrence. Finally, coercion leading to sex play occurred mostly in non-romantic friendships, casual dating, and when seeing only this person. Coercion, which led to intercourse, occurred predominantly in more permanent relationships.

Caceres, Marin and Hudes (2000) examined the prevalence and correlates of sexual coercion in adolescents and young adults. They found that sexual coercion was a relatively common experience for adolescents and young adults. More specifically, 46% of females and 20% of males reported having been sexually coerced. In addition, 40% of women and 11% of men reported being sexually coerced at their first heterosexual experience.

Finally, males are historically recognised as the transgressors in sexual coercion experiences, and a number of key risk factors were associated with male sexually aggressive behaviour (DeKeseredy, 1997). Firstly was the association with espousement of familial patriarchy. Familial patriarchy is defined as “a discourse that supports the abuse of women who violate the ideals of male power and control over women in intimate relationships” (DeKeseredy, 1997, p. 50). DeKeseredy (1997) described cultural and societal influences that appear to be strongly associated with perpetrators of this type of behaviour. These risk factors provide some explanation regarding sexual coercion practices of males.

Other factors include:

- the male peer support group exerts the influence,
- past sexually abusive behaviour during younger years,
- the contribution of pornography to male sexually aggressive behaviour.

Interestingly, research into sexual coercion has typically examined sexual coercion from the perspective of females being the victims and males the perpetrators. Despite this generalisation in research focus, a smaller body of research has found that some females are the perpetrators of sexual coercion against males. Furthermore, more liberal attitudes and sensitive research has investigated same-sex coercion instances.

O'Sullivan and Byers (1993) and Muehlenhard and Cook (1988) examined sexual coercion experiences of female and male university students. These researchers reported that, along with women, there were also self-reports of unwanted sexual activity found amongst the men.

Anderson, Reis and Stephens (1997) found that both males and females were victims of unwanted sexual activity. Specifically, being forced to do something sexual (24% and 24%, male and female, respectively), being physically hurt (19% and 13%, male and female, respectively), and being forced to have unwanted sex (24% and 63%, male and female, respectively). Two-thirds of males and one-third of females believed that alcohol and/or other drugs played a part in the intimidation or violence.

Jackson, Cram and Seymour (2000) focused on the prevalence of violence and sexual coercion within the dating relationships of high school students. They found that a similar number of females and males experienced most types of non-consensual sexual activity, with females experiencing being "felt-up" significantly more than males.

Caceres, Marin, and Hudes (2000) examined sexual coercion among youth and young adults in Lima, Peru. They found that approximately 25% of the male sample had experienced sexual coercion.

Carney, Buttell and Dutton (2007) reviewed literature regarding women who perpetrated partner violence and wrote that female initiated violence was trivialised and explained away. Violent females are usually portrayed as acting in self-defence or are victims of reporting bias (i.e., females have more credibility when reporting violence than males). Female initiated violence was found to equal, or even exceed, that perpetrated by males (Archer, 2000; 2002). Felson and Cares (2005) reported that males were more likely than females to suffer serious injuries, and were less likely to use violence in intimate relationships. Watson, Cascardi, Avery-Leaf and O’Leary (2001) found that adolescent females were more likely to assault male partners, rather than the other way around.

Fiebert (2006) reviewed published material reporting frequencies of aggression for females and males, and found that females are as physically aggressive, or more aggressive, than men in their relationships with their spouses or male partners. In short, dating violence is more likely to be perpetrated by female rather than male youths.

Similarly, Straus (in press) has found that females can perpetuate violence in a relationship. However, the most frequent pattern was bidirectional – relationships where both the male and female were violent, followed by “female only violence”. Interestingly, if either partner was dominant in the relationship this enhanced the likelihood of violence occurring.

Enosh (2007) examined a predictive model of perpetration of, and victimisation by, sexual coercive practices in adolescent dating relationships and reported partial support for the above findings with regards to sexually coercive acts. Specifically, Enosh (2007) found that male adolescents were prone to both victimisation and the

perpetration of sexual coercion; and the levels of victimisation were higher in males compared to females.

Finally, Sears, Byers and Price (2007) examined the co-occurrence of, and risk factors for, self-reported use of psychologically, physically and sexually abusive behaviours by adolescent males and females in their dating relationships. They found that 43% of boys and 51% of girls reported having used at least one form of abusive behaviour, and 19% of boys and 26% of girls had used two or more forms of abuse. The most common abuses reported by the males were psychologically abusive behaviours. Most frequently, females used psychologically abusive behaviours alone, or in combination with, physically abusive behaviours.

The literature above indicates that sexual coercion is relatively common amongst adolescents and young adults. The influence of alcohol and other drugs seems to be quite prevalent, and adolescents demonstrate problems with interpretation of verbal and non-verbal messages in their intimate dealings with each other. Some adolescents perceive the term rape differently and it appears that the female as a perpetrator of sexual coercion has been generally overlooked. Thus, it is possible that risk factors for male transgressions of sexual coercion outlined by DeKeseredy (1997) also could have relevance for females.

Potential Outcomes of Sexual Coercion

Given the levels of sexual coercion amongst adolescents, some studies have examined the potential outcomes of such experiences. Erickson and Rapkin (1991) found that, on average, students who had experienced sexual coercion reported slightly lower mean grade scores for school, 'skipped' school more often, reported more health problems and family problems.

Additionally, students who had had an unwanted sexual encounter were more likely to:

- be sexually active
- possibly have an alcohol and/or other drug problem
- have sexual problems
- have a sexually transmitted disease.

Anderson et al. (1997) found gender differences in the problems reported by victims of sexual coercion. The male students who had been forced to have sex when they did not want to, reported:

- missing classes
- being in trouble at school
- having concerns over substance abuse, and
- having feelings of being unpopular.

Female students appeared to exhibit specific problems similar to those associated with adolescence:

- having emotional highs and lows
- overreacting to minor incidents
- feeling unattractive
- having difficulty in making decisions.

Caceres, Marin and Hudes (2000) found that females who reported coercion at heterosexual initiation, reported a lower age for the first sexual intercourse experience,

when compared with their non-coerced counterparts. They also reported more lifetime sexually transmitted diseases. Males who reported coercion at heterosexual initiation, reported a lower number of lifetime heterosexual partners and, for some, future homosexual behaviour. Both genders revealed less sexual knowledge and experienced more sexually transmitted diseases when compared with their non-coerced counterparts. Caceres et al. (2000) concluded that experiencing heterosexual initiated coercion appeared to be a marker for a riskier sexual career.

In an examination of violence and sexual coercion in high school students' dating relationships, Jackson et al. (2000) found that significantly more female students reported feeling "dirty" after being sexually coerced. However, almost half the male students sampled indicated that they were not bothered by these activities.

Finally, de Visser, Rissel, Richters and Smith (2007) examined a range of factors such as age when coerced, number of times coerced and their respective relationships to poorer health status in a sample of Australian women aged 16-59 years. They found that women who had been coerced more than once, reported significantly greater psychosocial distress. Further, poorer physical well-being was found to be greater in women who were first coerced between the ages of 13-years and 16-years when compared with women coerced aged either younger than 13-years or older than 16-years.

In summary, adolescent victims of sexual coercion are associated with a number of poor outcomes. These include academic, personal and health problems. Victims of sexual coercion also are associated with riskier sexual practices. In a recent review of literature, Senn, Carey and Venable (in press) reported that, despite the limitations of

past research examining childhood and adolescent abuse, and subsequent sexual risk, the association between these two variables appears to be robust.

Attitudes of Adolescents to Sexual Coercion

Studies of the attitudes displayed by adolescents towards sexual coercion found that, in general, males are more likely to support the use of sexually coercive behaviours (Feltey, Ainslie & Geib, 1991). However, an age trend suggested that younger students tended to support coercion in situations where:

- the behaviour of the female was called into question,
- there was an opportunity for sexual activity,
- if money was spent on a date, and
- if there was an established relationship.

Generally, as the adolescents grew older, they were less likely to support sexually coercive behaviours. Feltey et al. (1991) also found that those who had experienced unwanted sexual activity were more likely to support coercion in situations where the woman fights back, money has been spent on a date, and where there was an opportunity for sexual activity. However, they found that saying ‘No’ and then use of physical force by the female victim, appeared to be a universal sign that the female does not want to engage in the activity; and that the male does not have the right to use coercion or force.

Rosenthal (1997) examined whether adolescents shared the same definitions of sexual practices as coercive and/or acceptable, and whether there was bias in the reading of communication. Communication for both females and males was judged to be

clearer when the message was yes to sex rather than no to sex. This suggests that the context of situations where the verbal message was no to sex may interfere with processing of the message. Possibly, adolescents have trouble in separating out clear verbal messages from the context in which those messages are being conveyed. Thus, they need to understand that 'No' means 'No', in spite of the non-verbal messages being conveyed. This finding also suggests that the adolescents may be responding to social rules about sexual encounters. In situations where either emotional or physical pressure was used, the adolescents were able to report that pressure was being exerted, especially when followed by unwanted sex. In situations where sex did not occur, the adolescents were likely to report pressure being exerted. However, females were more likely to report pressure in situations where they were hassled until sex occurred, and boys were less likely to report pressure in situations where a mutual agreement was reached, whether or not sex occurred. Acceptability of sexual experience ranked from high to low as follows - consensual sex, sex did not occur, sex without discussion but with good humoured pressure and, finally, non-consensual sex. However, males had a higher threshold of acceptability in situations where pressure was involved. Finally, Rosenthal (1997) noted that, although female and male adolescents appeared to understand the rules of sexual encounters (Rosenthal & Peart, 1996), they tended to behave differently in practice (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993). It is of concern that sexual coercion, and even rape, is acceptable to some adolescents.

Oswald and Russell (2006) examined perceptions of coercive situations such as the impact of the sexually coercive strategy and initiator gender on participant perceptions of all elements; aggressor, behaviour, relationship quality and victim. They found that women who used coercive strategies were deemed promiscuous. On the

other hand, men were deemed to be aggressive. In relation to the victim, those being victimised were not perceived as experiencing high levels of coercion. The authors contend that this view of coercive behaviours downplays the role of the aggressor and minimises the impact on the victim, suggesting it is a normal event and displays a social acceptance of the behaviour.

Rickert, Sanghvi and Weimann (2002) examined how perceived sexual assertiveness of sexually active adolescents and young women varies according to their demographic characteristics, sexual health behaviours and history of violence. They found that many women reported having sexually assertive beliefs. However, 20% perceived they never have the right to refuse sexual intercourse, to ask their partner if they have been examined for a sexually transmitted disease (STD), or to say that they are being too rough. Younger women reported that they never had the right to ask their partner if they had an STD. Finally, contrary to what is normally found, those women who did not have a history of physical assault were more likely to never tell their partner they were too rough or to deny them sexual intercourse.

Lacasse and Mendelson (2007) examined the attitudes of adolescent males and females who had experienced coercion, and others who had not. They found that female victims tended to score higher on measures of sexist attitudes than those who had not been coerced. Victims also were more likely to have a greater number of alcohol and other drug related behaviours than controls, or perpetrators, and scored lower on self esteem measures. Perpetrators and victims scored higher on sexist attitude measures than other males.

Gowen, Feldman, Diaz and Somera-Yisrael (2004) found that girls with a history of sexual coercion endorsed the belief that males are sexually proactive, that

sexual intercourse promotes maturity and that sex occurs spontaneously. Gidycz, McNamara and Edwards (2006) reviewed studies examining women's perception of risk to sexual victimisation and found that women typically exhibited an optimistic bias. They believe they are less likely than their peers to encounter sexual aggression, and if they do, they are better able than others to handle these situations.

Anderson, Reis and Stephens (1997) also found that both male and female students reported that they were confident in being able to assert themselves when necessary and also adhere to safe sex practices. Indeed, the girls reported that they regularly talked about safe sex with their sexual partners and insisted on using protection. However, male students who had been forced to have sex when they did not want to, had difficulties in talking to their partners about safe sex, getting their partner to listen to them, or turning down alcohol or other drugs prior to having sex.

Rigby and Johnson (2004) examined the reactions of Year 8 and Year 9 High School students to a video of a girl being sexually coerced by a boy in the presence of student bystanders. They found that the students' attitude towards the victim predicted the likelihood that they would express a readiness to help the girl. Specifically, a more positive attitude toward the victim was related to expressing a readiness to help and to telling a teacher about the incident. A more negative attitude leads to an unwillingness to help.

Morgan and Zurbriggen (2007) examined the sexual and relationship messages young females and males received from their first significant dating partner. They found that women reported receiving messages from their male partners that indicated a high interest in sexual activity along with pressure to engage in sexual activity. Often in response to these messages, the women gave in to the unwanted sexual activity. In

contrast, the men reported receiving messages from their female partners concerning the setting of sexual boundaries. In response to these messages, the men often accepted the situation but also reported being frustrated. Interestingly, both females and males had learned from their experiences, suggesting to the authors that the first significant dating partner may have lasting sexual and relational influences.

Sears, Byers and Price (2007) found that adolescents who had experienced sexual coercion in their intimate and dating relationships appeared to be more accepting of such abuse. Boys who engaged in sexually abusive behaviours were more accepting of sexual abuse, and had like-minded peers. Girls who used psychologically abusive behaviours tended to view using these behaviours as normal in intimate relationships.

Generally, the literature suggests that the attitudes of adolescents might need to be addressed. For instance, there is a general perception that being coerced sexually will not happen. If it does, then the individual is confident in being able to deal with their perpetrator. Additionally, those who have experienced sexual coercion believe such behaviours are normal in intimate relationships. Indeed, they will continue to use such methods. It is a concern that the use of sexual coercion under certain conditions is acceptable to some adolescents, especially those who are younger. As some adolescents can misinterpret cues in their relationships, there is a need to educate them about the potential harm of such abuse to others and themselves.

