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Reporting Sexual Violence in School: Pre-Service Teachers' Attitude and Behaviours

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Arts

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Reporting Sexual Violence in School:
Pre-Service Teachers' Attitude and Behaviours
(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Ronit Futerman

Graduate Program in Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

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Abstract

The present study examined pre-service teachers' attitudes and behaviours toward reporting students' disclosure of sexual violence. Sexual violence is a broad term that describes any violent, physical or psychological act, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality (Baker, Campbell & Straatman, 2012). Teachers play a significant role in recognizing and reporting acts of victimization, as they are among those who are trained to detect and label signs of victimization (Anagnostopoulos, Buchanan, Pereira & Lichty, 2009). For the purpose of this study, a sample of 190 University of Western Ontario Bachelor of Education students completed a questionnaire measuring attitudes toward sexual violence, as well as intervention responses in cases of students' disclosure of sexual victimization. The study evaluated four main components: (1) gender difference in regards to attitudes towards sexual violence, (2) the influence of pre-service teachers' past experience with violence on their perceived attitudes, (3) the impact of pre-service teachers' attitudes about sexual violence on their likelihood to report cases of students' disclosure of sexual victimization, and (4) the impact of pre-service teachers' past experience with violence on their likelihood to report cases of students' disclosure of sexual victimization. The research findings point to the importance of providing pre-service teachers with continuous training and implementation of educational programs.

Keywords: sexual violence, attitudes, reporting behavior, pre-service teachers, past experience

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

1.1 What is sexual violence?

Sexual violence is a serious problem that can have devastating consequences in the lives of women and girls. It is defined as “any violence, physical or psychological act, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality” (Baker, Campbell & Straatman, 2012). It encompasses a broad range of acts such as forced penetration, coercion, intimidation and physical force (Macdowall, Gibson, Tanton, Mercer, Lewis, Clifton, & Wellings, 2013). The United Nations defines sexual violence as an extreme form of gender-based violence which results in emotional, physical and psychological harm to women (Tavara, 2006).

Sexual violence is mostly about power and control, and often involves using dominance over another individual (Tavara, 2006). It can be experienced by individuals of all ages, and can occur as a single incident or as a continuous form of abuse (Macdowall et al., 2013). While both men and women can experience sexual violence, it has been noted that majority of victims are often women and aggressors are usually men (Tavara, 2006). It is not uncommon that the perpetrators are familiar to the victims; in many cases they can be spouses, partners, neighbours, and men in a position of authority (Baker et al., 2012; Tavara, 2006).

1.2 Extent of the problem

Prevalence. Establishing the prevalence of sexual violence can be challenging, mainly because only a small portion of all victims actually file a police report or seek medical assistance. Specifically, it is estimated that less than 10 percent of sexual assaults are reported to the police (Baker et al., 2012). In order to evaluate the prevalence of sexual violence, most data is collected through population-based surveys (Baslie Chen, Black & Saltzman, 2007; Tavara, 2006). For instance, according to the General Social Survey on

Victimization (GSS), which collected information on sexual violence in Canada, more than one third of Canadian women reported to have had at least one experience of sexual victimization since the age of 16 (Baker et al., 2012). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) showed that 13% of women and 6% of men identified experiencing sexual coercion at some point throughout their lives (Basil et al., 2007; Black et al., 2011). Moreover, reports by Statistics Canada suggest that a woman's likelihood to be victimized by sexual violence follows only slightly behind their likelihood to be a victim of physical assault (Basil et al., 2007).

Establishing the prevalence of sexual violence is not only challenging due to underreporting, but also due to the variations found between populations. Specifically, the prevalence of sexual violence is found to vary based on socio-economic status, as well as how the particular population defines violence (Tavara, 2006). For instance, women might avoid reporting marital rape as sexual assault due to social norms which encourage them to meet the sexual needs of their spouses (Basile et al., 2007). The National College Women's Sexual Victimization study showed that at least one out of every five college women were sexually assaulted during their college years (Baslie et al., 2007). A study completed by Krebs and colleagues (2009) estimated that 19% of female undergraduate students experienced various forms of sexual assault since entering the post-secondary institution (Baslie et al., 2007). Other studies suggest that at least one out of every three women around the world has been assaulted or been a victim of some type of sexual abuse (Baker et al., 2012; Baslie et al., 2007).

Risk factors. Sexual violence is a significant public health problem, with age being one of the primary risk factors (Tavara, 2006). Several studies indicated that women and adolescents were more likely to become victims of sexual violence than any other group age (Statistics Canada, 2009; Women Against Violence Against Women, n.d.; Baslie et al., 2007). For instance, the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS) found that 54 percent of females were raped before age 18 and 22 percent before the age of 12 (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Familiarity with the perpetrator is another risk factor for experiencing sexual violence: for both men and women, the perpetrator and victim are

often known to each other. Specifically, the perpetrators are often the victims' significant other, a member of their family, or another individual to whom they are close (e.g., caretaker, teacher) (Tavara, 2006). According to Statistic Canada (2009), 41 percent of the violent assaults against women were committed by current or former partner, while other family members and acquaintances were responsible for another 42 percent of the victimization (Statistics Canada, 2009).

Women's history of sexual violence and socio-economic status were also associated with increased incidence of violent episodes (Tavara, 2006). Women who were molested, abused or raped during childhood were found to have a greater likelihood of rape during their adolescence or adulthood. Moreover, poverty is considered to be a risk factor as these women are less likely to have access to the necessary resources needed to sustain safe living conditions (Tavara, 2006).

Exposure to sexually violent content in the media may also contribute to viewers' attitude and behavior in regards to violence against women. However, there is no clear consensus among scholars in terms of the true extent of the effects of media. That is, while some studies found that exposure to sexually violent content on television might be related to increased acceptance of rape myths and victim blaming (Dexter, Penrod, Linz & Saundres, 1997), other research has found little support for its negative effects (Lee, Hurst & Zhang, 2011).

In another study, Malamuth and Briere (1986) found that exposure to sexually violent content in the media can indirectly contribute to the development of violence towards women by reinforcing specific thought patterns and attitudes related to sexual violence. With regards to pornography use and its effects on sexual violence, Bonini, Ciairano, Rabaglietti & Cattelino (2006) found an association between exposure to various pornography materials (i.e., magazines, videos) and aggressive behavior among adolescents. The findings indicated that in terms of gender differences, boys were often identified as the perpetrators while the girls are positioned as the victims.

Consequences. Sexual violence has severe consequences on victims' psychological, emotional and physical health. These consequences may vary in its intensity, duration and victims' experiences following the assault (Tavara, 2006). The psychological consequences of sexual violence may depend on women's personal experience with sexual victimization. The most common and serious psychological effects expressed by the majority of women are depression, social phobias, anxiety, use of substances, post-traumatic stress disorder and rape trauma symptoms (Tavara, 2006). Rape trauma symptoms include acute and long-term phases. The acute phase is characterized by extreme emotional distress, as well as crying, anger, fear and shock. Long term effects may include feelings of sexual dysfunction or difficulties returning to their daily routines (Tavara, 2006). Victims of sexual violence may experience physical injuries such as broken bones, genital-anal lacerations, and reproductive health problems such as sexually transmitted infections (e.g., HIV), unwanted pregnancy, and continues health conditions related to stress and/or injury. Emotional effects often depend on the responses of others following the report of the violent incident. Negative responses can intensify feelings of personal loss, control, and isolation (Tavara, 2006; Baker et al., 2012).

1.3 Public attitudes and beliefs

The majority of public attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual violence are influenced by false beliefs and misconceptions (rape myths), gender differences, traditional gender roles, and ambiguity regarding characteristic of the situation.

Rape myth. Myths regarding sexual violence often exist in, and contribute to, a social context in which various forms of sexual violence are maintained. In addition, in this context, the consent and its meaning remains unclear, the seriousness of sexual violence is diminished, and victims feel reluctant to report (Baker et al, 2012). Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) defined rape myths as "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women" (p.134). That is, rape myths are the beliefs people have about rape as a sexually violent acts for which the victim should accept responsibility (Burt,

1980). Most of these myths were identified in relation to “stereotypical rape” situations in which the offender is often a stranger and the victim was inviting sexual victimization by wearing provocative clothing or acting in a way that contradicts predominant social norms (Talbot, Neill & Rankin, 2010). Rape accepting attitudes exemplify stereotypical ideas individuals have about rape, such as rape is not harmful, women falsely accuse men for the assault, women often enjoy it, and women deserve it due to inappropriate behaviour (Burt, 1980; Frese, Moya & Megias, 2004). According to Burt (1980), individuals who have high levels of rape myth acceptance are less likely to view sexually aggressive behavior as intrusive and violent. Additionally, individuals who demonstrate more accepting rape attitudes and obtain more traditional gender role, are more likely to blame the victim and excuse the perpetrator from the assault.

In their research, Frese and colleagues (2004) demonstrated the relationship between responsibility of attribution, rape myth acceptance and social perception on rape. One hundred and eighty two undergraduate psychology students were asked to evaluate victim and perpetrator responsibility, intensity for trauma, and likelihood to report the crime in three different rape situations (marital rape, acquaintance rape, and stranger rape). The findings revealed that people with high rape myth acceptance attributed more responsibility to the victim, estimated the victim’s trauma as less severe, and would be less likely to recommend the victim to report the rape to the police in less stereotypical rape scenarios (i.e., marital and acquaintance situations). The results of this study demonstrate that rape myth acceptance is an important predictor of individuals’ reactions towards victims and perpetrators of rape.

Similarly, Ben-David and Schneider (2005) found that when situations are less stereotypical, individuals tend to perceive the situations as less harming and psychologically damaging. The results showed that participants’ perceptions of the perpetrator, the situation and the appropriate punishment were perceived as less severe as the ambiguity regarding specific rape situations increased. That is, participants minimized the severity of the situation, the appropriate punishment, and excuse the perpetrator when the rape was committed by a neighbor, an ex-boyfriend, and a current life partner. In a

stranger rape situation which was identified by more stereotypical ideas, participants estimated trauma for the victim as more significant, attributed more responsibility to the perpetrator and identified more severe forms of appropriate punishment (Ben-David & Schneider, 2005). This pattern of results strengthens the interaction between rape myth accepting attitudes and context of the rape situations, and its influence on individuals' perception of sexual violence.