Potential Risk Factors Enhancing the Likelihood of Sexual Coercion

Several risk factors have been noted that can enhance the occurrence of sexual coercion. Small and Kern (1993) found that younger adolescents are more vulnerable to sexual coercion as they are less mature; and undergoing significant emotional, social and physical transformations. They also found that the most common perpetrator of

unwanted sexual contact in heterosexual relationships was the boyfriend, followed by a friend. Unwanted sexual contact was more likely to occur on the first date and/or when the partners considered themselves to be in a relationship. Potential risk factors for the occurrence of unwanted sexual contact were previous history of abuse, conforming to peer pressure, use of drugs and alcohol, and coming from a family which did not monitor children's whereabouts or provide children with opportunities to make some decisions about their lives.

Anderson, Reis and Stephens (1997) found that sexually coerced males (66%) and females (33%) believed that alcohol and/or other drugs played a part in the coercion. Gross and Billingham (1998) found a similar association when examining alcohol consumption and sexual victimisation. They found that females who drank more heavily were at an increased risk of sexual victimisation than more moderate drinkers.

Jackson, Cram and Seymour (2000) also found that sexually coercive activities tended to be experienced at parties, at the partner's house, a friend's house or when with friends. Significantly, more male students than females experienced unwanted sexual activities at school. Unwanted sexual activity was experienced more often in long-term relationships, and the next most frequent occurrences were with acquaintances or in casual relationships. The most reported perceived reasons for submitting to coercion were to show they loved their partners, because they thought that's what their partners wanted, and when they were under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs. Significantly more males reported having unwanted sexual activity because they thought their friends were doing it. Relatively few students reported fear of losing their partner, being held down, being threatened with harm or being hassled.

Gowen, Feldman, Diaz and Somera-Yisrael (2004) found that females who dated older males engaged in more risky sexual behaviour, were less likely to use condoms or contraceptives, and reported more incidences of sexual coercion than girls with similar-aged partners (Abma, Driscoll & Moore, 1998; Blythe, Fortenberry, Tamekit, Tu & Orr, 2006; Darroch, Landry & Oslak, 1999; Weisman, Nathanson, Ensminger, Teitelbaum, Robonson & Plichta, 1989). Gowen et al. (2004) found that girls dating older boys were more likely to experience sexual coercion attempts, the completion of this coercion, and to have sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

Arbeau, Galambos and Jansson (2007) examined adolescents' subjective experiences of age in relation to dating, sexual and substance use activities. They found that adolescents dating an older partner felt older when compared with other dating adolescents. Higher alcohol and other drug use also were related to a subjective feeling to be an older age. Sexually experienced adolescents also felt older than their non-experienced counterparts.

Finally, Hartwick, Desmarais and Hennig (2007) examined a range of victims' characteristics and their relationships with men's and women's sexually coercive experiences. They found that, for both men and women, the number of sexual partners, the number of romantic relationships, and the length of the longest romantic relationship were the highest predictors of sexually coerced experiences.

The above findings highlight potential risk factors and conditions associated with the occurrence of sexual coercion. These include opportunities for a coercive act to occur (e.g., at a party or friend's house), the length of the relationship (e.g., on the first date or within a longer, more serious commitment), the age difference of the

partner, history of sexual coercion abuse, and peer pressure. One finding of concern is that the use of alcohol and/or other drugs is often associated with sexual coercion. On their own, each of the risk factors is a problem but it is apparent that under certain conditions, some of these risk factors can co-occur. For instance, both alcohol and other drugs are more likely to be available at a party. Thus, adolescents need to be made more aware of such risks and their co-occurrence because, as these increase, there is a greater likelihood that problems will occur (Small & Kern, 1993).

Victim Reactions to Sexual Coercion

Some researchers have examined how a victim reacts to sexual coercion. Boldero and Fallon (1995) examined the help seeking behaviours of adolescents. They found that adolescents often turned to their friends to help with interpersonal problems. Similarly, Fallon and Bowles (1999) examined adolescent help-seeking for major and minor problems, and reported that 77% of the youths sampled went to their friends for advice on interpersonal issues. Patton and Mannison (1995b) found that some victims of sexual coercion did talk to others about their experiences. However, 54% of females and 68.2% of males did not tell anyone about the incident.

Anderson, Reis and Stephens (1997) found that approximately half the sample of males, and 67% of females reported telling either their teachers or parents about the experience; and 14% of males and 6% of females reported that they wanted to talk to someone further about their experiences. Jackson et al. (2000) also found that some of the students reported talking to friends about their experiences. For those who did talk to someone about their experiences, more female students talked to their family, partners or counsellors when compared with the boys. Many of the girls reported that the issue had been sorted out, contrasting with only a small number of boys who felt this

way. Very few relationships broke up because the victim talked about their experience. However, in cases where the coercion was not discussed, approximately 83% of females and 47% of males broke up the relationship. Only a small number of relationships reported no changes and/or things were sorted out.

However, Anderson et al. (1997) also found that almost half of the female and male students in their study did not talk to anybody. Such a finding replicates research by others (e.g., Patton & Mannison, 1995b). Indeed, de Visser et al. (2003) found, alarmingly, that two-thirds of the victims of sexual coercion sampled in their study did not talk to anybody about their experience. Those who did talk about their experiences chose first to talk to a friend. A smaller percentage talked to a family member. However, very few victims contacted professionals such as a counsellor or psychologist. Molidor and Tolman (1998) and Watson et al. (2001) have reported similar findings. Of note, some research with adolescents has indicated that this cohort often does not take advice from an adult seriously. So, if they do talk to anyone about their experiences, it will be with a close friend (Allen, 2005; Powell, 2007; Smith & Welchens, 2000).

Thus, some victims of sexual coercion talk to someone about their experiences while others do nothing. Other responses to sexual coercion have included pulling away; saying 'No', leaving and fighting off. In fact, Feltey et al. (1991) found that when a woman says 'No' and then uses physical force, this appears to be a universal sign that they do not want to engage in the activity. Furthermore, forceful verbal and/or physical resistance has been associated with rape avoidance (Feltey et al., 1991; Ullman, 1988; Ullman & Knight, 1993). Clearly more research is needed of the reactions of sexually coerced adolescents to build a more detailed understanding of their reactions to sexual coercion.

Educational Programs/ Interventions

Research has reported that either the 'date' or an acquaintance commits 90% of all sexual assaults during adolescence (Irwin & Rickert, 2005; Rickert & Weimann, 1998). Therefore, it may be of use to implement educational interventions that target females and males during adolescence. Some education interventions have been incorporated into studies to examine their effectiveness.

Feltey et al. (1991) incorporated a rape education lecture when examining high school students' attitudes towards sexual coercion. The lecture focused upon gender role socialisation from infancy and continuing through adolescence. This was related to dating and sexual behaviour, and underscored date rape as a logical consequence of the current sex role socialisation practices. Several causes of date rape and sexual coercion were also presented. These included a lack of communication between dating partners, a lack of respect by males for females, peer pressure in females to be cautious about engaging in sex, peer pressure among males to be sexually active, females appearing to be passive/feminine and males appearing to be aggressive, and situations that provided opportunities to engage in sexual behaviour such as in private settings and an atmosphere of sexual expectation. In all potential rape circumstances, male adolescents were found to be more likely to support coercive behaviours compared with their female counterparts. However, after experiencing the rape education lecture, male adolescents were more likely than females to support coercive behaviours only when there was an opportunity for sexual activity and when there was an established relationship. In all other potential rape circumstances, gender was not a factor in explaining sexual coercion attitudes.

Foshee, Bauman, Arriaga, Helms, Kock and Linder (1998) evaluated the effects of a dating violence prevention program, which targeted high school students. It was called the Safe Dates program, and used a combination of school and community activities. The school activities included a theatre production performed by peers, a 10-session curriculum and a poster contest. The community activities included special services for adolescents in abusive relationships (e.g., support groups, crisis line) and community service provider training. They found that the students exposed to the program had significantly lower rates of psychological perpetration, and of abuse and sexual violence than the control group. Further, when compared with students who did not take the Safe Date program, students in the treatment group were less supportive of dating violence norms, and also reported using more constructive communication skills.

Pacifici, Stoolmiller and Nelson (2001) evaluated a coeducational program targeting dating and sexual responsibility of high school adolescents. The students attended three 80-minute classroom sessions, and an individual session for viewing an interactive video story of a 'virtual' date. Session one focused on sexual coercion. The students learnt that sexually coercive behaviours violate individual rights and that such behaviours had hurtful effects. Also, the sessions explored the social influences of sexual coercion, clearly defined sexual coercion and differentiated coercion from healthy sexual development. Session two focused upon the beliefs, attitudes and expectations that contribute to coercive behaviour. For instance, the students learnt to identify different forms of sexual coercion, how to recognise and deal with mixed-messages, explored the myths teenagers have concerning sexual coercion, and to understand how differences in personal expectations can lead to coercive behaviours. Session three focused on helping the students build positive social skills. These skills

helped the students to deal with differences in personal expectations for sex, to understand why saying no is difficult for girls to give and boys to accept, and to learn and practise ways to refuse and respond to sexual advances in caring ways. The interactive video story depicted various forms of sexual coercion and, depending upon the choices made by the viewer, between coercive and cooperative strategies. At the end of the video, an educational discussion was presented by a peer, which reflected the choices made by the viewer. The researchers found that, over all, the students participating in the program reduced their acceptance of sexually coercive thoughts and behaviours (i.e., rape myth acceptance, adversarial sexual beliefs, sex role stereotyping and acceptance of interpersonal violence).

Weisz and Black (2001) evaluated a sexual assault and dating violence prevention program for high school students. The students were offered 12 one-and-a-half-hour sessions over either a 6-week or a 12-week period. The program focused upon gender definitions and roles, healthy relationships, sexual harassment, dating violence and sexual assault via use of lectures, discussions and role-playing. They found that the program was effective in improving the students' knowledge and attitudes towards dating violence and sexual assault, and that these effects were maintained over a 6-month period.

Finally, The Domestic and Dating Violence Peer Education Project was initiated in Western Australia in 2007 by The Womens Council For Domestic and Family Violence WA, in conjunction with the Family Domestic Violence Unit. It is a school based, early intervention program for Years 9, 10, and 11. This peer education program is designed to raise awareness about family and domestic violence, teen dating violence, and support services that are available for people who have witnessed or experienced

abuse. Despite the project being on-going, some positive outcomes have been requests from students for information about domestic and dating violence, and in terms of becoming peer educators. Some of the preliminary findings were that 30% of the students demonstrated a very low awareness/understanding of domestic violence, and approximately 30% demonstrated inappropriate attitudes or norms about violence. Also, over 50% of students indicated that they knew someone who had experienced domestic or dating violence.

A similarly focused program for young people aged 17 to 24 years has been initiated in South Australia by SHine SA (2007). The program is called 'Hear Me Out' and seeks to assist youths in negotiating for safer sex by using peer education as a youth participation strategy. Thus, young people work in partnership with SHine SA to identify solutions that will positively influence their peers and their sexual behaviours. Individuals within this program are trained to address issues around sexual health, effective communication and negotiation, young people's choices about sex - including how to say no - and their roles and responsibilities as peer educators. Initial indications are that this program is having a positive impact. Thus, despite the relative newness of these two programs, peer educators are having some success in gathering abuse information, and disseminating help and advice to their cohorts.

Given these findings, it appears necessary for adolescents to receive education and training in dealing effectively with sexual coercion abuses. There is a need to promote and develop ethical, non-violent behaviours which help to prevent sexual violence (Carmody, 2005). Specifically, adolescents require training and help in developing effective resistance strategies (Brecklin, 2008). They also need help in open communication skills to become more sensitive to their peers' feelings, rather than only

their own feelings. Young adults need to understand that they are responsible for their own behaviours, including control of their sexual behaviours; and to understand the stereotypes and expectations operating in their lives (Hird & Jackson, 2001; Powell, 2007). Also, it is important that adolescents understand a relationship should be based upon equality, mutuality and consent (Allen, 2005). Several studies have offered suggestions for inclusion in interventions (East & Adams, 2002; Gidycz et al., 2006; Jackson, Cram & Seymour, 2000; Patten & Mannison, 1995b; Rosenthal, 1997; Rozee & Koss, 2001; Sears, Byers & Price, 2007; Small & Kern, 1993). This research has revealed sequential developments based on previous studies have been implemented via programs aimed at improving adolescents' knowledge concerning sexual coercion. Progress is on-going to dispel the myths, point out the risk factors, teach appropriate verbal and behavioural responses, and provide avenues for support. Thus far, all the interventions have had some measure of success. Indeed, there are a few programs that have proved to be effective in the short-term in changing adolescent attitudes (Avery-Leaf, Casardi, O'Leary & Cano, 1997; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Weisz & Black, 2001; Wolfe et al., 2003). The most consistent finding is that the adolescents' knowledge and attitudes towards sexual coercion are improved. Despite these promising findings, more work is needed to clarify these issues further.

Summary of Literature Reviewed

From the literature reviewed, some general findings can be gleaned. The first is that sexual coercion is prevalent not only in adults, but also in adolescents. Also, there is a discrepancy between the level of sexual coercion experienced by females and the level of sexual aggression undertaken, or admitted to, by males. Researchers have stated that the under-reporting of sexual aggression by males is 'normal'. If sexual

aggression is being normalised in some manner by males, a clearer understanding of the processes leading to this normalisation is warranted. Additionally, recent research has reported some females to be sexually aggressive toward their partners. Whether this normalisation of behaviour, and reporting of behaviours, crosses over to females when examining male victims of female sexually coercive behaviours, is a question awaiting investigation.