Clarke and Stermac (2011) explored association between women's physical appearance and attitude towards sexual assault. Their results concluded that participants who held more stereotypical beliefs about women's body weight had more accepting attitude of sexual victimization and less empathetic responses towards the victim. In particular, the findings revealed that participants found the victim responsible, excused the perpetrator, minimized the severity of the situation, and responded more negatively toward the victim when the victim was described as thin (stereotypically viewed as more attractive and sexually experienced) versus overweight (Clarke & Stermac, 2011). The results of this study were consistent with the findings of Clarke and Lawson (2009), which showed that participants who had more stereotypical ideas regarding victims' body weight were more likely to attribute personal responsibility to a thin woman than an overweight woman (stereotypically viewed as less sexually desirable and experienced).

The White Ribbon Campaign, a worldwide organization devoted to end violence against women, investigated men's attitudes and reporting behaviours regarding violence against women (Carolo, 2012). In his study, a fifteen minute phone interview was administered to 1,064 men who rated their responses about attitudes and behaviours that constitute violence against women, seriousness of situations, acceptability of certain behaviours, and reporting behaviours. The results indicated that men were divided in their beliefs regarding what behaviours constitute rape and sexual assaults. For instance, 27% of men believed that a woman cannot say she was raped if she did not try to stop it, and 59% believed that women who "change their mind" after sex are not rape victims. A concerning number of 49% believed that men can get sexually carried away and only

51% agreed that a woman can identify sexual act as a rape when was pressured to have sex with a man while both were drunk (Carolo, 2012).

Men had less accepting attitudes towards behaviours that described acceptable gender roles. Eighty-nine percent disagreed that a woman's appearance puts her at risk for sexual assault and 86% of men thought that a woman could not be sexually assaulted if she acts and talk sexy. These findings were not consistent with previous studies regarding gender roles and rape accepting attitudes (Flood & Pease, 2009; Civilletto, 2004), which showed that men who had more accepting rape myth attitudes were more likely to hold traditional gender role beliefs. The data revealed alarming findings indicating that majority of men (12%) believed that a woman gives her consensus for sexual interaction even though she is saying "no" and 11% did not perceive sexual assault as a traumatic event for women who are sexually active (Carolo, 2012). Attitudes towards sexual assault in a relationship were less accepting and showed that men were more intolerant towards behaviours that constituted victimization. Thus, even though a significant portion of men in Ontario demonstrated attitudes that reject sexual victimization against women, some remain unclear in regards to what behaviours constitute sexual victimization.

Furthermore, the survey also included questions that addressed witnessing violence and reasons for not reporting it. The results indicated that of the 21% who witnessed violence against women in public, 92% believed that what the male did was wrong, and 77% acted on those beliefs either by checking with the victim to verify her safety (69%), saying something to challenge the male's behaviour (54%), or reporting the incident to the authorities (14%). According to these results, most men in Ontario are aware that violence against women is unacceptable; however, these men continue to be reluctant in reporting known incidents to the designated authorities (Carolo, 2012). This further contributes to the negative consequences experienced by the victim and prevents them from receiving much needed assistance.

Gender differences and gender roles. Several studies documented gender as an important predictor of attitudes that support the use of violence against women. Men and

women have been found to differ in their perceptions of sexual violence (Flood & Pease, 2009). Men were found to have more rape myth acceptance, minimize the severity of the victimization, excuse the perpetrator and attribute more responsibility for the victim. On the other hand, women were found to have less tolerance toward sexual victimization, have a wider definition for acts that constitute violence against women, reject victim blaming, and often hold the perpetrator responsible (Flood & Pease, 2009).

Civilletto (2004) examined gender differences in attitudes and attributions of responsibility in acquaintance rape situations and found that men were more likely than women to hold rape myth and blame the victim for sexual assault. Ekore (2012) found similar gender differences in perception of sexual harassment among 420 Nigerian university students. The study showed that women were more likely to label various behaviours as sexual harassment than men. For instance, women were more likely to consider sexual teasing, jokes, looks, and gestures, and remarks as sexual harassment. Men, on the other hand, indicated that sexual harassment is overestimated and that women incorrectly interpret expressions of sexual interest. The findings of this study contribute to understanding cultural perception of sexual victimization by male and female university students (Ekore, 2012).

According to Burt's (1980) socialization analysis of rape, individuals learn gender-appropriate behavior in sexual interactions through a developmental process (Flood & Pease, 2009). That is, an individual's interpretation of sexually violent acts and responsibility attribution is often guided by the beliefs other people have regarding the appropriate roles for men and women (Ben-David & Schneider, 2005; Flood & Pease, 2009). Men are often perceived as dominant and sexually aggressive, while women are viewed as more gentle, submissive and responsible for controlling their sexual activities (Flood & Pease, 2009).

Ben-David and Schneider's (2005) study identified the relationship between gender roles and rape accepting attitudes. The findings indicated that actions on the part of the victim may be used to justify attributions of blame when victims violated traditional norms, such

as not taking care of the family. In these cases, the participants blamed the victim more and the offender less when victim's behaviour was inconsistent with traditional gender roles. Similar results were found in the study by Talbot et al., (2010) where people who believed in rape myth or who exhibit rape accepting attitudes, and lean toward more traditional gender roles, were more likely to blame the victim than people who had more liberal view of gender roles. The findings also revealed that women who had more traditional gender roles were more likely to blame the victim for the rape, felt that the victim let the perpetrator on, and attributed the responsibility to the victim (Talbot et al., 2010).

A study completed by Viki and Abrams (2002) provided additional support in regards to gender roles and attitudes that individuals use to support sexually violent acts. In their research, attribution of blame was identified by measuring participants' levels of Benevolent Sexism (BS), which was defined as "set of attitudes that are sexist but subjectively positive and affectionate toward women" (p.289). That is, according to the BS theory, women who were categorized as holding traditional gender roles are more likely to be perceived as "good" while women who violate such expectations are more likely to be viewed as having "bad reputation" (Viki & Abrams, 2002, p.290). Thus, it was suggested that individuals who score high on BS will blame the victim who violated traditional gender roles. As predicted, the findings indicated that participants who score high in BS were more likely to blame the victim who was victimized during an act of infidelity (perceived as violation of traditional gender role), than victims whose marital status was not identified (Viki & Abrams, 2002).

1.4 Sexual violence in school

Extent of the problem. The prevalence of sexually related acts in school settings remains high in spite of the well-established interventions and educational programs. Alarming results reported by the U.S Department of Education (2004), showed that 1 out of 10 students reported being sexually victimized at school (Skakeshaft, 2002; Ashbaugh & Cornell, 2008). The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which

provides information regarding the number of sexual assault incidents reported to law enforcement agencies, showed that sexual assault among adolescents represent the most common sex crime in comparison to any other age group (Young, Grey & Boyd, 2008). Young and colleagues (2008) noted that in spite of such records, the prevalence rate of reported incidents among adolescents do not provide an accurate estimate of the problem. That is, the high rates of adolescents' sexual assault recorded by NIBRS were likely to show an underestimation of the problem (Young et al., 2008). The scholars indicated that the prevalence of youth sexual victimizations depends upon the measures of sexual assault used in the studies. According to community based studies, which used more in depth measures to identify adolescents' sexual victimization, 15% of male adolescent and majority of female adolescent reported to experience some forms of sexual victimization (Maxwell, Robinson & Post, 2003; Young et al., 2008). Young and colleagues (2008) explained that lower rates of reported sexual victimization acts among adolescents could be attributed to ambivalent measures used to identify such acts.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW, 2001) conducted a large scale adolescents' sexual harassment study based on a nationally representative sample of 2,064 students, grades 8 through 11. The findings revealed that 81% of students reported being a victim of sexual misconduct and 35% reported experiencing sexual victimization in grade 6 or before. The estimates of peer sexual harassment, which was labeled as "non-physical sexual contact, including sexual remarks, jokes, gestures, looks, showing sexual pictures, messages or notes, and spreading rumors" (Young et al., 2008, p.1073) ranged from 83% for girls to 79% for boys (AAUW, 2001; Young et al., 2008). Ashbaugh and Cornell (2008) noted that even though girls may experience similar amounts of sexual harassment incidents as their boys peers, they are more prone to experience severe psychological and educational consequences.

Students experiencing sexual violence. There is an increasing awareness that sexual victimization at schools has negative and long lasting outcomes for its victims. McMaster and colleagues (2002) showed that peer sexual harassment creates an intrusive educational environment, interferes with learning, and escalates when ignored. Students

who were targets of harassment reported that they felt threatened, depressed, suicidal, dreaded going to school, had difficulty paying attention, were reluctant to participate in class, experienced falling grades, and had considered changing schools (McMaster, Connolly, Pepler & Craig, 2002). Duffy, Wareham and Walsh (2004) identified several psychological, as well as educational consequences for high school students who were sexually harassed. Within the school context, adolescents who experienced sexual harassment reported to have decreased quality of school performance (i.e., obtained lower grades), loss of learning motivation, and increased avoidance behavior such as tardiness and absenteeism. The psychological effects of sexual harassment included experiences such as sadness, fear, confusion, low self-esteem, embarrassment, and decreased social interactions (Duffy et al., 2004). Holt and colleagues (2007) examined the impact of victimization experiences among elementary school children. Their findings showed that students who had several victimization experiences expressed more distress and academic difficulties compared to students with little victimization experiences and to students who experienced victimization mostly by their peers.

A significant amount of literature has focused on addressing the devastating consequences of sexual victimization in regards to females and in particular, young girls (Holt, Finkelhor & Kantor, 2007; Duffy et al., 2004; McMaster et al., 2002). Bogin (2006) argued the necessity to consider male adolescents and their experience of sexual victimization. According to Bogin (2006) male adolescents who experienced sexual victimization were prone to have difficulties with sexual identity, academic issues and inappropriate behaviours. The experience of sexual victimization could make it challenging for male adolescents to understand their sexual identity. For instance, a heterosexual young adult who was victimized by another male might incorrectly interpret the assault as being his fault since the perpetrator perceived him as 'gay'. In addition, due to various social norms, gender roles, and myths regarding sexual victimization, men often perceived themselves as a symbol of masculinity. This perception perpetuated the notion that men cannot be the victim of sexual violence and, thus, males' sexual victimization can often lead to shame and denial (Bogin, 2006). In terms of school and academic performance, Bogin (2006) argued that adolescents who have been victimized

might redirect their distress and start to act out behaviourally, be aggressive, defiant, and disengaged in school activities. They can also experience nightmares, alienation, and intrusive thoughts about the assault. Thus, while sexual victimization has detrimental effects on both males and females, there are differences in their experiences and reactions. Cultural differences and gender roles produce different reactions to sexual victimization for both men and women. Male victims are more likely to perceive their assault as an “attack on their masculinity” and self-identity (Bogin, 2006, p.7). Male victims are also more likely to externalize their distress by acting out (behaviourally and sexually) and abusing substances, while women may internalize their distress and show signs of anxiety and depression (Bogin, 2006).