Another discrepancy, which arises regularly, is the number of respondents admitting to experiences of unwanted intercourse, and those victims responses to the direct question of rape. Even though many cases of unwanted intercourse meet the legal definition of rape, many victims do not conceptualise themselves as having been raped. It appears that rape is viewed differently from unwanted sex with an acquaintance. Why this is so needs further research.

The two most predominant coercive strategies experienced by victims of social coercion were the use of physical force and being pressured into unwanted sexual activity. As such methods are effective for the perpetrators, adolescents need help in developing counter-strategies to help them manage sexual coercions.

In general, the outcomes to sexual coercion manifested themselves in poorer personal health and well-being, poorer academic achievement, a poorer understanding of sexual rights and education, and a greater likelihood to engage in riskier sexual activity. Additionally, a small body of research has reported that some of the victims had a more negative self-image with feelings of being dirty, and having regrets about going through with the sexual encounter. These findings have important implications for any intervention being implemented.

The attitudes of adolescents regarding sexual coercion practices such as unwanted hugging, kissing, genital contact or sexual intercourse often indicated an endorsement of such abuse (Muehlenhard & Linton, 1987). Further, being younger, having a sexist attitude and early sexual abuse also shaped the adolescents' attitudes towards accepting sexual coercion. Additionally, some victims believe that they do not have the right to stand up for themselves. Given these findings, there is a need to help modify adolescents' attitudes towards sexual coercion.

Several risk factors have also been highlighted with the most consistent being the presence of alcohol and/or other drugs. Also, being younger than your partner, the number of dates you have been on, and being in a longer-term relationship appear to be related to experiencing acts of sexual coercion. These findings also have important implications for any intervention being implemented, and need to be addressed especially with regards to the presence of alcohol and/or other drugs.

Finally, some research has reported the reactions of those having experienced sexual coercion. The main finding of this review was that the victim is most likely to talk to a friend about the experience. In addition, a small number of studies indicated other strategies such as verbal or physical aggression were used quite successfully. These findings have important implications for intervention work and educators have successfully used peer intervention to help educate their cohort. Whether this success can be carried further awaits further investigation.

However, what is apparent from the above review of the literature, is the overwhelming view that males are the perpetrators of sexual coercive acts, and females are the victims. Although research has indicated that females will more often experience sexual coercion, there is growing evidence that males are also experiencing

such acts. Indeed, this review has included a small body of recent research that examines females as perpetrators of sexual coercion. Again, more research is warranted in examining male and female sexual coercive experiences from the perspective of both victim and perpetrator. Such information would expand the depth of understanding of the issues and help practitioners develop more effective, gender specific education/training programs.

Furthermore, very little is known regarding the reactions of victims of sexual coercion. To date, research has found that some victims of sexual coercion talk to friends and other significant persons, but many tell no one. A few studies have indicated that the victim used verbal and physical aggression to ward off their perpetrators. However, it is possible that other reactive behaviours are being used. Examinations into the reactions of the victims of sexual coercion will help shape the nature of an intervention.

Theories of Sexual Coercion

Given the prevalence of sexual coercion, a number of theories have been offered in an attempt to provide an in-depth understanding of the process.

Craig (1990) proposed the Situational Model of Sexual Coercion which states that: Individuals bring certain dispositions or traits to any situation. Individuals also select situations, which they try to manipulate for the expression of their non-dispositions and avoid incongruence (i.e., events that are inconsistent with the aggressors' dispositions). Coercive males have an acceptance of interpersonal violence, hold certain beliefs regarding women, and have perceptions of their peers' experiences which influence them to behave in particular ways (Rapaport & Burkhart, 1984).

Should an incongruence of events take place, modification of the behaviour or cognitive thought is required.

Craig (1990) describes four techniques of cognitive processes that coercive males use to re-establish congruency. The first of these is selective exposure, which involves actions such as selecting a particular type of female (e.g., with a passive nature). Selective evaluation is another trait whereby coercive males misinterpret female interactions, and often perceive females' actions as more promiscuous than do the females. Evocation of congruent features is the third cognitive process. This involves behaviours intended to evoke the male's desired result. A common strategy used within this process is the use of alcohol and/or drugs. The final process proposed by Craig is that of cognitive restructuring. This involves modifying interpretations to fit the individuals' images (e.g., rationalising behaviour). It is these cognitive strategies that are employed by coercive males to maintain their behaviours.

Various limitations of the Situational Model of Sexual Coercion (Craig, 1990) have been proposed by Patton and Mannison (1995a). The first of these was that women are represented as docile agents. This allows men to select a style of female as a partner and disregards the female's role in mate selection. Secondly, Patton and Mannison (1995a) suggested that the model provided a limited view of male and female developmental capacities, and that the model focuses on a behavioural viewpoint. Finally, the model takes only coercive males into account, with no allowance for either socialisation or other external processes been considered. This almost isolates the individuals from the environments with which they are associated.

Various researchers have mentioned the influence of socialisation (Biglan, 1996; DeKeseredy, 1997; Patton & Mannison, 1995a). The influence of socialisation and

societal development forms the basis of the second explanatory theory. Socialisation is a process that develops across the whole of one's life. Potentially, it allows the development of particular gender roles such as females being taught to become victims and males to take domineering positions (Patton & Mannison, 1995a). This example stems from previous research relating to areas such as domestic violence and child abuse, and is still embedded to some extent within our culture; albeit undergoing positive change in recent times.

The socialisation process begins at a very early stage with what is taught to children regarding interactions with the opposite sex. Boys and girls tend to experience life qualitatively differently. For instance, boys tend to play competitively and roughly, and give commands to those around them. On the other hand, girls tend to be more cooperative, playing in small groups and developing more intimate friendships (Maccoby, 1990). As they progress towards adolescence, the interactions between sexes reinforces the behaviour of boys more so than that of girls; as boys will interrupt and dominate, whereas girls are more likely to listen and show interest (Maccoby, 1990).

The difficulty of the socialisation argument is that there are many females and males who are not involved in such behaviours, but who are of the same culture. One question that arises is that of how to recognise what influence it is that draws the line, and whether the differences occur at an individual level rather than societal. A second difficulty in clarifying the role of socialisation is that it occurs from the influences of several organisations such as family, school and the media (Biglan, 1996). Investigations into each of these components are necessary to explain socialisation more

fully. Humans interact heavily with the surrounding environment and it would be foolish to believe that it has no effect upon behaviours.

The third major theory regarding sexual coercion has been termed the mate deprivation hypothesis. It states that males are more likely to employ sexually coercive tactics if they are unsuccessful in accessing mates (Thornhill & Thornhill, 1992). The mate deprivation hypothesis is based on evolutionary psychology principles and is believed to have developed as a solution to adaptive problems within humans. Thornhill and Thornhill (1992) proposed that all mates have the capacity for coercive behaviour. It appears that only a small proportion of individuals use coercion due to various environmental and situational factors that are encountered and reduce their access to mates. Therefore, the mate deprivation hypothesis views coercive males to be unsuccessful in attaining resources and status, they are less sexually experienced and have a lower perception of mating success. The hypothesis has not been supported by other investigators (e.g., Koss, Leonard, Beezley & Oros, 1985; Lalamiere, Chalmers, Quinsey & Seto, 1996). These latter studies found that sexually coercive males have a greater level of sexual experience than non-coercive males, which argues against the original hypothesis. Also, coercive males have a short-term approach to mating, and show a greater preference for partner variety and casual sex.

Finally, one model that examines a number of the factors discussed in all of the previous models presented above is the Interactional Model of Sexual Victimization (White & Humphrey, 1997). In this model, the entire event is taken into account, with the victim, the perpetrator, the social context and the interactions between all three to be examined. The risk of assault will be influenced by how much the factors of the victim, perpetrator and context converge. That is, the socio-cultural and psychological

characteristics of the victim and perpetrator, and the social context of the offence itself (White & Humphrey, 1997). The Interactional model comprises all converse elements of socialisation, evolution, culture and personal influences. This has both a positive and negative influence on the model itself. The benefit of such an encompassing model is revealed in the opportunities for intervention. The model provides at least three main platforms (i.e., the victim, the perpetrator and the social context) from which to approach intervention and prevention programs. It does not view females as being docile agents or males as having full control over an event. Further, it does not assume that males are the perpetrators and females are the victims. Finally, even though the process of socialisation and/or evolution may be playing particular roles, it considers the personal influences of the individual to possibly overcome such processes.

Summary of Theories Reviewed

Several theories have been offered to provide a more in-depth understanding of sexual coercion. Each theory has its strengths but can only explain adequately some of the causal factors of sexual coercion. In contrast, the Interactional model (White & Humphrey, 1997) is more comprehensive with its person-by-situation approach. Not only can it explain simple relationships between victim, perpetrator and social context, the theory can help explain more complex relationships therein. Thus, from an applied perspective, the model represents human interaction very well. With respect to the current study aspects of the White and Humphrey (1997) model are relevant. Specifically, this current study examined one specific aspect of the model – the Social Context via dating relationships. Despite focusing only upon this aspect, it was considered important to begin investigating an area of adolescent life in which both the opportunity for sexual coercion and the possible use of disinhibitors are very apparent.

Secondly, the sexual coercion experiences of both females and males as victims were considered. Such a focus fits very well within the White and Humphrey (1997) theory since they do not assume that males are the sole perpetrators of sexual coercion and females are solely the victims.

The Current Study

Burkhart and Fromuth (1991) reported that friends, partners and family members perpetrate much of the sexual victimisation experienced by individuals. Indeed, research has revealed that either the 'date' or an acquaintance commits 90% of all sexual assaults during adolescence (Irwin & Rickert, 2005; Rickert & Weimann, 1998). Therefore, the current study chose to focus on sexual coercion experiences in the context of peer dating and peer relationships of adolescents, rather than stranger and/or family experiences. Specifically, the study sought to examine the sexual coercion experiences of Year 11 and Year 12 high school adolescents from the metropolitan area of Perth, Western Australia. The study also investigated unwanted sexual experiences concerning male adolescents, about which very little information could be found. Additionally, other foci of the research were the number of dating relationships in the students sampled, the duration of these dating relationships, the age difference between the dating partners, the number of sexually coercive experiences experienced, and how these adolescents responded to their sexually coercive experiences.

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Approval for the study was granted by The University of Western Australia Human Rights and Ethics Committee. The study was undertaken in three phases. The first phase was to develop a questionnaire for measuring sexual coercion among female and male, Year 11 and Year 12, high school students. A panel of expert workers in the field (see below) then assessed this ADRS questionnaire. The second phase was to pilot test the ADRS on 30 university undergraduate students for its appropriateness in measuring sexual coercion. Finally, 228 females and 113 males, recruited from Years 11 and 12 from a local high school, completed the ADRS questionnaire to examine the nature of their sexual coercion experiences.

Phases One and Two: Development of the Adolescent Dating and Relationship Survey (ADRS)

To gain access to the participants, letters of consent were required from school/principal, parent and participant. With the potential for the project to be rejected by any party asked to participate, attention was placed on the sensitivity of the survey to be used. In this instance, sensitivity is used to describe the manner in which the participants and the School Principals received the survey. Both professional educators and researchers advised that, given the sensitivity of the topic to the participants, schools and parents, a caring approach would enhance the likelihood of participation.

In the past, investigators of sexual coercion have used the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) mostly with adult and young adult populations (Cecil & Martin, 2006; Koss & Oros, 1982; Koss & Gidycz, 1985; Koss et al., 1987; Patton & Mannison, 1995a). As the current project involved only Year 11 and Year 12 high school students,

the SES needed modification for this population. To examine whether the SES would meet the above criteria, its suitability was assessed by:

- a research professor of education (UWA) who considered the appropriateness to the topic and links to the age band;
- a sport science professor (UWA) who is expert in survey construction;
- applied researchers and educators working in Sexual Health for their in-the-field expertise in social health issues applicable to this age group;
- two secondary school psychologists and two high school health educators; one each from government and non-government education;
- 5 children (2 x 14 yrs, 2 x 13 yrs and 1 x 12yrs) for readability given the potential disparity of reading ages found among upper school students.

Summary of Discussion Raised in ADRS Development.

Concerns About the SES. After consultation, the team raised several concerns and determined that the SES in its original format was unsuitable. A key question used in the SES asks whether the participant has ever been raped. The term rape has been stigmatised to a degree that sometimes, people who meet the classical definition of rape, do not perceive themselves as being rape victims. A second concern is that rape is an emotive term that is not as widely used in current teaching and may not have as much meaning for participants. The team also believed that the word ‘rape’ would have a negative influence on principals and schools considering being involved in the research.

Another concern was that the focus of the SES was originally to ask female participants if they had experienced any forms of sexual coercion, and whether males had perpetrated these coercive behaviours. One complicated issue in asking males

whether they have ever perpetrated such behaviours, especially if the perpetrator is a minor, is the legal issue of reporting such individuals to the appropriate authority. As the survey was to be administered anonymously, a logistical issue would arise if mandatory reporting were ever enforced. Such a scenario might also affect the trust of the schools and participants, and was perceived to be a deterrent to involvement.

Additionally, the SES is designed to elicit responses about sexual coercion. The team believed that the survey would be too direct and may impact on the degree of parental permission. The final concern of the SES was whether the reading level required by the survey was appropriate for the adolescents. Given these concerns about the suitability of the SES in its original form, it was decided that a modified version of the SES that addressed these concerns would be more practical.

The Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey (ADRS):

The ADRS was constructed for Year 11 and Year 12 students within a school environment. The first important modification was the title itself. The title of the survey provides information about the research without appearing to be solely focussed on adolescent sexual coercion experiences. There are four sections making up the ADRS.

Section One is titled 'General Information' and surveys basic demographic information from the participants regarding ages, gender, religious backgrounds, and some basic family and lifestyle questions.