1.5 Disclosure of sexual violence

The ubiquitous experiences of sexual victimization on students’ well-being have increased the need for the development and implementation of school policies and intervention programs. For instance, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S Department of Education (1997), established explicit sexual harassment policies and procedures that are “accessible, effective and fairly applied” (Anagnostopoulos, Buchanan, Pereira & Lichty, 2009). OCR guidelines emphasize that schools are responsible for promoting safe and harassment-free educational environments. However, despite such guidelines, teachers, administrators, and even parents often fail to respond appropriately to students’ disclosure of sexual violence and harassment. For instance, in the AAUW (2001) study, students indicated that teachers and administrators were reluctant to intervene and take corrective measures in spite of witnessing harassing behavior.

Students’ reluctance to disclose peer sexual victimization. While sexual victimization in school creates a variety of social, emotional, and academic difficulties, many students remain reluctant to seek help. In her study, Delara (2012) explored students’ (grade 9 through 12) perspective on their reasons for not reporting incidents of violence to school authorities. The results showed that students had little hope in adequate adult

interventions and prevention of the intrusive incident. Specifically, students expressed their concerns with regards to confidentiality, not being taken seriously by school personnel, and feeling ashamed when they were victimized (Delara, 2012). Additionally, the findings pointed out that the difference in definition of bullying and harassing behavior given by students and adults, served as an important predictor for inadequate responses and subsequently prevention. That is, adults may consider a broader definition of bullying and harassing behavior and therefore inaccurately interpret students' experiences of victimization. Thus, the findings of this study show that students' lack of reporting and seeking help from school personnel and other adults was attributed to insufficient action on the part of adults and subsequently, students' feelings of powerlessness (Delara, 2012).

Newman and Murray (2005) study showed that students' willingness to report peer sexual harassment may also depend upon perceived seriousness of the situations as well as their social status in school (students were classified as popular, average and unpopular). The results indicated that children were less likely to seek help from teachers when faced with victimization and peer harassment. Students were more likely to believe that disclosure to school personnel would not resolve the situation, but rather cause additional aggravation. The results also indicated that seeking help was associated with perceived seriousness of the harassment. Popular children perceived peer harassment as less intrusive and were more likely to report the incidents in order to end the conflict and achieve justice. Unpopular children, on the other hand, perceived the harassment as a serious act of victimization; however, they were less likely to seek help from teachers due to fear from retribution. The implications of this study suggest that teachers' understanding of and reaction to peer harassment affects students' willingness to disclose such incidents and seek for help (Newman & Murray, 2005).

Yablon (2010) investigated whether the student-teacher relationship can affect students' perceptions of a teacher's ability to intervene and prevent violence in school. The findings showed that the quality of student-teacher relationships mediated students' willingness to seek help, and the quality of such a relationship partly mediated students'

perceptions of their teacher's ability to intervene and actual willingness to prevent victimization. That is, student-teacher relationships contributed to students' overall willingness to seek help and disclose incidents of victimization. Positive and meaningful relationships correlated with students' perception of their teachers as being able to intervene and therefore were more willing to seek help. The findings also suggested that girls and younger students (sixth grader) had higher quality relationship with their teachers and were more likely to perceive them as capable to assist (Yablon, 2010). Gender and age differences in students' willingness to seek help is consistent with past research, indicating that men are often reluctant to seek help due to differences in socialization of gender roles (i.e., perception of masculinity) (Bogin, 2006).

Teachers' reaction to school victimization. Due to the nature of their profession, teachers play an important role in recognizing signs of victimization and protecting students' well-being. Studies have suggested that teachers' attitudes were an important predictor for interpreting violent situations, as well as considering the likelihood to intervene (Craig, Bell & Leschied, 2011; Craig, Henderson & Murphy, 2000). Newman & Murray (2005) found that ambiguous situations influenced teachers' readiness to intervene. For instance, teasing and spreading rumors which were perceived as a less severe form of victimization was less likely to be identified as a reason for intervention, while overt aggression was perceived as a pervasive form of harassment which called for action. Thus, when the event was evaluated as intrusive, teachers were more likely to be responsive to take extreme measures and prevent the harassment (Newman & Murray, 2005).

Similarly, Craig and colleagues (2000) who investigated 116 prospective teachers and their attitudes towards bullying and victimization, found that teachers' attitudes, as well as feelings of empathy served as an important indicator for determining the definition they assigned to bullying, perceptions regarding the seriousness of bullying, and their likelihood to intervene. The results showed that participants were more likely to identify physical aggression as bullying, perceived it as more serious form of victimization, and believed it was more worthy to report in compared to verbal aggression. Moreover, the

extent to which participants labeled bullying was also affected by the lack of visibility from certain types of victimizations. That is, pre-service teachers were more likely to identify physical and verbal aggression as bullying compared to social exclusion, which may be harder to witness and identify (Craig et al., 2000). The scholars explained that social exclusion is less likely to be observed since this behavior is often covert and therefore less visible. Physical and verbal aggression on the other hand, may be easier to detect since the effect on the victim is visible. Thus, the visibility of certain types of bullying can also affect pre-service teachers' perceived seriousness. Craig and colleagues (2011) found that pre-service teachers were more likely to consider physical bullying as a severe form of bullying compared to relational, homophobic, and cyberbullying. Teachers are more confident to identify overt form of aggression since it assists them to rely on known policies and procedures, guiding them how to respond to such situations.

Mishna and Alaggia (2005) reported that teachers' who had previous personal experience with violence were more likely to identify signs of victimization, expressed more sensitivity and empathy towards victims, and encouraged students to engage and disclose incident of victimization. In support of these findings, Craig and colleagues (2011) reported that pre-service teachers' personal experience with violence contributed to their confidence in recognizing and labelling violent situations. They were also more likely to intervene and report violent incidents in school. Craig and colleagues (2000) advised that pre-service teachers who experienced social exclusion as a form of victimization were more likely to label it as bullying, perceived it as a serious act of victimization and were more likely to intervene.

Craig and colleagues (2011) also found that exposure to violence preventions programs was related to the way pre-service teachers view and respond to bullying. According to their findings, previous exposure to violence prevention programs resulted in increased concern and confidence recognizing and dealing with incidents of victimization compared to those who did not receive such training. In their study, Stone and Couch (2004) found that teachers who had previous' training of sexual harassment were able to recognize behaviours that constituted sexual harassment in 75% of students. This training

included viewing a video demonstrating adult to adult sexual harassment situations and teacher-student sexual harassment situation, as well as listening to a lawyer describing court cases of sexual harassment and their implications. It is important to mention that teachers were not exposed to student to student cases of sexual harassment; therefore it is unclear whether such training would assist teachers to better recognize and prevent students' sexual harassment. Shakeshaft (2002) asserted that many teachers are unsure about what constitutes harassing behavior, and therefore find it difficult to distinguish between flirting and sexually intrusive behaviour. As a result, teachers tend to intervene and report situations they perceive as most severe and intrusive.

The gender of pre-service teachers served as another important indicator contributing to understanding teachers' attitudes concerning bullying and victimization. Craig and colleagues (2011) showed that female pre service teachers perceived victimization as more serious in comparison to male pre service teachers. These authors also suggested that male teachers tend to express more tolerant attitudes towards students aggression in comparison to female teachers, who tend to have more negative and less accepting attitudes towards peers victimization. The scholars suggested that this variance in teachers' attitudes and subsequently responses to victimization can be partly explained by variation in feelings of empathy. Craig and colleagues (2011) advised that teachers who promote empathy can be more effective in their responses to students' victimization by promoting awareness regarding the devastating consequences of aggression and supporting victims by encouraging expression of hurtful feelings. Thus, teachers who are empathetic are more likely to identify bullying, label it as a serious form of victimization and are more likely to respond to such acts.

Contrary to previous studies, Stone and Couch (2004) who studied teachers' attitudes towards sexual harassment, their perceptions of sexually harassing behaviours, and their responses to such behaviours, indicated that teachers' gender did not affect their attitudes and intervention rates. The results of the study showed generally teachers had less accepting attitudes towards sexual harassment, were able to identify signs of peer sexual harassment, and were more likely to intervene in order to stop the behavior. Thus,

teachers' gender did not contribute to their perceptions and attitudes towards sexual harassment. However, it did seem to affect the action they would take to respond to students' victimization. Specifically, female teachers were more consistent in complying with school policies and procedures which emphasize reporting sexually harassing behaviours to designated authorities (i.e., principal), and ask the harasser to stop the behavior (Stone & Couch, 2004).

Behre, Astor and Meyer (2001) found teachers' readiness to intervene is related to their perceived professional role in various school spaces. Results revealed that elementary school teachers perceived the entire school context as within their responsibility, and therefore were more likely to intervene and prevent victimization in comparison to middle school teachers, who only identified specific context such as hallways, cafeteria and playground. The authors explained middle school teachers were more likely to perceive certain locations within school context as their responsibility to intervene because they perceived other locations as the role and responsibility of other school personnel. On the other hand, elementary school teachers' decision to intervene was mainly based upon evaluating the physical harm that might be caused to their students. Thus, teachers vary in their attitudes in regards to their professional roles and responsibilities to intervene within various locations within school context (Behre et al., 2001). The likelihood of teachers and school personnel to intervene and prevent victimization in their school depends upon how they interpret peer interactions and their responsibilities for intervening (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2009).

1.6 The present study

School staff personnel play a critical role in addressing and preventing sexual victimization in school settings (Craig et al., 2011). Teachers are trained to recognize signs of victimization and assist students to report incidents of violence. The increasing awareness of the long lasting and detrimental consequences for experiencing sexual victimization in school setting have increased the need for establishing anti-violence and anti-bullying preventions programs to protect students' well-being (Duffy et al., 2004).

However, in spite of programs and school policies which address the importance of preventing school violence, several studies documented that educators failed to fulfill such obligations (AAUW, 2001; Shakeshaft, 2002). Many students continue to perceive school staff members as unresponsive and ineffective in responding to dangerous and intrusive situations, which further reinforces their reluctance to report sexual victimization. Craig and colleagues (2000) suggested that teachers' attitudes and beliefs concerning some aspects of victimization can contribute to understanding the severity of the situation and reflect their willingness to intervene. Little research has been done examining pre-service teachers' attitudes regarding sexual violence and the influence it has on their willingness to respond to students' disclosures of sexual victimization. Therefore, investigating the association between attitudes and readiness to intervene is of particular importance since these attitudes will later determine the effectiveness of pre-service teachers' interventions once entering the teaching profession. The present study also aims to investigate how pre-service teachers' experience with violence might affect their attitudes concerning victimization and decision to report violent acts among students.

It was proposed that previous experience with sexual violence serves as an important indicator for intervening violent behaviors at school. Craig et al., (2000) found that pre-service teachers' previous experiences of witnessing bullying increased their readiness to intervene and report peer victimization to designated authorities. Since pre-service teachers lack adequate experience and knowledge regarding school victimization, it would be of interest to investigate the degree to which personal experience with violence is related to their decisions to intervene and report the incidents to the designated authorities. Several studies documented that gender has an effect on individuals' attitudes and perceptions of sexual victimization. In particular, men were found to have more accepting attitudes and were less likely to find the event as intrusive and harming for the victim (Flood & Pease, 2009; Carolo, 2012). Thus, it is important to investigate whether similar patterns in attitudes and responses to victimization will be demonstrated among pre-services teachers and further influences their interpretation of the event and readiness to take appropriate measures. This will further assist developing and implementing more

effective training programs which will target common misconception and false beliefs about sexual violence.

The purpose of this study is to investigate pre-service teachers' individual characteristics and their influence on attitudes concerning sexual victimization. These characteristics are an important predictor for understanding how teacher in training will respond to violent situations. This study also aims to investigate how pre-service teachers' attitudes concerning various aspects of sexual violence will determine their interventions patterns. In particular, it was of interest to investigate whether more progressive attitudes towards sexual violence will result in more extreme venues of interventions. Areas of exploration included: pre-service teachers' previous experience (personal and professional) with respect to victimization and how it reflected on their attitudes; the extent to which previous experience influences pre-service teachers' choices of interventions; and the extent to which the gender of pre-service teachers influences their attitudes towards sexual violence and their concern regarding taking appropriate actions.

Research question

The current study investigates how gender and previous experience concerning sexual violence will influence pre-service teachers' attitudes and interventions patterns. It further examines to what extent attitudes concerning sexual violence will affect pre-service teachers' readiness to intervene following students disclosures of victimization.

Research hypotheses

Based on the findings from the literature review the following hypotheses have been made:

Hypothesis 1: It was predicted that that gender of a pre-service teacher will influence their attitude of and beliefs about sexual violence. In particular it was predicted that female participants will more likely to reject attitudes that minimize sexual violence compared to male participants.

Hypothesis 2: it was predicted that pre-service teachers' past experience with violence will influence their attitudes of and believes about sexual violence.

Hypothesis 2 part one: it was predicted that pre-service teachers who had previous personal experience with violence are more likely to reject attitudes that support myths about sexual violence.

Hypothesis 2 part two: it was predicted that pre-service teachers who had previous professional experience with violence are more likely to reject attitudes that support myths about sexual violence.

Hypothesis 3: It was predicted that pre-service teachers' attitudes will influence their response to cases of sexual violence involving students.

Hypothesis 3 part one: it was predicted that individuals who have more appropriate attitudes about sexual violence are more likely to have positive intervention responses to students' disclosures.

Hypothesis 3 part two: it was predicted that female pre-service teachers will more likely to have positive intervention responses to students' disclosures compared the male pre-service teachers.

Hypothesis 4: Pre-service teachers are more likely to intervene and report sexual violence incidents if they had previous experience with sexual violence. It is predicted that pre-service teachers who have more personal and professional past experience with violence are likely to intervene and report students' disclosure of sexual victimization

Chapter 2

2.1 Methodology

The current study used a questionnaire to measure pre-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs about sexual violence, as well as intervention behaviours in cases of students' disclosure of sexual victimization. The study used items from White Ribbon Campaign to measure participants' misconceptions about certain behaviours and situations that depict sexual victimization. Two case scenarios were developed in order to measure responses to disclosure of sexual victimization and pre-service teachers' reporting behaviour.

2.2 Participants

Participants in the current study included students enrolled in the Safe Schools course in the Faculty of Education, Western University in London, Ontario, Canada. Safe Schools is a course designed to help students develop the understanding and practical knowledge necessary to develop a safe and caring learning environment for all students, regardless of race, creed, ancestry, ability, colour, gender identification, or sexual orientation. Students in this course develop an understanding of current trends in school violence and critically examine comprehensive school violence prevention policies and programs in Ontario schools (for course description please see Appendix A). The course is an elective, taken by 500 out of the 700 potential students. The topic of our survey had not been covered at the time it was completed. Out of the 250 Bachelor of Education students who were enrolled in the Safe School course, 190 volunteered to participate in the survey; 35.8% (n=68) were male and 64.2% (n=122) were females, ranging from 21-52 years of age (mean=25.13, SD=5.32). Participants received a five-dollar gift certificate to the campus cafeteria for their participation.

2.3 Materials

The questions for the current survey were based on the White Ribbon Campaign: Ontario men's survey (Carolo, 2012), a wide world organization devoted to end violence against

women. The campaign examined men's attitudes of violence against women, behaviours that constitute violence against women, seriousness of situations, acceptability of certain behaviours, and reporting behaviours. A random sample of 1,064 men from 18 years of age and older participated in the fifteen minute telephone survey. The survey aimed to understand men's attitudes, to help inform, shape, and influence future behaviours (Carolo, 2012). Participants' responses were recorded on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The questions identified specific perceptions and attitudes towards sexual assault and rape, determined the extent to which behaviours and attitudes were changing, and identified venues to notify men and boys on the issue (Carolo, 2012).

Questions regarding attitudes towards sexual violence were taken from the pre-existing survey in order to enhance reliability of the data. Participants were asked to rate their attitudes towards violence and likelihood to take action when students disclosed victimization. Participants rated their responses on a Likert-type scale, with answers ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Participants' intervention and course of action was measured based on four scenarios. The current survey included a total of 49 items measuring participants' views regarding domestic and sexual violence. However, for the purpose of this study, questions evaluating participants' views of domestic violence were not used. For a list of the 16 items measuring participants' views of sexual items, please refer to the complete survey in Appendix B.

The current study also included 4 scenarios developed by the researchers. Two of the scenarios described incidents of domestic violence and two described incidents of sexual assault. The scenarios measured participants' likelihood to intervene in a variety of ways. Each scenario was followed by eight items, which measured participants' likelihood to intervene in the violent act in several different ways. Each answer was recorded on a 5 point, Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely). The answers included talking to the parents, notifying the principal, reporting to the police, gathering professional knowledge regarding violence at school, and dealing directly with the child

or other (no ratings were required for this answer). For the purpose of this study, scenarios describing incidents of domestic violence were not used (See Appendix B).

2.4 Procedure

Participants took part by completing a survey during their first week of the Safe Schools course. Participants were informed regarding the purpose of the study and ensured their anonymity and confidentiality. Participations were advised the study was voluntary and withdrawal at any point of the study would not affect their academic achievements (for a complete letter of information please see Appendix C). The survey took place at the Faculty of Education at the Western University; participants answered the survey in their classroom. The survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Debriefing was available in person or in writing via email correspondence after the completion of the survey.

2.5 Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted in order to examine participants' age, gender, stream of education, relationship status, and past experience with violence (personal and professional). Univariate analyses of variance, Independent-sample *t*-tests as well as chi-square analyses were conducted in order to measure pre-service teachers' attitudes, previous experience with violence and their reporting behavior. Pearson correlation coefficient analysis was performed in order to analyze the relationship between pre-service teachers' attitudes and their intervention responses.

Chapter 3

3 Results

For the purpose of this study we investigated items that measured pre-service teachers' attitudes towards sexual violence and their intentions to report incidents of sexual victimization.

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

Participants. Description of the sample is shown in Table 1. A sample of 190 pre-service teachers volunteered to complete the survey. The candidates were diverse in regards to their focus of pre-service training and education; primary/junior (27%); junior/intermediate (24%); and intermediate/senior (48%). Sixty percent of the pre-service teachers reported being single, 14% were married, 2% were divorced or separated, and 14% reported their relationship status as "other".

Seventy-nine percent of the participants indicated that they had previous personal experience with violence. Fourteen percent of pre-service teachers reported growing up with violence, 20% experienced violence as adults, and 40% indicated that they knew someone who experienced violence. Moreover, 25% reported having previous professional experience with violence. Six percent of pre-service teachers volunteered in crisis centers, 6% were part of club or activities group related to violence, 7% were part of violence prevention programs, and 14% provided counselling for individuals who experienced violence.

Table 1. *Description of the sample*

		n	%
Gender	Male	68	35.8
	Female	122	64.2
Stream of training	PJ	51	26.8
	JI	46	24.2
	IS	92	48.4
Relationship status	Single	114	60
	Married	26	13.7
	Common –in law	20	10.5
	Divorced or Separated	4	2.1
	Other	26	13.7
Previous personal experience with violence	Grew up with violence	26	13.7
	Experienced violence as adult	40	21.1
	Known someone	75	39.5
	Met someone who experienced violence	98	51.6
	No experience	38	20
	Don't wish to say	3	1.6
Previous professional experience with violence	Volunteered in crisis center	11	5.8
	Part of club or activities group	11	5.8
	Part of violence prevention group	13	6.8
	Counselled individual who experienced violence	24	12.6
	No experience	142	74.7
	Don't wish to say	1	0.5

Note: participants were able to choose more than one possible option for previous personal and professional experience

Attitudes concerning sexual violence. A summary of pre-services teachers' attitudes regarding sexual violence is reported in Table 2. Participants rated their attitudes regarding behaviours and situations that constitute sexual victimization. The following six items were reverse coded so that lower scores indicated more progressive attitudes towards sexual violence: a woman could say she was raped if she was pressured to have sex with a man while both were drunk, the use of pornography contributes to harmful attitudes towards women, both partners in a relationship are free to say if they don't want to have sex, it is important that a woman be as happy in a relationship as a man, men should never get their partners drunk to get them to have sex, and a man should not touch his partner unless they want to be touched. Item analysis was conducted on the 16 items hypothesized to measure pre-service teachers' attitudes towards sexual violence. The following three items were eliminated as they indicated low reliability levels: a woman could say she was raped if she pressured to have sex with a man while both were drunk, the use of pornography contributes to harmful attitudes towards women, it's possible for a women to be raped by someone she is in a relationship with. The alpha level for the new attitude scale was (.73).