Section Two is titled 'Relationship Information' and surveys basic relationship information such as the age at initial onset of dating. It also examines in greater detail the experiences of sexual coercion such as individual reactions to sexual coercion, and

support avenues used following unwanted sexual experiences. This is an extension over the SES, which does not examine the detail surrounding the characteristics of coercion.

Section Three is titled ‘Support Information’ to provide details about the support options available to the high school students. The support options were divided into the two sub-components of ‘School Support’ and ‘External Support’. The school support was the title, name and contact details of individuals within the school best equipped to provide assistance for anyone requiring help (e.g., School Counsellors and Psychologists). The external support was added to increase the awareness of support agencies available within the local community if participants required a little more anonymity. For general or experimental information, a contact number for the researcher was provided.

Differences Between the ADRS and the SES.

The ADRS also differs from the SES in that the ADRS surveys sexual coercion experiences only. This focus on participants’ experiences has a two-fold benefit. Firstly, it allows sexual coercion data gathering from both males and females because not much is known about adolescent males’ unwanted sexual experiences. Also, it avoided the difficulties associated with having to report any individuals who admitted to perpetrating sexual coercion. It might be assumed that, if some of the participants reported that they experienced sexual coercion, then their partners are the perpetrators. However, it was considered to be more important to focus upon the details surrounding sexual coercion events at this point in time. Thus, specific information regarding the perpetrators of sexual coercion was not sought, largely for legal reasons.

Another important distinction of the ADRS is that it does not focus only on sexual coercion in relation to sexual intercourse. Interactions are divided into three

separate areas of kissing, touching (of the breasts or genitals) and other experiences that the participants regarded as more intimate than the first two. The final area is not specified in an attempt to capture individuals who would not perceive themselves as having been raped. Thus, they could report specific experiences that otherwise might severely have deterred many principals and parents from allowing their children to participate. For example, attempts to request participants detailed experiences involving anal penetration could have increased resistance to participation. Again, the focus was on the acts of coercion and not on the end-point event of this coercion.

Finally, the ADRS did not assume an individual's sexual preference, whereas the SES focuses on heterosexual relationships. The current research just focused upon the sexual coercion experiences of adolescent high school students.

Preliminary Testing of the ADRS.

Since the ADRS was a newly developed instrument, some preliminary testing was done to ensure its suitability for the desired sample group. This occurred in three stages. The first stage involved the same team of experts reviewing the ADRS were involved in critiquing the SES. The survey also was reviewed by sexual health experts experienced in researching sensitive issues among school aged students. The panel agreed that the ADRS achieved maximum sensitivity for participants without diminishing the quality of responses.

In the second stage, the ADRS was administered to five individuals ranging from 12 – 14 years of age to assess any reading/comprehension difficulties. Once completed, each individual was asked about any difficulties in reading or understanding any questions or sections. They also were asked to report their perceived meanings of the questions regarding sexual coercion. No person reported any difficulties relating to

completion of the ADRS, and their reported answers regarding sexual coercion were congruent with the research aims in the development of the questions. The researcher also gained information such as the time taken to complete the test.

Finally, the ADRS was presented to a sample of 30 university students to determine if it was able to reveal sexually coercive events. The university students revealed that 48.6% had experienced at least one event of sexual coercion while on a date or within a relationship. This is comparable with data obtained using the SES and various versions thereof. For example, Koss et al. (1987) found that 53.7% of the female sample had reported being sexually coerced. Similarly, Patton and Mannison (1995a) found 53% of female participants had reported that their partners had overestimated the level of intimacy desired by them. Finally, of the 23 studies reviewed by Craig (1990), a range of 30% - 78% of females had experienced sexual coercion while on a date. Thus, the author was satisfied that the ADRS was capable of measuring sexual coercion experiences. In short, the ADRS appears to exhibit both face and content validity.

Phase Three: Recruitment and Administration of the ADRS

This project examined the prevalence of sexual coercion during dating and relationships in Year 11 and Year 12 students. The Western Australian Department of Education statistics and census information were used to select schools/participants most closely matching the current demographic scenario, appropriate proportions of government and non-government attendees, religious backgrounds and socio-economic status. However, the attempt at stratified sampling was hampered by the individual perceptions of school principals/parents regarding the sensitivity of the topic for their

students/children. Hence, convenience sampling was used because principals, teachers, parents and the students could withdraw at any time.

Participants

The sample group comprised of 342 students who completed the survey. One participant was excluded after reporting having never had a relationship but hundreds of sexual coercion experiences.

This left a final tally of 341 participants, comprising 228 females and 113 males. The average age was 16.5 and 16.6 years, for females and males, respectively. The majority of the sample was born in Australia (81.8%), yet only 58.9% reported that their family background was Australian. The other substantial family backgrounds were from the United Kingdom (12.9%), other parts of Europe (12.3%) and Asia (9.7%). In regards to religion, 53.7% of the group reported to not follow any religion. Of those who did indicate a religion, 93 (27.3%) responded that they were Christians, and a further 47 (13.8%) were of Roman Catholic faith.

When asked if their parents were separated or divorced, 29.9% responded yes. If the family had broken up, the majority of children lived with their mothers. Furthermore, 49% were living with their mothers, or 31.4% with their mothers and step-fathers; and 227 respondents lived at home with their biological mothers and fathers.

Instruments

The Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey (ADRS).

The Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey (ADRS) is a questionnaire developed specifically for this study to examine sexual coercion in adolescents. This questionnaire is made up of 3 sections - sample demographics information, relationship

information, sexual coercion and support information. Section 1 collected demographic information characteristics such as the ages, gender, nationalities, religious backgrounds, marital status of parents and current living status of the participants.

A modified version of the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES, Koss & Oros, 1982) formed the basis of Section Two, the relationship information section of the questionnaire. Specifically, the questions from the original SES were modified to only focus upon sexual coercion experiences. The participants were asked to respond to whether they had or had not experienced the following forms of coercion in any unwanted sexual experiences (i.e., Kissing, Touching and Other). These included Made to Feel Guilty, Alcohol and/or Drugs, Begging and/or Arguing, Threatened with Blackmail, Lied To, Threatened with Force, Restrained Physically, Forced Physically, or a Weapon Used. Their reactions to these forms of sexual coercions were then assessed. Specifically, the participants were asked whether they had or had not responded to a sexual coercion experience (i.e., Did Not Use, Used Once, Used More Than Once). The responses to sexual coercion examined included: Told Someone; Talked Later; Said Stop; Did Nothing; Pulled Away; Said No Further; Left; Fought Off, and Yelled. In addition to these questions, participants were asked about the age they started dating, and their partners' ages at the time of the incidents. Finally, participants were asked to tick a category response to questions involving their relationships. These included the Number of Partners (1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10 or more), the Length of the Relationship in months (0-4, 5-8, 9-12, 13-16, 17 or more), and the Age Difference between themselves and their partner (3 or more years younger, 1-2 years younger, Same age, 1-2 years older, 3 or more years older).

Section Three of the ADRS contained information about the support services both within the high school and the local community to help with this and other forms of abuse.

Procedures

General. An introductory letter was sent to 80 secondary schools across the Perth metropolitan area to explain the purpose of the research and requesting access to students. A follow-up phone call was made to each principal to further discuss the possibility of the school being involved. It was difficult to make contact with some high school principals and, if no contact was made with the schools within 30 days of the first letter, a second letter was sent out; and 35 schools received a second letter.

From the first round, 14 schools agreed to participate in the research. The second round was also fruitful in that a further 7 schools agreed to participate. This provided 25% of the originally selected schools as the base from which the students were to be sourced. From this group, one school was unable to find any teachers willing to assist the researcher internally and was not comfortable in proceeding. Another school only received one positive consent form and elected not to be involved for privacy reasons for the student. Four schools agreed to be involved, but were unable to be contacted to pursue the process further. Finally, one principal was positive regarding the research and wanted the school to be involved, but was voted down by the religious element of the college. Hence, of the 80 high schools originally canvassed, only 14 schools participated in the study.

Once each school had accepted involvement, a meeting was held with the staff member from within the school who would assist the researcher. This meeting provided the staff member with a clearer idea of what was required, clarified any further

information, and developed a testing schedule suitable to the school. The testing procedure included an introductory presentation to the students to explain the topic, and its relevance to the schools and individuals. The initial presentation also had a secondary purpose. The researcher attempted to leave a positive impression with the students so as to be a stimulus for recall later when they arrived home and had to present their permission slip to their parents. The next stage involved the distribution of the permission forms.

If the school was agreeable, the permission forms and a covering letter were prepared and included a pre-paid self-addressed envelope in a mail-out through the school. The forms could be returned either directly to the researcher via mail or to the school. If the school was unable to send the permission forms directly to the parents, the students delivered them home. When the permission slips were posted home, a greater number of forms were returned and only 11.2% of the entire post-out students who were approached actually participated. If the permission slips were sent home with the students, fewer slips were returned and only 8% of the available group actually participated. Two schools were only comfortable with self-administering and only returned the completed surveys. As a result, no information could be obtained regarding the number of forms handed out, the number of slips returned, or the number of participants who were given permission to participate but did not.

The survey was administered to all participants by the principal researcher except for two schools that self-administered. To ensure a minimal disruption to the school, and to avoid any discussion of the survey amongst students, all the students from each school undertook the survey at the same time. The survey was administered under examination conditions to maximise the privacy for each participant. Standard

instructions were presented to each school and, in the cases of self-administration, a copy of the instruction sheet was provided to the schools to ensure the same information and opportunities were provided to all.

The participants were presented with a copy of the ADRS and a Take Home Information sheet. The Take Home Information sheet contained the instructions for completing the survey, information relating to support avenues both internal and external to the school, and contact details of the researcher should they wish to inquire further about the research. Instructions were also relayed to each group verbally as well, to highlight the exact procedure for answering each question. Each group also was told of their rights to cease participation at any stage without prejudice. Finally, students were advised that the survey would take approximately 15 minutes to complete and that, for privacy reasons, no one was to leave until everyone had finished. All participants were offered envelopes in which to place their completed surveys for additional privacy, but none were requested.

Statistics.

Two types of analyses are presented. The first consists of basic frequency information of the dating and relationship characteristics of the sample group. This is followed by a series of Chi-square analyses. Chi-square analyses were conducted to determine whether the variables examined were either independent of, or related to, the gender of the student. Specifically, it was considered important to know whether the number of relationships, the duration of the relationships, the differences in ages of partners, and the number of coercive experiences of the students and their reactions were independent of gender. For the chi-square test to be valid, no cell should have an expected frequency value less than 1, and not more than 20 percent of the cells should

have expected frequency values less than 5. To overcome these problems, the problematic cells were re-collapsed to form new categories, and the chi-square analyses were re-run (Brace, Kemp & Snelgar, 2003). A significant chi-square indicates a significant association *overall* for the variables under investigation. Therefore, an examination of the adjusted standardised residuals for each cell was also undertaken to reveal those cells which contributed to the significant chi-square (i.e., those cells that depart most from the hypothesis of independence). The adjusted standardised residual is distributed according to the standard normal distribution with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. Using a cut-off point of absolute 2, any adjusted standardised residual with an absolute value greater than 2 would be deemed to contribute considerably to a significant chi-square. Finally, Cramer's phi is also presented to indicate the strength of association between the variables for a significant chi-square.

Chapter 4: Results

Relationship Analyses

In examining the dating and relationship characteristics of the sample group, 87.7% of the 341 participants reported to have either been on a date, or to have been involved in at least one relationship. When examining gender separately, slightly more females than males had been involved with a partner, namely 204 females (89.5%) as compared with 95 males (84.1%). Both females' and males' median first 'date' ages were 13 years, with females recording a mean age of 13.30 years ($SD = 1.54$, $Range = 7$ years to 16 years) and the males a mean age of 13.15 years ($SD = 1.92$, $Range = 5$ years to 17 years).

The Number of Relationships Reported.

When questioned about the total number of relationships in which they had been involved since their onset of dating, 40.2% of females and 33% of males had had 2-3 partners (See Table 1). This was the highest category for the number of relationships.

Table 1. Total number of relationships in which each participant was involved.

Number of relationships	Females Number (%)	Males Number (%)
1	26 (12.7%)	19 (20.0%)
2-3	82 (40.2%)	31 (33.0%)
4-6	49 (24.0%)	27 (28.0%)
7-9	25 (12.3%)	5 (5.3%)
10 or more	22 (10.8%)	13 (13.7%)

The second most prevalent category was for students who had reported being in a relationship with 4-6 partners. A smaller, yet substantial, number of participants reported that they had been involved with 10 or more relationships since their onset of dating. At the other extreme, 12.7% of females and 20% of males had reported having been in one relationship.

Duration of the Relationships.

Most relationships lasted no longer than 4 months (See Table 2). This was especially evident with males (71.6%) vs females (52.9%). An additional 20% of male students reported that their relationships lasted, on average, no longer than 8 months (female students = 25.1%). Considerably more female students reported relationships lasting between 9 and 12 months (14.7%) (males = 4.2%). For the number of relationships lasting longer than 12 months, the female students reported slightly more than their male counterparts (7.3% and 4.2%, respectively).

Table 2. Average duration of relationships in months

Duration (months)	Females	Males
	Number (%)	Number (%)
0-4	108 (52.9%)	68 (71.6%)
5-8	51 (25.1%)	19 (20.0%)
9-12	30 (14.7%)	4 (4.2%)
13-16	7 (3.4%)	3 (3.2%)
17 or more	8 (3.9%)	1 (1.0%)

Average Age Difference of Partners

Table 3 reports the average age differences of partners for the female and male high school students. In relation to the age discrepancies between partners, males reported that most of their partners were of the same age (69.5%) or younger (20%). Females were more likely to be dating, or in a relationship with, a partner who was the same age (44.6%) or older than them (52.9%).

Table 3. Average age difference of partners

	Females	Males
Number of years	Number (%)	Number (%)
3 years or more younger	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.1%)
1-2 years younger	5 (2.5%)	17 (17.9%)
Same age	91 (44.6%)	66 (69.5%)
1-2 years older	86 (42.1%)	8 (8.4%)
3 years or more older	22 (10.8%)	2 (2.1%)

Sexual Coercion Experiences

Sexual coercion was experienced by 49.8% of the dating student sub-group. A total of 118 females (39.4%) and 31 males (10.4%) reported having experienced at least one instance of sexually coercive behaviour from either a 'date' or partner. The female student sub-sample who had experienced sexual coercion reported an average of 6.5 sexually coercive events, with the highest number of experiences recorded by one individual being 53 events (*Mode* = 1, *Median* = 4.5). The male student sub-sample who had experienced sexual coercion had an average of 5.9 sexually coercive experiences (*Mode* = 3, *Median* = 3) with 63 being the highest number of events

experienced by one male individual. Overall, the 118 females who reported being sexually coerced recorded a total of 765 coercive events, and the 31 males reported 182 coercive events.

Table 4 shows the number of coercive experiences reported by this sub-group. For both males and females, being made to feel guilty, the use of alcohol and/or other drugs,

Table 4. Number of coercive experiences

		Coercive Behaviour Experienced									
		G	D/A	B/A	L	PR	PF	T/B	ToF	UoW	
Female (n = 118)	Kissing	64	62	32	43	46	15	8	2	1	
	Touching	66	48	40	38	29	16	10	2	1	
	Other	77	46	50	30	20	11	5	3	-	
	Total	207	156	122	111	95	42	23	7	2	
		%	27.1	20.4	15.9	14.5	12.4	5.5	3.0	.9	.3
Male (n = 31)	Kissing	21	13	14	18	8	3	-	1	-	
	Touching	17	9	12	13	6	1	-	0	-	
	Other	14	2	11	16	2	-	-	1	-	
	Total	52	24	37	47	16	4	0	2	0	
		%	28.6	13.2	20.3	25.8	8.8	2.2	0	1.1	0

Note. G = Made to Feel Guilty; D/A = Use of Drugs or Alcohol; B/A = Begging or Arguing; L = Lying; PR = Physically Restraining; PF = Physical Force; T/B = Threat or Blackmail; ToF = Threat of Force; UoW = Use of a Weapon. Percentages are based on the total number of coercive experiences reported separately for Females and Males. Strategies are ranked high to low in reported experiences from left to right for female students.

begging and/or arguing, and being lied to were the most frequently cited forms of coercion. Physical force and being threatened were reported more often by the females than the males. However, approximately a quarter of the coercive experiences reported by male students consisted of being lied to.

Reactions to Sexual Coercion

When examining the students' reactions to the sexual coercive behaviours experienced, only 94 female and 26 male students completed this part of the ADSR. Table 5 shows

Table 5. Reactions to Sexual Coercion

		Reaction Category								
		T	TL	SS	N	PA	SNF	L	FO	Y
Did Not Use		-	-	40	42	45	45	49	82	88
%		-	-	42.5	44.7	47.8	47.9	52.2	87.2	93.6
Female (<i>n</i> = 94)	Used Once	22	40	20	25	20	30	24	9	5
	%	23.4	42.6	21.3	26.6	21.3	31.9	25.5	9.6	5.3
More Than Once		72	54	34	27	29	19	21	3	1
%		76.6	57.4	36.2	28.7	30.9	20.2	22.3	3.2	1.1
Did Not Use		-	-	20	9	24	20	24	26	26
%		-	-	80	34.6	92.4	76.9	92.3	100	100
Male (<i>n</i> = 26)	Used Once	12	15	3	5	1	5	2	-	-
	%	46.2	57.7	12	19.2	3.8	19.3	7.7	-	-
More Than Once		14	11	2	12	1	1	-	-	-
%		53.8	42.3	8	46.2	3.8	3.8	-	-	-

Note. T = Told Someone; TL = Talked Later; SS = Said Stop; N = Did Nothing; PA = Pulled Away; SNF = Said No Further; L = Left; FO = Fought Off; Y = Yelled. Percentages are based on the total number of reaction categories reported separately for Females and Males. Reactions ranked high to low in reported usage from left to right for female students.

the number of reactions reported by this sub-group. In general, the female students at one time or other used all of the reaction categories. In particular, Told Someone and Talk Later were reported to be used by all of the sexually coerced female students. The greater part of this female sub-sample also reported reacting to sexually coercive experiences with Said Stop, Did Nothing, Pulled Away, Said No Further, and Left. However, the reactions Fought Off and Yelled were reported by a minority of sexually coerced female students. The male students reported using all of the reaction categories at one time or other with the exception of Fought Off and Yelled. This sub-sample of male students did not report reacting to a sexually coercive experience in either of these ways. As with the female students, all the sexually coerced male students reported reacting by Told Someone and Talked Later. But, unlike the female students, reacting to sexually coercive experiences with Said Stop, Pulled Away, Said No Further, and Left were only reported by a minority of sexually coerced male students. Interestingly, Did Nothing was reported by a large portion of sexually coerced male students, and just over half of the female students.

Chi-Square Analyses

Number of Relationships Reported by the Students

When examining the independence of the number of relationships reported by the students and their genders, the chi-square analysis was not significant (*Chi-square* = 7.37, *df* = 4, *p* = .118). That is, the number of relationships reported by the female and male students was not sufficiently different from the expected number of relationships.

The Duration of the Relationships Reported

Table 6 shows the counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals, for the duration of relationships reported by participants. The chi-square analysis showed that 2 cells had an expected count less than 5 (3.5 for the duration category 13 to 16 months/males, and 2.9 for the category 17 or more months/males). These two duration categories were subsequently combined to form a new category “13 or more months”, and the chi-square analysis was re-run. The results of this analysis revealed a

Table 6. Duration of the Relationships Reported by Student Gender

		Duration of the Relationship (months)				Total
		0 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 12	13 or more	
Females	Count	108	51	30	15	204
	Exp. Count	120.1	47.8	22.5	13.6	204
	Adj. Std. Residual	-3.0	1.0	3.0	.7	
Males	Count	68	19	3	5	95
	Exp. Count	55.9	22.2	10.5	6.4	95
	Adj. Std. Residual	3.0	-1.0	-3.0	-.7	
Total		176	70	33	20	299

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

significant Pearson chi-square ($Chi\text{-square} = 12.77, df = 3, p = .005$). This revealed some common variance between the duration of a relationship recorded and the gender of the participant. An examination of the residuals indicated that the duration categories of 0 to 4 months and 9 to 12 months were responsible for the significant chi-square. For the female students, the pattern of results suggested a trend towards having longer

relationships. Specifically, there were less short-term relationships (i.e., 0 to 4 months), and more reported long-term relationships (i.e., 9 to 12 months), than expected. In contrast, the male students reported more short-term relationships (i.e., 0 to 4 months) and less long-term relationships (i.e., 9 to 12 months) than expected. Finally, a *Cramer's phi* of .21 was reported for the relationships found here, which indicated that approximately 4% of the length of time in a relationship can be explained by gender.

The Average Age Difference of Partners

The chi-square analysis showed that 2 cells had an expected count of less than 5 (1.4/females and .64/males for the age difference category 3 years or more younger). This age difference category was subsequently combined with the 1 to 2 years younger category to form a "1 or more years younger category". The chi-square analysis was then re-run. The results of this analysis revealed a significant Pearson chi-square (*Chi-square* = 62.05, *df* = 3, *p* < .001), and demonstrated a relationship between the age difference of the partners recorded and the gender of the participants. Table 7 outlines the counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals, for the age difference of partners reported by the female and male students. An examination of the residuals indicated that all of the age difference categories contributed to the significant chi-square. For the female students, the pattern of results suggested that they tended to have partners who are older than themselves. Specifically, a lesser number of partners were reported to be either 1 year or more younger, or of the same age, than expected (i.e., 5 versus 16.4, and 91 versus 107.1, respectively). However, female students did report a greater number of partners either 1 to 2 years older and 3 years or more older,

than expected (i.e., 86 versus 64.1, and 22 versus 16.4, respectively). In contrast, the male students reported a greater number of partners either 1 or more years younger, or

Table 7. Average Age Difference of Partners Reported by Gender of Student

		Average Age Difference of Partner				Total
		≥ 1 years younger	Same Age	1–2 years older	≥ 3 years older	
Females	Count	5	91	86	22	204
	Exp. Count	16.4	107.1	64.1	16.4	204
	Adj. Std. Residual	-5.2	-4.0	5.9	2.6	
Males	Count	19	66	8	2	95
	Exp. Count	7.6	49.9	29.9	7.6	95
	Adj. Std. Residual	5.2	4.0	-5.9	-2.6	
Total		24	157	94	24	299

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

of the same age, than expected (i.e., 19 versus 7.6, and 66 versus 49.9, respectively). Concerning relationships with partners older than themselves, the males reported a lesser number of partners either 1 year or more older, or 3 years or more older, than expected (i.e., 8 versus 29.9, and 2 versus 7.6, respectively). Finally, a *Cramer's phi* of .46 was reported for the relationships found here and revealed that approximately 21% of the age difference of partners can be explained by gender.

Types of Coercive Experiences.

When assessing the type of coercive experiences experienced by the students, the participants were able to make multiple responses and detail the number of times they had experienced a specific form of coercion. Therefore, the recorded number of coercion events exceeds the total number of students reporting (i.e., 118 sexually coerced females reported a total of 765 events, 31 sexually coerced males reported 182 events in total. The normal chi-square procedure that analyses the whole table is inappropriate because the cells are not mutually exclusive (i.e., each participant falls into more than one cell). Therefore, each coercion category will be analysed separately using the standard chi-square for two-way tables (Jann, 2004).

Since the students reported a particular coercive experience more than once, these cells were subsequently combined. This resulted in the creation of three sub-categories for each coercion category – did not experience, experienced on 1 occasion, experienced on 2 or more occasions. Additionally, the coercion categories Threat or Blackmail and Threat of Force were combined to form a Threat with Blackmail/ Force category. This was due to all the cells in the respective contingency tables recording expected frequencies less than 5. Finally, the category Use of a Weapon was not analysed and dropped due to difficulty in rationalising its combination with the preceding categories.

Only one chi-square analysis revealed a significant Pearson chi-square. This was for the examination of the independence between the coercion category Physically Restraining and gender ($Chi\text{-square} = 6.84, df = 2, p = .033$). This finding indicated that there was a relationship between the gender of the participant and physical restraint. Table 8 shows the counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals for

the use of physical restraint, as reported by the female and male students. An examination of the residuals indicated that the category of having experienced this form of coercion on 1 occasion, and the category of not having experienced this form at all, were responsible for the significant chi-square. For the female students, the pattern of results suggested that the number of females who had experienced this form of coercion on only 1 occasion was more than expected, and contrasted with that found for the male students. For the male students, the number not having experienced this form of coercion at all was more than expected, in contrast with that found for the female students. Finally, a *Cramer's phi* of .21 was reported for these relationships and indicated that approximately 4% of the sexual coercion by using physical restraint can be explained by gender.

Table 8. Use of Physical Restraint Reported by Gender of Students

		Use of Physical Restraint			Total
		Not Experienced	1 Occasion	≥ 2 Occasions	
Females	Count	70	27	21	118
	Exp. Count	75.2	22.2	20.6	118
	Adj. Std. Residual	-2.2	2.5	.2	
Males	Count	25	1	5	31
	Exp. Count	19.8	5.8	5.4	31
	Adj. Std. Residual	2.2	-2.5	-.2	
Total		95	28	26	149

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

All other chi-square analyses were not significant - Made to Feel Guilty (*Chi-square* = 2.93, *df* = 2, *p* = .231), Use of Drugs or Alcohol (*Chi-square* = 2.85, *df* = 2, *p* =

.241), Begging or Arguing ($Chi-square = 3.06, df = 2, p = .216$), Lying ($Chi-square = 1.08, df = 2, p = .584$), Physical Force ($Chi-square = 3.25, df = 2, p = .196$), Threat with Blackmail/ Force ($Chi-square = 2.33, df = 2, p = .313$). These findings indicated that the number of female and male students who reported either experiencing, or not experiencing, these coercive events, were not sufficiently different from the expected number of students.

Reactions to Sexual Coercion

When assessing the students' reactions to sexual coercion, multiple responses were provided to detail all the reactions they had made to their coercive experiences. Therefore, each reaction category was analysed separately using the standard chi-square for two-way tables (Jann, 2004). The reactions Fought Off and Yelled were not analysed due to the large number of cells with expected frequencies less than 5 (50% and 67%, respectively). Additionally, it was not possible to collapse the cells for these two reactions in a meaningful way in order to proceed with a chi-square analysis.

Told Someone. An examination of the independence between the reaction category Told Someone and gender produced a significant Pearson Chi-square ($Chi-square = 5.19, df = 1, p = .023$). This finding indicated a relationship between the gender of the participant and telling someone about the coercive experience. Table 9 shows the counts, expected counts, total and adjusted standardised residuals, for the reaction Told Someone reported by the female and male students. An examination of the residuals indicated that the categories Used Once and Used More Than Once were responsible for the significant chi-square. For the female students, the pattern of results

suggested that the number of females who reacted by telling someone more often than once was greater than expected, and contrasted with that found for the male students. The male students' pattern suggested that the number of males who reacted by telling

Table 9. Told Someone

		Told Someone			Total
		Did Not Use	Used Once	Used More Than Once	
Females	Count	-	22	72	94
	Exp. Count	-	26.6	67.4	94
	Adj. Std. Residual	-	-2.3	2.3	
Males	Count	-	12	14	26
	Exp. Count	-	7.4	18.6	26
	Adj. Std. Residual	-	2.3	-2.3	
Total		-	34	86	120

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

someone once was greater than expected, and contrasted with that found for the female students. Finally, a *Cramer's phi* of .21 was reported for the relationships found here. Hence, approximately 4% of the use of the sexual coercion reaction Told Someone can be explained by gender.