Attitudes and gender. In order to accurately analyze the results in a meaningful manner, a composite score was created for the attitude scale. Scores ranged from 13-70 based on the 13 items on the 5-point scale; lower scores reflected more contemporary attitudes. One way between subject ANOVA was conducted to measure the difference between males and females in regards to their perceived attitudes toward sexual violence. In accordance with hypothesis one, a significant difference was found between males ($M=25.51, SD=5.99$) and females ($M=22.96, SD=4.99$) in regards to their perceived attitudes about and beliefs of sexual violence, $F(1,182)=9.36, p<.01$ Specifically, female pre-service teachers demonstrated more progressive attitudes towards sexual violence in comparison to male pre-service teachers.

Table 2. *Frequencies and percentage of attitudes towards sexual violence*

	Strongly disagree		Somewhat disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Somewhat agree		Strongly agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
If a women wears provocative clothing, she's responsible for being raped	156	82.1	15	7.9	16	8.4	3	1.6	0	0
When a woman says 'no' she often means 'yes'	122	64.2	33	17.4	23	12.1	8	4.2	3	1.6
A woman can say she was raped if was pressured to have sex with a man while both were drunk	44	23.2	59	31.1	39	20.5	30	15.8	15	7.9
When women talk and act sexy, they inviting rape	155	81.6	16	8.4	12	6.3	6	3.2	0	0
Men don't intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes can sexually carried away	69	36.3	34	17.9	50	26.3	31	16.3	6	3.2
If women cant try to stop you, she cant really say it was rape	84	44.2	44	23.2	31	16.3	25	13.2	6	3.2
The use of pornography, strip clubs, and the purchase of sex contribute to harmful attitude towards women	23	12.1	23	12.1	29	15.3	60	31.6	55	28.9
Rape victims are women who had sex and "changed their mind"	87	45.8	42	22.1	44	23.2	15	7.9	0	0
Sexual assault is less traumatic for experienced women	150	78.9	13	6.8	22	11.6	2	1.1	3	1.6
both partners have equal rights to initiate sex in a relationship	1	.5	1	.5	6	3.2	14	7.4	168	88.4
Both partners in a relationship are free to say if they don't want to have sex	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	2.6	185	97.4
It is important that a woman be as happy as a man in a relationship	1	.5	1	.5	3	1.6	10	5.3	175	92.1
It's a woman's job to bring up protection before sex	107	56.3	23	12.1	45	23.7	4	2.1	9	4.7
Its possible for a woman to get raped she's in a sexual relationship with	8	4.2	3	1.6	7	3.7	36	18.9	136	71.6
Men should never get their partner drunk to get them to have sex	3	1.6	10	5.3	18	9.5	29	15.3	129	67.9
A man should not touch his partner unless they want to be touched	1	.5	8	4.2	25	13.2	39	20.5	117	61.6

Note: N=190

Responses to scenario one. A summary of pre-service teachers' responses to students' disclosure of violence is shown in Table 3. Scenario one described a female student who disclosed that she was raped by another student attending her class, but did not report the incident to the police. The student also mentioned that she was explicitly asking her harasser to stop, but had difficulty in fighting back due to previous consumption of alcohol. The majority of pre-service teachers (96%) indicated that it was their duty to report this incident. Specifically, 94% of males and 98% percent of female indicated that they would report the incident. Supplementary cross tabulation analysis showed that there was no difference between males and females in regards to their believed responsibility in reporting the student's disclosure, $\chi^2 = (1, N=182) = 2.70, p = .10$

Table 3. *Frequencies and percentage underlying responses to case scenario one*

	Very likely n (%)	Somewhat likely n (%)	Neutral n(%)	Somewhat unlikely n(%)	Very unlikely n(%)
Talk to mother	93 (48.9)	52 (27.4)	27 (14.2)	8 (4.2)	9 (4.7)
Talk to father	80 (42.1)	52 (27.4)	34 (17.9)	12 (6.3)	11 (5.8)
Encourage to her to talk to parents	129 (67.9)	38 (20)	15 (7.9)	4 (2.1)	
Notify principal	153 (80.3)	22 (11.6)	10 (5.3)	2 (1.1)	3 (1.6)
Support her	176 (92.6)	11 (5.8)	1 (.5)	1 (.5)	
Find time in the next 2 days to talk to her (follow up)	170 (89.5)	13 (6.8)	4 (2.1)	0 (0)	2 (1.1)
Notify police	72 (37.9)	59 (31.1)	34 (17.9)	12 (6.3)	10 (5.3)
Seek professional development	129 (67.9)	42 (22.1)	12 (6.3)	4 (2.1)	2 (1.1)
Do nothing	3 (1.6)	4 (2.1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	175 (92.1)

Note: N=190

Responses to scenario two. Scenario two depicted a female student who was forced to have nude pictures taken of herself, which later were used by her peers as a constant reminder of her assault. The summary of pre-service teachers' responses to the student's disclosure is presented in Table 4. Ninety-seven percent of pre-service teachers believed that it was their duty to report the incident. Specifically, 97% of males and 98% percent of female indicated that they would report the student's disclosure. Supplementary cross tabulation analysis showed that there was no difference between males and females in regards to their believed responsibility in reporting the student's disclosure, $\chi^2(1, N=185)=.37, p=.54$

Table 4. *Frequencies and percentage underlying responses to case scenario two*

	Very likely n(%)	Somewhat likely n(%)	Neutral n(%)	Somewhat unlikely n(%)	Very unlikely n(%)
Talk to mother	110(57.9)	46(24.2)	17(8.9)	7(3.7)	8(4.2)
Talk to father	102 (53.7)	44 (23.2)	26 (13.7)	8 (4.2)	8 (0)
Encourage to her to talk to parents	137(72.1)	32(16.8)	13(6.8)	4(2.1)	2(1.1)
Notify principal	179(94.2)	10(5.3)	1(.5)	0(0)	0(0)
Support her	175 (92.1)	11 (5.8)	2 (1.1)	0(0)	0 (0)
Find time in the next 2 days to talk to her (follow up)	169(88.9)	13(6.8)	6(3.2)	0(0)	1(.5)
Notify police	101(53.2)	52(27.4)	23(12.1)	7(3.7)	5(2.6)
Seek professional development	135(71.1)	34(17.9)	16(8.4)	2(1.1)	2(1.1)
Do nothing	4(2.1)	7(3.7)	0(0)	0(0)	167(87.9)

Note: N=190

3.2 Positive interventions

In order to interpret pre-service teachers' intervention responses, a composite score for intervention responses was created using three forms of positive responses: notify the principal, notify the police, and follow up with the student. For each of the three chosen items, the responses were combined into likely to respond (very likely and somewhat likely) and unlikely to respond (very unlikely and somewhat unlikely). A composite score was then created for the three items ranging from 3 (very likely) to 6 (very unlikely). The composite score was created for participants who answered on all three items.

Positive responses to scenario one. Overall, 92% percent of pre-service teachers indicated that they would likely report the incident to the principal, 69% would likely to report it to the police, and 98% reported that they would follow up with the student. The average positive response for 145 participants was 3.15 ($SD=.397$).

Positive responses to scenario two. Ninety-nine percent of pre-service teachers indicated that they would likely to report the incident to the school principal, 80% would likely report the abuse to the police, and 96% reported that they would follow up with the student. The average positive response for 159 participants was 3.069 ($SD=.254$).

Gender and positive responses. One way between subjects ANOVAs were conducted in order to evaluate the difference between males and females in regards to their responses to students' disclosure. Gender differences were examined for each case scenario with positive intervention response. Contrary to hypothesis three part two, in case scenario one, the ANOVA analysis showed that there was no difference between males ($M=3.12$, $SD=.39$) and females ($M=3.13$, $SD=.39$) in regards to their positive intervention response, $F(1,143)=.84$, $p=.359$. Similarly, the ANOVA analysis showed that in case scenario two, no significant difference was found between males ($M=3.03$, $SD=.19$) and females ($M=3.08$, $SD=.28$) in regards to their positive intervention responses, $F(1,157)=1.21$, $p=.27$.

Positive responses and attitudes toward sexual violence. Correlational analyses were conducted in order to measure the relationship between pre-service teachers' attitudes and their responses to students' disclosures in each case scenario. In accordance with hypothesis three part one, the analysis showed that the correlation between attitudes and positive intervention responses in case scenario one was significant, $r(137)=.183, p<.05$. That is, pre-service teachers who had less accepting attitudes were more likely to have positive intervention responses. However, for case scenario two, the relationship between pre-service teachers' attitudes and their positive intervention responses was not significant, $r(152)=.053, p=.51$. (See Table 5)

Table 5. Attitudes*positive intervention responses to case scenarios

	Mean	Std. Deviation	R
Attitudes	23.84	5.48	.183*
Case scenario 3	3.15	.39	
Attitudes	23.84	5.48	.053
Case scenario 4	3.07	.25	

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

3.3 Past personal experience

In order to accurately analyze the results, an overall *yes* or *no* score was created for past personal experience. Responses to items such as experiencing violence as adults, growing up with violence, and knowing someone close who experienced violence, were collapsed into a *yes* response to past personal experience. Responses to items such as met someone who experience violence, no experience, and don't wish to say were collapsed into a *no* response for not having past personal experience with violence. The item 'meeting someone who experienced violence' was excluded from the analysis since the impact of such exposure on the participant is broad and unclear. Seventy-nine percent of pre-service teachers reported having past personal experience with violence. Supplementary cross tabulation analysis indicated that no differences were found between males and

females in regards to their past personal experience with violence, $\chi^2(1, N=190)=.014$, $p=.907$ (See Table 6).