Said Stop. An examination of the independence between the reaction category Told Someone and gender produced a significant Pearson Chi-square (*Chi-square* = 9.83, *df* = 2, *p* = .007). This finding revealed a relationship between the participant gender and reaction to a coercive experience by saying Stop. Table 10 shows the

counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals for the reaction Said Stop reported by the female and male students. An examination of the residuals indicated that the categories Did Not Use and Used More Than Once were responsible for the significant chi-square. For the female students, the pattern of results suggested that the number of females who reacted by saying Stop more often than once was greater than expected, and contrasted with that found for the male students. The pattern revealed for the male students suggest that the number of males who did not say Stop was greater than expected, contrasting with that found for the female students. Finally, a *Cramer's phi* of .29 was reported for the relationships found here which revealed that approximately 8% of the use of the sexual coercion reaction Said Stop can be explained by gender.

Table 10. Said Stop

		Said Stop			
		Did Not	Used	Used More	
		Use	Once	Than Once	Total
Females	Count	40	20	34	94
	Exp. Count	47	18	29	94
	Adj. Std. Residual	-3.1	1.1	2.4	
Males	Count	20	3	3	26
	Exp. Count	13	5	8	26
	Adj. Std. Residual	3.1	-1.1	-2.4	
Total		60	23	37	120

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

Pulled Away. An examination of the independence between the reaction category Pulled Away and gender produced a significant Pearson Chi-square ($Chi\text{-square} = 16.47, df = 2, p < .001$). This confirms a relationship between the gender of the participant and reaction to a coercive experience by pulling away. Table 11 shows the counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals for the reaction

Table 11. Pulled Away

		Pulled Away			Total
		Did Not Use	Used Once	Used More Than Once	
Females	Count	45	20	29	94
	Exp. Count	54.1	16.5	23.5	94
	Adj. Std. Residual	-4.1	2.1	2.8	
Males	Count	24	1	1	26
	Exp. Count	15	4.6	6.5	26
	Adj. Std. Residual	4.1	-2.1	-2.8	
Total		69	21	30	120

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

Pulled Away as reported by the female and male students. An examination of the residuals indicated that the three categories Did Not Use, Used Once and Used More Than Once were responsible for the significant chi-square. This pattern of results suggested that the number of females who reacted by pulling away was greater than expected, and contrasted with that found for the male students. The pattern revealed for the male students suggests that the number of males who did not react by pulling away was more than expected, and contrasted with that found for the female students. As a

Cramer's phi of .37 was reported here and explains that approximately 13% of the use of the sexual coercion reaction Pulled Away could be explained by gender.

Said No Further. An examination of the independence between the reaction category Said No Further and gender produced a significant Pearson Chi-square (*Chi-square* = 7.57, *df* = 2, *p* = .023). This finding indicated a relationship between the gender of the participant and reaction to a coercive experience by saying No Further. Table 12 shows the counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals for the reaction Said No Further, as reported by the female and male students. An examination of the residuals indicated that the categories Did Not Use and Used More Than Once were responsible for the significant chi-square. For the female students, the pattern of results suggests that the number of females reacting by Said No Further more

Table 12. Said No Further

		Said No Further			Total
		Did Not Use	Used Once	Used More Than Once	
Females	Count	45	30	19	94
	Exp. Count	50.9	27.4	15.7	94
	Adj. Std. Residual	-2.6	1.3	2.0	
Males	Count	20	5	1	26
	Exp. Count	14.1	7.6	4.3	26
	Adj. Std. Residual	2.6	-1.3	-2.0	
Total		65	35	20	120

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

than once was greater than expected, and contrasted with that found for the male students. The male students' pattern suggested that those reporting they did not react in this way were more than expected, and contrasted with the female students. Finally, a *Cramer's phi* of .25 was found for these relationships and showed that about 6% of the use of the sexual coercion reaction Said No Further could be explained by gender.

Left. Examining the independence between the reaction category Left and gender produced a significant Pearson Chi-square (*Chi-square* = 14.21, *df* = 2, *p* < .001). This indicates a relationship between the gender of the participant and reaction to a coercive experience by leaving. Table 13 shows the counts, expected counts, totals and adjusted standardised residuals, for the reaction Left, reported by the female and male students. The residuals indicated that the categories Did Not Use, Used Once and

Table 13. *Left*

		Left			
		Did Not Use	Used Once	Used More Than Once	Total
Females	Count	49	24	21	94
	Exp. Count	57.2	20.4	16.5	94
	Adj. Std. Residual	-3.7	2.0	2.7	
Males	Count	24	2	0	26
	Exp. Count	15.8	5.6	4.6	26
	Adj. Std. Residual	3.7	-2.0	-2.0	
Total		73	26	21	120

Note. Exp. Count = Expected Count; Adj. Std. Residual = Adjusted Standardised Residual.

Used More Than Once were responsible for the significant chi-square. Results suggested that the number of females who Left was greater than expected and contrasted with the males; and the males who did not react in this way were more than expected, and contrasted with the females. A *Cramer's phi* of .34 revealed that around 11% of the use of the sexual coercion reaction Left can be explained by gender.

No other chi-square analyses were significant – Talk Later (Chi-square = 1.88, df = 1, p = .170), and Did Nothing (Chi-square = 2.83, df = 2, p = .243). Hence, the number of female and male students who reported either reacting or not reacting to the coercive experience, by either talking later or doing nothing, were not sufficiently different from the expected number of students.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The current study examined female and male Year 11 and Year 12 student experiences of sexual coercion within their relationship and dating events. Additionally, the research also explored the number of relationships these students had experienced, the duration of these relationships, the age difference between the dating partners, the number of sexually coercive experiences experienced, and how these students responded to their sexually coercive experiences.

The relationships reported by the high school participants demonstrated that the majority had been with at least 2-3 partners, and the next largest group reported having had 4 to 6 partners. Therefore, both female and male high school students were active in relationships, but the number of relationships they reported were not sufficiently different from what was expected for each gender.

Approximately 45% of female students and 70% of male students reported having dated partners of the same age. However, significantly more females tended to have partners who were older, and significantly more males tended to have partners who were younger. This finding is of concern because female students who date older males have been found to engage in more risky sexual behaviour than females who date males of a similar age (Gowen et al., 2004). They are also less likely to urge condom use or contraceptives, and report more incidences of sexual coercion than girls with similar-aged partners (Abma, Driscoll & Moore, 1998; Blythe, Fortenberry, Tamekit, Tu & Orr, 2006; Darroch, Landry & Oslak, 1999; Weisman, Nathanson, Ensminger, Teitelbaum, Robonson & Plichta, 1989). Gowen et al. (2004) found also that girls dating older boys were more likely to experience sexual coercion attempts, the completion of this

coercion, and to have sexual intercourse under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs. Their attitudes toward sex endorsed the belief that males are sexually proactive, that sex occurs spontaneously and that sexual intercourse promotes maturity. Arbeau, Galambos and Jansson (2007) also found that sexually experienced adolescent girls considered themselves older than their non-experienced counterparts. Additionally, dating an older partner made them feel older and superior when compared with other dating adolescents, and that alcohol and/or other drug use were also related to this subjective feeling of enhanced maturity. Such attitudes and subjective perceptions are particularly worrying when one considers the findings from the current study. The result is that Year 11 and Year 12 girls who date older boys, and boys who date younger girls is quite common. Thus, for girls dating older boys, alcohol and substance use, and having sex could imply a false level of maturity. Further, such practices may compromise their health and well being. With regard to boys dating younger girls, these boys could also bring a higher level of maturity to the relationship, thereby exerting a greater level of influence over their younger, less experienced partners. This could be reflected either in a physical sense through intimidation or force, or in a psychological sense by having a greater understanding, and perhaps even greater control, of the situation to successfully coerce their younger partners. In either case, females in relationships with older partners need to be wary throughout adolescence, as even a year or two of age difference has an impact.

The female students tended to have longer relationships when compared with their male counterparts. This was significant for those who had reported being in a relationship 9 to 12 months. Approximately half the female sample had relationships that lasted from 0 to 4 months. A further 25% reported relationships that lasted from 5

to 8 months, and an additional 15% lasted 9 to 12 months. For the male students, approximately 72% of their reported relationships lasted from 0 to 4 months, with a further 20% of relationships reported lasting 5 to 8 months. The male students reported significantly more relationships lasting 0 to 4 months than the females. Thus, a large number of Year 11 and Year 12 students tended to have short-term relationships, and this was especially so for males. On the other hand, more females than male students reported a greater number of relationships lasting 5 months or more. This raised the question as to why is there an apparent gender difference in the length of these adolescent relationships? Perhaps the age of the partner could be a factor as significantly more female students reported having relationships with partners who were older than them. Coincidentally, significantly more male students reported relationships with younger partners. Around Year 11 and Year 12 ages is a time where one becomes increasingly capable of sharing others' views and perspectives. Thus, intimacy within relationships is established through shared discussion and self-disclosure (McNelles & Connolly, 2000; Peterson, 2004). These developmental changes gradually unfold across adolescence in both females and males. By late adolescence, these relationships are beginning to be characterised by attachment and care giving typically found in early adulthood (Furman, 2002). Additionally, research on friendship in early adolescence has found that girls have more intimate, self-disclosing, same-sex friendships when compared with males (Berndt, 1982). Perhaps the girls in the current study were attracted to older boys because the older boys become more sharing, intimate and self-disclosing. Research with older adolescents has indicated that higher levels of support, depth and intimacy are associated with relationship longevity (Rotosky, Galliher, Welsh & Kawaguchi, 2000). It might be that this developmental change of sharing, intimacy

and self-disclosure in boys results in younger female students reporting a greater number of relationships lasting 5 months or more. However, the data examining the interaction between the age of the partner and the duration of a relationship revealed no clear pattern. So, the gender difference found in the current research could be an anomaly. A re-examination is needed in future studies to gain a clearer picture regarding apparent gender differences in relationship duration.

This study revealed the prevalence of sexual coercion within these Year 11 and Year 12 high school students, as 149 (43.7%) reported having experienced at least one sexually coercive episode. The level of female sexual coercion was 51.7% and was similar to previous data of 40.9% (Blythe et al., 2006) and slightly higher than 50% (Jackson, Cram & Seymour, 2000; Koss et al., 1987; Patton & Mannison, 1995b). Questioning males regarding their experiences of sexual coercion has been limited. Gross et al. (2006), Koss and Oros (1982) and Careres et al. (2000) reported that approximately 25% of males experienced sexual coercion. O'Sullivan and Byers (1993) and Muehlenhard and Cook (1988) found that a large portion of university age men also had been in situations of unwanted sexual activity. In the present study, 27.4% of males had experienced sexual coercion, which was similar to that reported for university aged and older males. These findings suggest that, despite a greater number of women experiencing sexual coercion, men are also vulnerable. Thus, one needs to be aware that both females and males experience unwanted sexual experiences during adolescence.

The participants who reported sexual coercion had experienced all the forms measured. However, the male students did not experience either Threat or Blackmail or Use of a Weapon. Both females and males had been made to feel guilty, pushed to use

alcohol and other drugs, were subjected to begging and/or arguing, and were lied to as the most frequently cited forms of coercion. Indeed, being lied to, accounted for approximately a quarter of the coercive experiences reported by male students. Finally, a small number of female students (8%) reported use of physical force and being threatened. Females reported being physically restrained significantly more than their male counterparts. This agreed with past research in that more females than males reported coercion by physical force (e.g., 31%, Erickson & Rapkin, 1991; 13.3%, Gross et al., 2006). Further, both females and males reported alcohol and/or other drugs were used in 26% of all unwanted sexual experiences. Similarly, when examining the sexual coercion experiences of adolescents, Gross et al. (2006) found 39% of females had consumed alcohol at the time of the coercive experience while 45% of men mentioned that their abusive experience was associated with alcohol. Anderson, Reis and Stephens (1997) found that two-thirds of males and one-third of females believed that alcohol and other drugs played a part in their unwanted sexual experiences. Patton and Mannison (1995a, b) and Jackson et al. (2000) reported that alcohol and other drugs played a part in the unwanted sexual experiences of adolescents. Finally, Sears et al. (2007) found that girls experienced a pattern of either psychologically abusive behaviour alone, or in combination with physical abuse. It is clear that adolescents experience a variety of coercive practices and it is a concern that alcohol and other drug use by adolescents is consistently present. Taking such substances can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, using these substances appears to give an air of maturity in the mind of the user. However, such practices also can leave the user open to unwanted sexual experiences.

The psychological tactics by some perpetrators, such as making the partner feel guilty, possibly via begging/arguing or lying, despite being 'softer' approaches, are

insidious. Hence, adolescents and young adults may need education in formal skills to help them combat such attacks. Some Year 11 and Year 12 high school girls in this study had encountered physical restraint and how one would cope effectively in this situation begs answering. Practitioners need to educate potential victims of the coercion situations and potential perpetrators who are likely to use such tactics. Only then can appropriate avoidance behaviours be devised; and/or even self-defence skills for women introduced to better handle themselves. A recent review of research examining self-defense training programs for women found that the attendees reported increased levels of assertiveness, self-esteem, perceived control, self-efficacy, and physical competence, and reductions in anxiety, feelings of helplessness, fear and avoidance behaviours (Brecklin, 2008).

The reactions to the unwanted sexual experiences reported by the Year 11 and Year 12 high school students were varied. As a group, they reported reacting to these experiences via all the forms measured, with the exception that Fought Off and Yelled were not adopted by the male student sub-group. Telling Someone and Talking later about the experience were the two most common reactions reported and supports past research. For instance, Boldero and Fallon (1995) found that adolescents often turn to their friends to help with interpersonal problems. Similarly, Fallon and Bowles (1999) reported that 77% of the youths they sampled went to friends for advice on interpersonal issues. Anderson et al. (1997) found that approximately half of the males and 67% of their female participants reported telling either teachers or parents about their experiences. They also found that 14% of males and 6% of females wanted to talk to someone further about their experiences. Significantly, the female students told someone about their unwanted sexual experience 'more than once', which was more

than the males who told someone about their unwanted sexual experience just 'once'. These findings support previous research, which revealed that female students talked to their friends first, then to their family, partners or counsellors more often than do boys. However, when males do talk to someone about their sexual experiences it is usually to their close friends (Jackson et al., 2000). A positive consequence of talking about their experiences with someone else was that many of the girls reported that the issue had been resolved to their satisfaction without actually explaining how. Perhaps this is also the case for boys? However, despite such promising findings, almost half of the female and male students sampled in this study did not talk to anybody which replicates other research (Patton & Mannison, 1995b). Indeed, de Visser et al. (2003) found, alarmingly, that two-thirds of the victims of sexual coercion sampled in their study did not talk to anybody about their experiences. Those who did talk about their experience chose first to talk to friends. A smaller percentage talked to a family member but very few victims contacted professionals such as a counsellor or psychologist. Molidor and Tolman (1998) and Watson et al. (2001) have reported similar findings.

The female students also reacted by saying Stop, No Further, Pulled Away, and Left significantly more than the males. Feltey et al. (1991) found that Saying No and then Using Physical Force by the female victim appears to be a universal sign that the female does not want to engage in the activity. Whether the victims in the current study used a similar combination of reactions is not known. Thus, such a reaction appears to be one that is reliably used by adolescent females in such coercive situations. As a group though, the female students reported using all the reactions measured, thereby reacting to sexual coercion in a greater variety of ways. By comparison, the male students reported less use of their reported reactions. However, just over half of the

female students and a large portion of the male students reported reacting to sexual coercion by Doing Nothing. It is unclear as to why a large number of adolescents Do Nothing. Could this mean they submitted to the coercion? Perhaps there were certain coercive situations in which the students lacked the necessary skills to manage their experience effectively. Alternatively, it could be that the victim perceived some of the coercion experiences as less unpleasant compared to the potential unpleasantness in terminating a relationship that they wanted to continue. Therefore, they Do Nothing. Whatever the case, it was noted that some students could only Do Nothing, and this needs to be addressed further.

Some of the findings from the current study have implications for practitioners wanting to help adolescents who are experiencing, or are yet to experience, sexual coercion. Generally, female and male adolescents who reported having experienced a relationship or a dating event mostly also experienced sexual coercion within these relationships. Given the propensity of this finding, it is important that comprehensive education and skills packages are developed to help adolescents understand and cope successfully in these situations. This is crucial because students are vulnerable to sexual coercion when they are less mature and undergoing significant emotional, social and physical transformations (Peterson, 2004). Furthermore, research has shown that adolescents and young adults unaware of a number of risk factors, exposure to which increases for particular individuals and enhances the likelihood of unwanted sexual activity (Small & Kern, 1993).

Another issue raised in the current study concerns females having relationships with older partners. Girls need to understand that dating older boys increases the likelihood of experiencing sexual coercion attempts and sexual intercourse. (Gowen et

al., 2004). Therefore, girls need to be aware of the danger signs (e.g., inappropriate touching, potentially controlling and abusive incidents) and know how to respond effectively. This is especially so in acquaintance assault situations (Rozee & Koss, 2001). Knowledge of these signs will help adolescents, men and women to better identify risky individuals (Gidycz et al., 2006). Young people also need to be able to assert their sexual rights of it not being okay for anyone to touch or kiss another when unwanted. One does not have to have sex if one does not want to participate. One needs not to be pressured into doing anything sexually with which one is uncomfortable (East & Adams, 2002). Despite many women reporting having sexually assertive beliefs, 20% perceived that they never have the right to refuse sexual intercourse; to ask their partner if they have been examined for a sexually transmitted disease (STD); or to inform their partners that they are being too rough. Furthermore, younger women reported a belief that they never had the right to ask their partners if they had STDs (Rickert, Sanghvi & Weimann, 2002). Therefore, women need to know and understand their sexual rights, and have greater confidence in voicing them. Also, young males who date younger females need to recognise, understand and honour these same rights. Males need to understand that the responsibility of their own behaviour lies within them, and that they are in control of their sexual behaviours and are responsible for them (Hird & Jackson, 2001; Powell, 2007). In short, males need to recognise that relationships should be based upon equality, mutuality and consent (Allen, 2005).

Another major concern arising in the current study was the contribution of alcohol and other drugs in unwanted sexual experiences. This form of coercion renders the victims less likely to be able to assert their sexual rights. Further, for some adolescents it is a perceived sign of maturity and could be considered an acceptable part

of a relationship. Unfortunately, research has found that girls under the influence of alcohol and other drugs are more likely to experience sexual coercion attempts and sexual intercourse (Gowen et al., 2004). Thus, adolescents and young adults in general, and females in particular, need to be aware of the potential risk-taking and health-compromising consequences, of alcohol and other drug use in their relationships

The most frequent reaction to a sexually coercive experience found in this study was to speak to close friends about what happened. Given this finding, it is important to help students acquire skills in listening, how to respond appropriately, and where to direct the victim, their friend, for professional advice/help. Additionally, they need specific communication tools and knowledge to help resolve not only their peers' problems but also their own (Jackson, Cram & Seymour, 2000).

Most of the Year 11 and Year 12 students reported reacting to some sexual coercive experiences by Doing Nothing. Unfortunately, the methodology used in the study did not specify the situations to which the adolescents responded in this way. However, it is clear that the students were at a loss in some instances as to know what to do. Hence, there is a need to discuss the types of risky situations that high school students could face and how individuals could respond to a threat once it is identified. Specific coping strategies are needed. Providing realistic scenarios or role-plays involving conflicting goals of relationship initiations and safety could also better equip students. An important aspect of this package might be to provide the skills necessary to respond assertively in sexual assault situations, especially where the risk cues are subtle (Gidycz, McNamara & Edwards, 2006). Forceful verbal and/or physical resistance has been associated with rape avoidance (Feltey et al., 1991; Ullman, 1988; Ullman & Knight, 1993). Therefore, perhaps a range of physical self-defence skills also

might be a useful adjunct along with assertiveness training. Indeed, in a review of research examining self-defense training programs for women, Brecklin (2008) found a variety of positive outcomes related to such training. These include improvements in the attendees levels of assertiveness, self-esteem, perceived control, self-efficacy, and physical competence, and reductions in anxiety, feelings of helplessness, fear, and avoidance behaviours.

Finally, a consistent finding in this study was the significant number of male students who reported not reacting to their sexually coercive experiences with the reactions assessed. It is possible that this sample of male students reacted in ways that were not listed in this study and requires further clarification. However, it also might suggest that, in general, most males are less able to deal with such experiences – and know fewer options to use. If this was the case, it is imperative that males are included in all facets of any educational skills packages. Practitioners need to be aware that, although females will report sexual coercion experiences more often, there are some male victims who require just as much help in dealing with such events.

Taken together, the above findings indicate that any education package for adolescents needs to be multifaceted. For instance, the package needs to help students understand that the responsibility of their own behaviour lies within them (i.e., males along with females). There also needs to be a movement away from the notion that sexuality of males is out of control and irrepressible and that females are the gatekeepers responsible for managing males' sexual behaviours (Powell, 2007). Feminist researchers agree with such sentiments and also argue that it is necessary to modify the predominant view of the heterosexual narrative centred on male sexual coercion of females (Hird & Jackson, 2001). There is recognition for the necessity of

promoting and developing ethical, non-violent inter-relations to help prevent sexual violence (Carmody, 2005). Allen (2005) contended that education should be based on equality, mutuality and consent. Students also need to be sensitive to the hurtfulness of aggressive behaviour by peers (Rigby & Johnson, 2004). Finally, given that adolescents tend to talk to their friends about their experiences rather than adults, it may be of use to have peer-run intervention programs. Initial research has indicated that young people often do not take advice from an adult seriously (Allen, 2005; Powell, 2007; Smith & Welchens, 2000). In recent times, Australian agencies have initiated peer education programs for adolescents and young adults. In Western Australia (2007), The Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence WA, in conjunction with the Family Domestic Violence Unit, initiated The Domestic and Dating Violence Peer Education Project. This intervention is a school based early intervention program for Years 9, 10 and 11 students, and is designed to raise awareness about family and domestic violence, teen dating violence, and the support services available for people who have witnessed or experienced abuse. The approach adopted in this program is based around information sharing between peers. Some of the preliminary findings from this intervention include an overwhelming interest from students for information about domestic and dating violence, and in terms of becoming peer educators. Further, 30% of students demonstrated a very low awareness/understanding of domestic violence, approximately 30% demonstrated inappropriate attitudes or norms about violence, and over 50% of students indicated that they knew someone who had experienced domestic or dating violence. A similarly focused program has been aimed at young people aged 17 to 24 years in South Australia by SHine SA (2007). The program is called 'Hear Me Out' and seeks to assist the youth in negotiating for safer sex. The Hear Me Out project

uses peer education as a youth participation strategy for engaging young people to work in partnership with SHine SA, and identify solutions that will positively influence their peers and their sexual behaviours. Individuals within this program are trained to address issues around sexual health, effective communication and negotiation, young people's choices about sex, including how to say no; and their role and responsibilities as peer educators. Despite the relative newness of these two programs, anecdotally, it appears that peer educators are having some success in gathering information and disseminating help and advice to their cohorts.

Even though the findings in this study make some important points regarding sexual coercion experiences of Year 11 and Year 12 high school students, some limitations were inherent in the methodology. The information gathered on coping responses was self-report, retrospective and questionnaire based; and the use of self-report measures is open to bias. However, it is an accepted way of accessing such information and has been used widely in sexual coercion research. It is also a practical method of obtaining information from a large number of individuals in a relatively non-invasive way. Another criticism of retrospective, self-report methodology is evidence that, as time elapses, individuals are more biased toward dispositional accounts of their own behaviour (Moore, Sherod, Liv & Underwood, 1979; Peterson, 1980). However, the question framing the response was meant to cue the student into thinking about specific dating experiences as opposed to some other kind of interpersonal encounter. Thus, a prospective research strategy to examine sexual coercion experiences might produce greater detail because of the immediacy of assessment in such a methodology. However, following a large number of students and monitoring their coercive experiences would be costly and time consuming, not to mention quite invasive to an

already pressured population. Despite the potential problems associated with retrospective methodology, it was employed here as a practical means of obtaining information about sexual coercion experiences of Year 11 and Year 12 high school students.

A related limitation concerns the sole use of a quantitative methodology. Despite its ease in capturing and analysing large amounts of information, this type of methodology does focus the participants' responses based upon an a priori research focus and doesn't allow for natural variations in the types of responses that may be made. For instance, in the current study, a list of reactions to sexual coercive experiences was presented to the students. However, it is possible that some victims of such abuse responded in ways that were not measured. If that was the case, then future research should endeavour to include qualitative methods along with quantitative methods in order to capture as much information as possible. For example, incorporating an *Other* category would allow the participants to record a response that was not listed. Additionally, there could be a *Please Explain* section where the participant can expand upon their response.

Also, the findings for reacting to sexually coercive events by male students in particular, indicated a significant lack of reporting their reactions in some of the ways measured by the ADRS. So, it is unclear as to how these male students are reacting in these situations. Possibly the males were reacting in ways not addressed by the ADRS. Thus, it might be useful to also include some open-ended questions asking the male students to write-down how they reacted in order to provide more detailed information regarding sexual coercion.

Finally, the students were allowed to report all the reactions they had used. Subsequently, this makes it difficult to tease out whether particular reactions were common to specific instances, and/or whether a variety of strategies was employed for a given situation. Past research has suggested that a combination of Saying No and then Using Physical Force by female victims appears to be a universal sign that they do not want to engage in the activity. But, the methodology employed here did not enable such a detailed analysis. Also, the students were allowed to report all of their sexual coercive experiences, which masked detailed information regarding those experiences.

Given these limitations and the findings of the current study, there is plenty of scope for future research to examine the sexual coercion experiences of adolescents. It appears that both females and males are victims of sexual coercion. Therefore, it is important to fully understand sexual coercion as it can have serious consequences by initiating and maintaining abuse structures, and risky/poor health outcomes. There is also a need for prospective longitudinal research to help understand the causes and effects of being coerced, and the possible psychological and interpersonal communication consequences of such abuse. There is also a need to examine not only sexual coercion experiences in females, but in males as well. Very little is known about the sexual coercion experiences in male adolescents and males in general. Additionally, there is a need to examine both females and males as perpetrators of sexual coercion as, previously, focus has generally been on the male as the initiator. There is also the issue of same-sex coercion, which has had scant attention and may be worth further investigation. Also, more qualitative work is needed on its own, or along with quantitative methods. Only then can practitioners provide more detailed and relevant information to enhance the understanding of such abuse. Future research needs also to

provide and examine interventions and education programs to assist adolescents. There are a few programs that have proved to be effective in the short-term in changing adolescent attitudes (e.g., Avery-Leaf, Casardi, O'Leary & Cano, 1997; Hanson & Gidycz, 1993; Wolfe et al., 2003). Despite the initial success of the interventions currently running at the moment in both Western Australia and South Australia, the jury is still out on how effective they will be.