Table 6. *Gender*Past personal experience*

	Gender		X^2
	Male	Female	
	(%)	(%)	
Yes	79	78	.014
No	21	22	

Past personal experience and attitudes. An independent *t*-test was conducted in order to measure the relationship between participants' past personal experience and their attitudes towards sexual violence. Contrary to hypothesis two part one, the analysis revealed that having past personal experience ($M=23.7$, $SD=5.46$) and having no past personal experience ($M=24.33$, $SD=5.56$), did not significantly impact participants' attitudes towards sexual violence, $t(181)=.64$, $p=.53$.

Past personal experience and responses to case scenarios. One way between subjects ANOVA's were conducted in order to evaluate the impact of participants' past personal experience with violence on positive intervention responses in each case scenario. Contrary to hypothesis four part one, in scenario one, the ANOVA analysis showed that past personal experience with violence did not have an effect on pre-service teachers' positive intervention response. Specifically, having past personal experience ($M=3.15$, $SD=.38$) and no past personal experience with violence ($M=3.16$, $SD=.47$), did not significantly impact the composite score of positive intervention response, $F(1,143)=.013$, $P=.91$. Similarly, in case scenario two, the ANOVA analysis revealed that having past personal experience with violence ($M=3.06$, $SD=.24$) and no past personal experience with violence ($M=3.09$, $SD=.29$) did not significantly affect the composite score of positive intervention response, $F(1,157)=.302$, $p=.58$.

3.4 Past professional experience

As with past personal experience, responses to past professional experience were collapsed into an overall score of *yes* or *no* responses. Responses to items such as volunteering at a crisis centre, being part of a club or activist group that prevents violence, being part of prevention program, and having counselled individuals who experienced violence were collapsed into a *yes* response to having past professional experience. Responses to items such as “no experience” and “don’t wish to say” were collapsed into a *no* response for not having past professional experience with violence. Only 25% of pre-service teachers reported having past professional experience with violence. Supplementary cross tabulation analysis showed no differences between males and females in regards to their past professional experience with violence, $\chi^2 (1, N=190)=.08, p=.77$ (See Table 7).

Table 7. *Gender*Past professional experience*

	Gender		X^2
	Male	Female	
	(%)	(%)	
Yes	24	25	.08
No	76	75	

Past professional experience and attitude. An independent *t*-test was conducted in order to measure the impact of participants’ previous professional experience with violence on their attitudes towards sexual violence. The analysis revealed that having past professional experience ($M=25.78, SD=6.31$) and no past professional experience ($M=23.20, SD=5.04$) significantly impacted participants’ attitudes towards sexual violence, $t(181)=-2.79, p<.01$. Contrary to hypothesis two part two, these results indicate

that pre-service teachers with past professional experience reported less progressive attitudes in regards to sexual violence.

Past professional experience and responses to case scenarios. One way between subjects ANOVA's were conducted in order to evaluate the effect of participants' past professional experience on positive intervention responses in each case scenario. In accordance to hypothesis four, in case scenario one, the ANOVA analysis showed that having past professional experience ($M=3.03$, $SD=.17$) and no past professional experience ($M=3.19$, $SD=.44$), significantly impacted positive intervention responses, $F(1,143)=4.80$, $p=.03$. That is, pre-service teachers' who had past professional experience reported to have more positive intervention responses. However, in case scenario two, the ANOVA analysis indicated that having past professional experience with violence ($M=3.05$, $SD=.23$) and no past professional experience with violence ($M=3.07$, $SD=.26$), did not significantly affect positive intervention responses, $F(1,157)=.210$, $p>.05$

Chapter 4

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to investigate which attitudes pre-service teachers' hold in regards to sexual violence, as well as their reporting behaviours in cases of students' disclosure of sexual victimization. A questionnaire was used to examine the extent to which pre-service teachers' gender, previous experience with and beliefs about sexual violence impact their likelihood to intervene in cases of students' disclosures of sexual victimization.

Results from 190 pre-service teachers from Western University were analyzed and demonstrated that, in general, students hold progressive and sensitive attitudes about sexual violence, and take their reporting responsibilities seriously. They appeared to be aware of the degree to which behaviours and situations constituted sexual victimization and showed intolerance towards such cases. The students were also aware of their duty to report cases of sexual victimization, and in general had positive interventions responses which included reporting it to the police, the principal, and to follow up with the victim. Contrary to hypothesis three part two, male and female pre-service teachers did not differ in their assumed responsibility to report the incidents. However, a small but significant difference was found between genders in regards to their beliefs about sexual violence.

It was observed that previous experience with violence had an impact on pre-service teachers' intervention responses, as well as attitudes towards sexual violence. Pre-service teachers who had previous professional experience with violence indicated a strong likelihood to respond to cases of sexual victimization. Previous personal experience with violence, however, did not affect their likelihood to intervene and respond to cases of sexual victimization. In terms of pre-service teachers previous experience with violence and attitudes about sexual victimization, the analyses showed that past professional experience significantly impacted students' beliefs of and attitudes towards sexual misconduct. Students who had professional experience with violence had less progressive attitudes about sexual violence. On the other hand, personal experience with violence did

not have an effect on students' attitudes. It is important to indicate that although the results showed a significant impact in terms of pre-service teachers' professional experience and their presumed attitudes towards sexual victimization, it did not negatively influence their likelihood to report cases of sexual victimization. The implications of these results will be discussed later in the paper.

4.1 Differences between gender of pre-service teachers and their attitudes towards sexual victimization.

The majority of pre-service teachers held progressive attitudes toward sexual violence. They rejected many statements that depicted sexual victimization across different situations. This included statements regarding women's provocative clothing and sexually inviting behaviour, getting the partner drunk in order to have sex, sexual victimization in a relationship, considering the abuse to be sexually in nature only if tried to prevent it, and when a women say "no" they often mean "yes".

Based on the results from the *White Ribbon Campaign* (Carolo, 2012), which evaluated Ontario men's attitudes and reporting behaviour regarding violence against women, it was predicated that male pre-service teachers would hold similar progressive attitudes toward sexual assault, which was evident in the current findings. Similar to the *White Ribbon Campaign* findings, the majority of male pre-service teachers did not believe that when a woman acts and talks sexy she is inviting rape (90%), or that if a woman wears provocative clothing she is responsible for being assaulted (94%). Male pre-service teachers' attitudes were congruent with those of the men in Carolo's study in that they endorsed women's right to be as happy in a relationship as men, to equally initiate sex, and not to touch the partner unless they want to be touched. As with the *White Ribbon Campaign* results, variance in male pre-service teachers' responses to their attitudes towards sexual violence was found in regards to when a woman can say she was raped, and men's tendency to sometimes be sexually carried away. Specifically, only 36% of male pre-service teachers disagreed with the statement that men often don't intend to force sex, but can sometime be carried away. Twenty-three percent indicated that they don't agree that a woman can be pressured to have sex if both were drunk.

Major findings from the current study suggest that even though the majority of pre-service teachers were sensitive in their beliefs towards sexual victimization, female pre-service teachers demonstrated more progressive attitudes than male pre-service teachers. These results have implications in regards to pre-service teachers' sensitivity to recognize incidents of sexual victimization once they enter their career placements. For male pre-service teachers these results suggest that they may not understand the true extent of how their attitudes might affect their interpretation of the situation, and ultimately their responses to sexual victimization. In spite of this variation in attitudes it is worth noting that overall men had scores all in the positive direction and over 95% indicated that they would intervene. Educators are at the front line for creating safe and supportive learning environments for their students. To maintain such an obligation, further training and education for pre-service teachers is fundamental. Increasing pre-service teachers' awareness in regards to the detrimental effects of sexual victimization on students (Holt et al., 2007; Duffy et al., 2004; McMaster et al., 2002; Bogin, 2006) will further assist in recognizing risk factors and administering prevention programs.

4.2 Experience with violence and attitudes towards sexual victimization.

Pre-service teachers' previous personal experience with violence was not found to have a significant impact on their attitudes and beliefs about sexual victimization. These results do not reflect the existing research emphasizing the importance of pre-service teachers' training and experience with violence (Craig et al., 2000; Craig et al., 2011). Specifically, it was documented that pre-service teachers who had previous personal experience with violence would express more sensitivity and empathy, and would be more likely to identify violent situations (Mishna & Alaggia, 2005). Thus, the findings of past studies suggest that pre-service teachers' personal experience with violence is an important indicator for their attitudes toward violence which would further assist them to recognize signs of victimization.

The nature of the current findings implies that pre-service teachers' views regarding sexual victimization were not affected by their personal experiences with violence. One possible explanation of these findings could be the nature of pre-service teachers' personal experience with violence. According to the data, the majority of pre-service

teachers (52%) indicated that they have met someone who experienced violence or knew someone close who was previously exposed to violence (40%). In comparison, only 21% of pre-service teachers indicated that they had an experience with violence as adults and 13% reported that they grew up with violence. The results seem clear; there was no relationship between pre-service teachers' personal experience with violence and their attitudes towards sexual victimization. However, what remains of interest here are the variables that have not been measured. Specifically, how was the experience with violence supported or processed, what was the response of individuals around them to the violence, was there a socialization effect? It could be that asking the right questions is just as much as having connections between personal experience with violence and attitudes towards sexual victimization.

Additional research is needed in order to assess the impact of personal exposure to violence on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards sexual victimization. It is important to include more specific questions that would measure the exposure of personal experience with violence and its contribution to pre-service teachers' understanding of its impact. It is also important to investigate if such exposure increases their confidence in recognizing incidents of sexual victimization in school or whether it inhibits their perception due to personal biases or traumas.

Furthermore, contrary to the predicted hypothesis two part two, pre-service teachers' previous professional experience with violence negatively affected their attitudes towards sexual victimization. That is, pre-service teachers who had previous professional experience with violence were less sensitive in their beliefs towards sexual victimization. This is an important finding particularly since it contradicts the existing research addressing the significant impact that professional experience has on pre-service teachers' attitudes and responses to school violence. According to the literature, pre-service teachers' who were exposed to previous violence prevention programs expressed more confidence in recognizing and responding to violent situations (Craig et al., 2011). The implications of these studies suggest that previous exposure to violence prevention training programs should increase pre-service teachers' awareness and progressive attitudes towards victimization.

One possible explanation for the current results is that previous professional exposure to violence might indirectly contribute to teachers' increased desensitization towards peer victimization, and in turn, result in inaccurate interpretation of violent situation (Stone & Couch, 2005). It is also important to notice that only a small percentage of pre-service teachers (25%) reported having past professional experience with violence. Specifically, 7% reported being part of violence intervention groups, and 13% indicated that they had counselling experience with individuals who experienced violence; in comparison to the 75% who indicated having no professional experience with violence. Furthermore, it is unclear whether pre-service teachers' previous professional experience with violence was related to children and adolescents, as such experiences could contribute to different attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual victimization. Peer sexual victimization can take numerous forms and have a detrimental effect on students' educational, emotional and psychological experiences (Holt et al., 2007; Duffy et al., 2004; McMaster et al., 2002; Bogin, 2006).

These findings can also be attributed to compassion fatigue, which is described as feeling mentally exhausted or overwhelmed due to the continues involvement in an emotionally demanding situation (Udipi, Veach, Kao & LeRoy, 2008). According to this concept, it is possible that pre-service teachers' previous professional experience with violence manifested into feeling overwhelmed by caring about individuals' traumatic experiences and feeling of detachment, consequently affecting their overall attitudes toward sexual violence. Additional research is needed to understand the true extent of compassion fatigue on teachers' perceptions and responses to students' sexual victimization.

It is also of particular importance to understand the extent of pre-service teachers' training and knowledge regarding students' experiences with violence, especially sexual violence. Specifically, understand that not only the lack of proper professional training can affect pre-service teachers' attitudes towards sexual victimization, but it can also significantly impact their identification of and proper responses to incidents of violence in school (Craig et al., 2000; Craig et al., 2011).

Stone and Couch (2004) reported that teachers who received proper training prior to entering educational setting, were more confident in identifying signs of peer sexual

harassment, expressed more empathy, and would take more positive actions to stop the harassing behaviour. It is important to indicate that although pre-service teachers' professional experience was found to have an effect on their attitudes toward sexual victimization, it was reported as minor. Therefore, it is crucial that additional research be conducted to evaluate pre-service teachers' past professional experience and their attitudes toward sexual violence in more detail. Specifically, by evaluating the length of time involved in past professional experiences, the duties they completed during their past experiences, and the populations they have been exposed to.

Gender differences in regards to pre-service teachers' experience with violence and its impact on their attitudes were not observed. This finding indicates that although a variance in pre-service teachers' gender was found in regarding to overall attitudes towards sexual victimization; it was not directly affected by their subjective experience with violence. Additional research into gender differences in regards to pre-service teachers' experience and perceived attitudes is essential. As suggested by Craig and colleagues (2000), variance in teachers' attitudes towards victimization can be partly explained by variation in feelings of empathy. Since female teachers were found to score higher on their expressed feelings of empathy and have more progressive attitudes toward victimization, it would be interesting to investigate whether this factor can also affect female teachers' experiences and their perceived attitudes.

4.3 Pre-service teachers' intervention responses.

Duty to report. The majority of pre-service teachers reported that they felt responsible to report students' disclosures, and intervene in hypothetical case scenarios. Their response is consistent with provincial legislation which mandates reporting of student violence and abuse which may affect student well-being (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014). *Bill 157* (which came into force February, 2010) emphasizes school staff and principals' obligation to report behaviours that negatively affected students and school climate. *Bill 13*, the Accepting School Act, (which came into force September, 2012), explains principals' responsibility to investigate serious and inappropriate incidents and notify parents of students who have been engaged in such behaviours, for which they can be suspended or expelled (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2014). Thus, even though it was

reported that female pre-service teachers held more progressive attitudes towards sexual violence compared to male pre-service teachers, they did not differ in their presumed responsibility of reporting victimization. Contrary to previous studies which showed that teachers' attitudes can serve as an important predictor and reflect the rate in which they will choose to intervene and report incidents of victimization (Craig et al., 2000), the results of the current study suggest that regardless of pre-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs about sexual victimization, they will not choose to ignore it.

Positive intervention responses and attitudes. Overall, pre-service teachers held progressive and sensitive attitudes about sexual violence and took their reporting responsibilities seriously as indicated by their responses to hypothetical scenarios. The majority of pre-service teachers foster positive responses toward intervening cases of students' sexual victimization. For both case scenarios, over 90% of pre-service teachers indicated that they would report the incident to the school principal. Small variance in pre-service teachers' responses was observed in reporting the case to the police. In case scenario one, which describes forced sexual behaviour, only 70% indicated that they would report the victimization to the police compared to 80% in scenario two which described more ambiguous case of sexual victimization. Over 95% indicated that they would follow up with the victim in both case scenarios. These results imply that overall, pre-service teachers held very positive responses of intervening, especially through reporting it to the school principal and following up with the student.

These results support the existing research showing how individuals' intentions to intervene in incidents of sexual victimization are related to their perceived attitudes towards sexual violence (Newman & Murray, 2005; Craig et al., 2000; Craig et al., 2011). These studies explain that individuals who foster more accepting attitudes of sexual victimization are more likely to minimize the severity of the situation, blame the victim, and excuse the harasser from responsibility (Ben-David & Schneider, 2005; Frese et al., 2004). These attitudes further impact individuals' decisions to intervene and report victimization to the designated authorities (i.e., police). Frese and colleagues (2004) indicated that individuals who have more accepting rape myth attitudes are less likely to perceive acquaintance rape as a severe form of sexual victimization due to the victim's

proximity to her harasser. In accordance with these attitudes, rape and sexual assault is less likely to be reported to the police if the incidents happened by an intimate partner or acquaintance as opposed to a stranger (Frese et al., 2004).

Furthermore, Craig and colleagues (2000) also support this notion, and point out that teachers' beliefs about violence, in particular bullying, reflects the rate to which they would intervene and report violent situation. Specifically, the likelihood of teachers and school personnel to intervene and prevent victimization depends upon how they interpret the seriousness of the situations and attribute responsibility (Newman & Murray, 2005). In accordance with these findings, the results of the current study showed that pre-service teachers who held more progressive attitudes towards sexual violence reported to have more positive intervention responses, specifically in the case scenario that depicted disclosure of forced sexual behaviour.

In general, the results of the current study showed that pre-service teachers tend to have less tolerance towards sexual victimization and tend to have higher rates of intervention and reporting behaviour compared to the report from the general population (Baslie et al., 2007; Tavera, 2006; Baker et al., 2012). A possible explanation for this trend could be partly due to the caring and sensitive nature of educators as a profession. Teachers are more likely to express empathy and compassion towards students' needs and well-being compared to the general population (Craig et al., 2000). Furthermore, it was documented that higher levels of education were positively correlated with attitudes towards violence against women (Flood & Peace, 2009). Therefore, it is expected that pre-service teachers who have previous educational background will foster more progressive attitudes towards sexual violence, and thus have more positive intentions to report the incidents. It is also possible that pre-service teachers' response rate was more related to social desirability effect rather than presumed attitudes towards sexual victimization. Therefore, additional research should be conducted to evaluate pre-service teachers' social desirability and its effect on their likelihood to intervene in situations of victimization.

Positive intervention responses and past experience. Based on the study conducted by Craig and colleagues (2000) pre-service teachers who had more exposure to past professional and personal experience with sexual violence were expected to have higher

rates of positive intervention responses. However, contrary to this prediction, a significant effect of previous personal experience on pre-service teachers' intervention responses was not evident. Past professional experience, on the other hand, was found to have a significant effect on pre-service teachers' intervention responses in a scenario dealt with a student being raped.

These results are of particular interest since previous analyses yield a negative association between pre-service teachers' past professional experience and its impact on their attitudes towards sexual violence. It is possible that perhaps the severity of this situation outweighed the impact of their attitudes. Behre, Astor and Meyer (2001) explained that teachers' readiness to intervene relates to their perceived professional role and interpretation of the harassing behaviour. Thus, it is possible that pre-service teachers were more inclined to perceive a rape situation as more severe and damaging to the victim compared to sexually harassing behaviour through pictures. Pre-service teachers' decisions to intervene could be partly explained due to their insufficient past professional experience with youth, which was not measured in the current study. Therefore, it is possible that their attitudes, and ultimately intentions to intervene, would change if the harassing behaviour involves youth and children. Lastly, it is suggested that following the increased awareness and implementation of school policies, violence prevention programs, and public service announcements, pre-service teachers' were well aware of their obligation to report the victimization, regardless of their overall attitudes towards sexual violence.

Limitations

The results of the present study indicate that overall pre-service teachers had progressive attitudes towards sexual violence and were inclined to report situations of sexual victimization compared to the general population. It is possible that the results of the present study were partly due to nature of the questions and the product of social desirability. Specifically, it is possible that pre-service teachers' answers depicted the 'right' answer instead of an answer that would truly demonstrate their core beliefs and attitudes towards sexual violence. Since the current questionnaire did not include

questions measuring social desirability, it would be interesting to investigate whether pre-service teachers' would provide similar responses and intentions to report the incident of sexual victimization on a questionnaire that did incorporate a social desirability measure. It is also possible that the nature of the scenarios did not accurately portray the severity of both situations. Pre-service teachers may have clear understanding regarding the severity of rape; however, they were less clear in regards to the perceived seriousness of taking nude pictures. Moreover, it is also essential to investigate whether pre-service teachers would respond in the same manner if the scenarios described similar situations, however varied in terms of the victim's gender. Finally, pre-service teachers are assumed to enter educational program with academic background, and in some cases prior professional experiences. However, most of the pre-service teachers may not have the skills and personal experience in terms of encountering situations of sexual victimization in professional settings. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate whether pre-service teachers' Self-reported positive intentions would translate into doing the right thing in a real life situation.