In conclusion, sexual coercion is a frequently reported experience by adolescents and young adults. Those who experience sexual coercion tend to be more sexually vulnerable, and are being exposed to a variety of risky behaviours and serious health issues (Caceres, Marin & Hudes, 2000). The findings of the current study have extended knowledge about sexual coercion of Year 11 and Year 12 high school students, including males and their reactions to unwanted sexual experiences. Overall, there needs to be an awareness that males also experience sexual coercion, and that they appear not to have as many strategies to cope with such experiences. For female Year 11 and Year 12 students, similar concerns are raised and they also need to be aware of the potential perils in dating older partners. A concerted effort should focus on the message that pressured sexual activity is a serious abuse and unacceptable. Such behaviour not only violates the sexual rights of the victim, but is also associated with health-compromising outcomes.

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Study

Summary

High school students undergo accelerated physical and sexual growth, and many become sexually active before they finish secondary schooling. Unfortunately, throughout adolescence, sexual coercion experiences will occur in their close relationships. Sexual coercion involves broad verbal or physical pressure to engage in sexual activity. Due to inadequate testing tools, it was necessary to design a more suitable questionnaire for Year 11 and Year 12 high school students. Initially, the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES; Koss & Oros, 1982) was modified to allow an examination of the sexual coercion experiences of females and males. Secondly, it was examined by experts in the area and validated via a pilot study of 30 university students. This modified SES was then incorporated into the Adolescent Dating and Relationship Survey (ADRS) designed specifically for the current research. The ADRS was then administered to 341, Year 11 and Year 12 high school students to examine their sexual coercion experiences and responses, in peer dating and peer relationships. Both female and male Year 11 and Year 12 high school students were actively engaging in relationships and Chi square analyses were used to report that the number of relationships was no different from what was expected for their gender. Nearly 50% of the female students and 70% of the males reported having had a relationship with a partner of the same age. However, significantly more female than male students recorded having older partners and, concomitantly, significantly more male students were involved with younger partners. The female students tended to have longer relationships than their male counterparts, and this was significantly so for those who

had reported relationships of 9 to 12 months or longer. Those high school students who reported sexual coercion events, indicated having experienced all forms of sexual coercion measured; except threat or blackmail, and use of a weapon in the male student sub-group only. So, both females and males were subjected to being made to feel guilty, plied with alcohol and other drugs, subjected to begging and/or arguing, and being lied to as the most frequently cited forms of coercion. However, when compared with their male counterparts the female students reported being physically restrained significantly more. As a group, they responded to these sexually coercive acts via all categories measured. The male student sub-group did not engage in the Fought Off and Yelled categories. Telling someone and talking about the experience later were the two responses commonly reported by the students. The female student responses included saying Stop, No Further, Pulling Away, and Left the scene significantly more than the male students. Just over half of the female participants, and a large portion of the males, reported responding to sexual coercion by Doing Nothing at all. These findings indicate that this age group may be inexperienced in dealing effectively with some forms of sexual coercion and, subsequently, are vulnerable. Therefore, formal health education programs could significantly assist in both educating and providing coping strategies for high school aged females and males to deal effectively with sexual coercion.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings in this study it can be concluded that:

1. The ADRS is suitable for capturing sexual coercive experiences.
2. The ADRS demonstrated that there were no differences between the number of relationships reported by the students.
3. Female participants tended towards longer relationships (9-12 months) while males reported more short-term relationships (0-4 months).
4. The average age difference analysis found that females had a greater number of partners who were 1-2 years or more than 3 years older than themselves; and males reported a greater number of partners around one year younger than themselves.
5. Physical restraint and gender differed significantly with males recording no counts whereas females did experience this coercion; no other coercive experience was significantly different for males and females.
6. Reactions to sexual coercion indicated that female high school students Told Someone about the experience more than once; whereas males generally did not tell anyone, and, if telling someone else, once only.
7. Females said Stop, No Further, Pulled Away, and Left more than males to avert the coercion.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. A larger sample size of both males and females would provide a more in-depth appreciation of the experiences of Year 11 and 12 secondary school students.
2. Some modification of the questions could evoke more specific responses from both males and females regarding their sexual coercion experiences.

3. In view of the number of sexual coercion encounters, it could be useful to include year 10 students in any future study.
4. The interaction of family/friend or stranger sexual violence would be useful.
5. Include an “other” category to cover other forms of coercion not listed in the current study.
6. The inclusion of qualitative methodology would provide a richer account of the sexual coercion experience.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Research Information and Consent

I am currently undertaking research as part of my Masters of Science degree at the University of Western Australia. The research is attempting to examine a number of factors involved within adolescent dating and relationship situations. My hope is to contribute information to be used in future health education programs.

I would like to take this opportunity to request your permission for the participation of your son/daughter in completing the survey. Each participant has been randomly selected and the information is to be collected via a survey administered at your child's school. All information gathered will be **anonymous** and totally **confidential**. Participation will be completely **voluntary**. All participants will be free to withdraw their consent at any point throughout the duration of the study, without prejudice or need to provide reason. Their participation in this study does not prejudice any right to compensation, which they may have under statute or common law.

The survey has been specifically designed for adolescents and can be completed in approximately 15 minutes. There are no foreseeable risks from involvement within the study. Some students may find issues within the survey uncomfortable. In anticipation, a number of professional support options will be made available to the participants if necessary.

Should you have any questions or queries regarding the research, the survey or any other information you wish to clarify, do not hesitate to contact me, **Ashraf Dashlouty on 9380 2361**.

Thank you for your time.

I _____ (please print name), **DO / DO NOT**
(please circle one)

give permission for _____ (please print child's name) of Year _____ to
complete the Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey.

(Signature of Parent / Legal Guardian / Legal authorised official) (Date)

Participant Consent

I understand that my parents have said it's ok for me to do the "**Adolescent Dating and Relationship Survey**". I chose to do this survey and have been told that I may stop at any time without having to provide a reason. I have been given a copy of the information sheet to take with me.

(Signature of participant) (Date)

**PLEASE RETURN ALL FORMS BY WEDNESDAY 21st AUGUST
TO STUDENT SERVICES AT THE COLLEGE.
THANK YOU.**

APPENDIX B: Letter Of Consent



THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of Human Movement and Exercise Science
Parkway Entrance No.3 (Deliveries)
35 Stirling Highway
CRAWLEY WA 6009
+61 8 9380 2361 phone
+61 8 9380 1039 facsimile
<http://www.hmes.uwa.edu.au>

COERCION IN ADOLESCENT DATING AND RELATIONSHIPS

Researcher: Ashraf Dashlouty 9380 2361

Research Information and Parental Consent

I am currently undertaking research as part of my Masters of Science degree at the University of Western Australia. The research is attempting to examine a number of factors involved within adolescent dating and relationship situations. My hope is to contribute information to be used in future health education programs.

I would like to take this opportunity to request your permission for the participation of your son/daughter in completing the survey. Each participant has been randomly selected and the information is to be collected via a survey administered at your child's school. All information gathered would be **anonymous** and totally **confidential**. Participation will be completely **voluntary**. All participants will be free to withdraw their consent at any point throughout the duration of the study, without prejudice or need to provide reason. Their participation in this study does not prejudice any right to compensation, which they may have under statute or common law.

The survey has been specifically designed for adolescents and can be completed in approximately 15 minutes. There are no foreseeable risks from involvement within the study. Some students may find issues within the survey uncomfortable. In anticipation, a number of professional support options will be made available to the participants if necessary.

Should you have any questions or queries regarding the research, the survey or any other information you wish to clarify, do not hesitate to contact me, **Ashraf Dashlouty on 9380 2361**.

Thank you for your time.

Parent Consent

I _____ (please print name), **DO / DO NOT**
(please circle one)

give permission for _____ (please print child's name) of Year _____ to
complete the Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey.

(Signature of Parent / Legal Guardian / Legal authorised official)

(Date)

Participant Consent

I understand that my parents have said it's ok for me to do the "**Adolescent Dating and Relationship Survey**". I chose to do this survey and have been told that I may stop at any time without having to provide a reason. I have been given a copy of the information sheet to take with me.

(Signature of participant)

(Date)

**PLEASE RETURN ALL FORMS BY WEDNESDAY 21st AUGUST TO
STUDENT SERVICES AT THE COLLEGE.**

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX C: Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey

Instruction Sheet to Self-Administer

The Adolescent Dating and Relationships Survey

The following survey is a group of questions looking at different aspects of adolescent relationships. The survey is divided into four parts,

Section 1	General Information	Page 1.
Section 2	Relationship Situations	Page 3.
Section 3	Support Options	Page 9.

(Pages number in the top right hand corner of each page.)

Please answer all questions as best as you can. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete.

I would like to point out that you have the choice to do all of the survey, part of it or leave it blank. If you complete the survey there is no chance of anyone knowing whose information it is, or from which school they attend. All surveys done or not are completely **PRIVATE**.

Thank you very much for your time.

SECTION 1. General Information

1. Age: (please circle your age and the month you were born in)

	13	14	15	16	17	18	19						
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		

2. Sex:

Female

Male

3. In which country were you born? _____

4. Family Ethnic Background:

Australian

Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander

Asian

African

European

Middle Eastern

United Kingdom

Other (please specify)

5. What is your religion?

(Please state your religion or write none if you do not have one):

6. Are your parents separated or divorced?

No

Yes

7. Who do you live with?

Mother and father

Mother only

Mother and stepfather or live in partner

Father only

Father and stepmother or live in partner

Out of home

(if so, for how many years _____)

Other (please describe)

8. When was your first year at this school?

19_____ (please indicate)

2000

2001

2002

9. Please pick the grade that best represents your overall level of school work.

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
 F (less than 40%) D (40-49%) C (50-64%) B (65-79%) A (80-100%)

14. On average, how long have your relationships with your boyfriends/girlfriends been? (in months)

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
 0-4 5-8 9-12 13-16 17 or more

15. On average, what was the age difference between your partner(s) and yourself at the time you were together?

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
 Partner was Partner was Partner was Partner was Partner was
 3 or more 1-2 years the same age 1-2 years 3 or more
 years younger younger older years older

Please Note:

All questions below this point are for events that have taken place ON dates or IN relationships.

16. There are times when a date or boyfriend/girlfriend wants to become more physically involved (go further) than the other. Using the following list, please report the **number of times** that you have experienced any of the following situations when you have **NOT WANTED** the event to take place.

Please answer in every box. If the event has never happened to you place a zero in that box.

For example. My date/boyfriend/girlfriend has:
always taken my wishes into account when

0

Kissing

1

Touching
(breast or genitals)

2

Other experiences
beyond the first two

My date/boyfriend/girlfriend has:

(a) made me feel guilty leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(b) encouraged me to use alcohol and/or drugs and took advantage of me leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(c) begged me or continually argued with me leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(d) threatened or blackmailed me leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(e) lied to me (e.g., told you they loved you and you found out later that they had lied) leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(f) **threatened** to use physical force or a weapon against me leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(g) physically restrained me or stopped me from leaving, leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(h) **used** physical force against me leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(i) **used** a weapon leading to

Kissing

Touching
(breast or genitals)

Other experiences
beyond the first two

(If you placed a zero in all of the squares in question 16, please go straight to Section 3, page 9)

17. Did one date or boyfriend/girlfriend do all of the things you reported above?

No

Yes

18. Please report your attempted reaction to the **UNWANTED** advances by your date or boyfriend/girlfriend.

Reaction	Number of times
I chose to do nothing	_____
I said that I wanted them to stop	_____
I said that I didn't want to go any further than what we were doing	_____
I yelled, screamed or called out for help	_____
I tried to leave	_____
I tried to push them away	_____
I tried to punch, kick or fight them off to make them stop	_____

19. Please describe the **three** most common situations where the unwanted experience took place. For **each** situation (i.e., 1, 2, & 3), please report information about the place, time of day, and if anyone else around.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

20. At a later time, did you talk to your date or boyfriend/girlfriend about the unwanted experience?

Yes

No

(a) If no, please describe your reason for not doing so:

21. Who did you tell about any of the experiences?

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| No one | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Parent or guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Brother or sister | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A friend | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A teacher/counselor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Support service
(i.e., Kids Help Line) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police or other authority | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please describe) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SECTION 3. Support Information

There is information in this survey that some people may find challenging. This section has been put in to let you know that there are people who can support you. If you feel in any way upset please seek support from any of the groups or people listed below.

Details of the out of school support groups may also be found on the sheet called the “**Take Home Information Sheet**”, which you get to take with you.

School Support

This will be individually tailored for each school. Contact points within the school (e.g., counselors, psychologists, or other support avenues) will be made available to students.

External Support

Sexual Assault Resource Centre **9340 1828 (24 hours crisis)**

Provides counselling, support, medical help and information on support groups. It is a free **confidential** service.

FPWA (Family Planning)

Quarry Health Centre

9430 4544

quarry@fpwa-health.org.au

sexual health services for under 25's, providing counselling, a medical clinic, plus heaps of information

Sexual Health Helpline

9227 6178

(Weekdays 8:30am to 5:00pm)

The Samaritans

The Samaritans is a support organisation for suicide prevention. They provide emotional support in a **non-judgmental, non-religious, confidential** environment. They can also provide a number of other support services (should you want)

Youthline

9388 2500 (24 hours)

TTY (hearing impaired)

9382 8822 (24 hours)

Email

jo@samaritans.org

(email response within 4 hours)

General or Research Information

Researcher: Ashraf Dashlouty

9380 2361

Thank you very much for your participation.
For further privacy, an envelope will be provided upon request.