Chapter 5

5 Conclusion

Sexual violence is a significant public health problem. In spite of its prevalence and severe implications only about half of all victims of sexual victimization report the crimes committed on them. Over the past few years there has been a rapid increase in public awareness and education regarding the consequences of sexual violence. This includes but is not limited to violence prevention programs, public announcements, victim support groups, and changes in the criminal justice system (Baker et al., 2012; Basile et al., 2007). It has been suggested that in order to understand underlying explanations for the rate of underreported cases of sexual victimization, it is crucial to review public's overall attitudes towards sexual violence (Baker et al., 2012). Numerous studies found attitudes which support sexual victimization are mostly likely to affect the way individuals perceive the severity of the abuse, attribute responsibility to the victim, and excuse the perpetrator (Ben-David & Schneider, 2005; Frese et al., 2004). It was also suggested that males are more likely to foster these attitudes and therefore are more prone to underestimate the severity of the situation (Flood & Pease, 2009; Civilletto, 2004).

The increase in legal and public awareness of sexual violence and the attitudes that contribute to its prevalence supported an expansion of education and training for the general population, specifically, teachers. Currently there is a focus to increase teachers' awareness regarding peer victimization, its consequences and prevention strategies. Teachers are now provided with specific training programs that stress the importance of recognizing signs of victimization and responding to known or suspected cases of students' sexual victimization (Stone & Couch, 2004). Therefore, it is not surprising that the results of the present study suggest that pre-service teachers foster very progressive attitudes toward sexual violence and reporting.

Overall the results showed in spite of the variation between male and female pre-service teachers, the students hold progressive and sensitive attitudes about sexual violence. Moreover, they hold very positive intervention responses in regards to students' cases of sexual victimization and thus take their reporting responsibility very seriously. These

results suggest that pre-service teachers are more progressive in their beliefs toward sexual violence and their intentions of reporting incidents, than the general population. Although further investigation is needed to address the implication of this study, it is suggested that pre-service teachers' attitudes and reporting behaviour should be further addressed in the field of education. By addressing these issues and recognizing its impact on students' intervention behavior, it is possible that there could be an increase in reporting incidents of sexual victimization as students will increase their confidence in recognizing and labelling harassing behaviours. Specifically, pre-service teachers may foster the knowledge and intention to report cases of sexual victimization; however, they may require the practical skills to address these concerns with students and reporting the incidents to the appropriate authorities such as the police.

although an extensive training and education is provided to teachers prior to entering school setting, it has been found that some teachers remain unclear in regards to their professional role and responsibilities dealing with cases of students' victimization (Newman & Murray, 2005; Shakeshaft, 2002). Thus, it is important to investigate what occurs between the times that they are taking part in their educational programs to the time that they have a career as a teacher, which put a strain on their reporting behavior.

5.1 Future direction

The present study examined pre-service teachers' attitudes and the impact it has on their likelihood to report incidents of sexual violence and peer victimization. Given the findings of the current study which reflect the progressive attitudes and positive intervention responses, it is essential to determine how such views are being implied in practice and what might inhibit pre-service teachers to implement their positive intention to report peer victimization. Understanding these discrepancies may contribute to implementation of better training programs for pre-service teachers prior to their chosen educational practice. These programs should also target pre-service teachers' attitudes that contribute to the formation of their decision to respond to students' disclosures. As was previously mentioned, these attitudes significantly contribute to individuals' perception of sexual violence and interpretation of the abuse. Therefore, pre-service teachers should be provided with opportunities to develop confidence in recognizing and

managing harassing behaviour early in their teacher-training program. Specifically, it is recommended that teacher preparation programs include training on the prevalence, types, and impact of sexual victimization, in addition to effective prevention and intervention strategies.

It is also essential to target pre-service teachers' previous experience with violence and the impact it has on their presumed sensitivity towards understanding the implications of school violence. Given the importance identified in previous research regarding the role of previous professional and personal experience in increasing sensitivity in teachers (Craig et al., 2000; Craig et al., 2011), violence prevention programs in educational programs should examine the option of delivering course content that targets the examination of pre-service teachers' prior experiences and its implications on their perception of sexual violence.

In spite of inability to control pre-service teachers' socially desirable responding, the results of the present study contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the fields of sexual violence and education. The results provide an insight into pre-service teachers' perceived attitudes and reporting responsibilities. The results also stress the gap between pre-service teachers' preferred reporting behaviour and the reporting behavior by practicing teachers. Therefore, it is imperative that future research be conducted in regards to the factors that influence teacher reporting of sexual violence, specifically peer victimization.

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Appendix A

Safe Schools EDU 5434S - A course designed to help students develop the understanding and practical knowledge necessary to develop a safe and caring learning environment for all students, regardless of race, creed, ancestry, ability, colour, gender identification, or sexual orientation. Students in this course will develop an understanding of current trends in school violence and critically examine comprehensive school violence prevention policies & programs in Ontario schools.

Appendix B

VIOLENCE SURVEY

Background

1. Are you: Male Female
2. How old are you? _____
3. Which stream are you in? PJ JI IS
4. Are you a parent? : No Yes (if yes, age of oldest child _____)
5. What is your relationship status?
 - Single
 - Married
 - Common-law
 - Divorced or separated
 - other
6. What is your personal experience with violence? (Check all that apply)
 - Grew up with violence in my family
 - Have experienced violence as an adult (e.g., workplace, intimate relationship, school)

- Know someone close to me that has experienced violence / abuse
- Have met someone that has experienced violence / abuse

7. What is your professional experience with violence? (Check all that apply)

- Have volunteered at a crisis centre (e.g., help hotline, victim services, CAS, Kids Help Phone)
- Have been part of a club or activist group that prevented violence and related issues
- Have been part of a violence prevention program
- Have counselled (job or volunteer... don't count family or friends) an individual who has experienced violence

My Views

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.

strongly disagree somewhat disagree neither agree nor disagree somewhat agree strongly agree

- | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Domestic violence can happen in any family, regardless of cultural background or economic situation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Violence against women and girls is a concern to me | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Violence against women and girls affects all women including women I care about in my life | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Sexist, violent language and the sexualization of women in media and popular culture helps to normalize violence against women | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Most women could leave a violent relationship if they really wanted to | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the family | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.

When would you consider the following to be forms of domestic violence?

always sometimes never

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 7. One partner pushes the other to cause harm or fear | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|

8. One partner makes the other have sex with them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. One partner tries to scare or control the other by threatening to hurt them or other family members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. A parent slaps their child across the face because the child did something wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. One partner yells at the other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. One partner puts the other down and tries to make them feel bad about themselves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. One partner prevents another from seeing family and friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. One partner tries to control the other by withholding money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.

<i>How serious is each one of these situations?</i>	very serious	quite serious	not that serious	not at all serious
15. One partner pushes the other to cause harm or fear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. One partner makes the other have sex with them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. One partner tries to scare or control the other by	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

threatening to hurt them or other family members				
18. A parent slaps their child across the face because the child did something wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. One partner yells at the other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. One partner puts the other down and tries to make them feel bad about themselves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. One partner prevents another from seeing family and friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. One partner tries to control the other by withholding money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.

Some people believe that is acceptable under certain circumstances to physically assault their wife, partner or girlfriend. In which of the following circumstances do you think a man has a right to do this to his spouse or partner. If she...

always sometimes never

	acceptable	acceptable	acceptable
23. Argues or refuses to obey him	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Doesn't keep up with domestic chores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Refuses to have sex with him	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Admits to having sex with another man	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Makes him look stupid or insults him in front of his friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Does something to make him angry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Imagine that you became aware that a family member or close friend of yours was currently a victim of domestic abuse.					
29. How likely are you to intervene in any way at all?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<i>For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.</i>	Yes	No	Don't Know
30. In the past year, have you ever witnessed a man using abusive or harassing behavior towards a woman in a social environment such as a pub, club or party?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Did you act on witnessing this abuse or harassment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. If yes you acted, did you do any of the following?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A- Thought to yourself that what the man did was wrong	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B- Said or did something to challenge the man's behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C- Checked with the victim to see if she was okay or needed help	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D- Reported the incident to the police	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
E- Did not get involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. If you chose not to get involved, what was the main reason?			
A- Didn't know how to respond	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
B- Didn't want to get involved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
C- Was concerned about personal safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
F- Felt that it was a personal matter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
G- Thought someone else would intervene	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
H- Don't know	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I- If other please specify:			

<i>For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.</i>	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree nor disagree	somewhat agree	strongly agree
34. If a woman wears provocative clothing, she's responsible for being raped	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. Women often say 'no' when they mean 'yes'	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36. A woman could say she was raped if she was pressured to have sex with a man while both were drunk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37. When women talk and act sexy, they are inviting rape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. If a woman doesn't try to stop you, she cant really say it was rape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. The use of pornography, strip clubs, and the purchase of sex (prostitution) contribute to harmful attitudes towards women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41. Many so-called rape victims are actually women who had sex and "changed their minds" afterwards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42. Sexual assault is less traumatic for a woman who is more sexually experienced	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.

	strongly disagree	somewhat disagree	neither agree nor disagree	somewhat agree	strongly agree
43. Both partners in a relationship have the right to initiate sex equally provided there is consent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
43. Both partners in a relationship are free to say if they don't want sex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
44. It is important that a woman be as happy as a man in a sexual relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
45. It's a woman's job to bring up protection before sex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
46. It's possible for a woman to be raped by someone she is in a sexual relationship with	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
47. Men should never get their partners drunk to get them to have sex	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
48. A man should not touch his partner unless they want to be touched	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Case Examples

1. You assigned a poetry project in your grade 9 English class where the students were asked to free write an original poem on a topic of their choice. While reading Elizabeth's poem you became quite concerned regarding the content. She wrote a very detailed and dark poem about a young girl living in an angry and violent home. The poem made reference to parents fighting, violence, depressed feelings, and fear. After handing back the assignments you approached Elizabeth at the end of class to ask her about her poem. You tell her that you are concerned about her because of the content of her poem and asked her if there was anything going on at home that she would like to talk about and she replied "no, perfect families do not exist, they all have their problems," and then she hurried out of class.

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?

Yes	No	Don't Know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How likely are you to do each of the following?

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Talk to Elizabeth's mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Talk to Elizabeth's father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage Elizabeth to talk to her parents about her feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notify the principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Elizabeth on an ongoing basis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Call the Children's Aid Society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notify the police	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seek professional development to learn more about children exposed to domestic violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make a follow up appointment to talk with Elizabeth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do nothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify)

2. Dean, a grade 2 student of yours, frequently has been asking you if he and his younger sister can stay in your classroom to clean up. He is worried about going home and when you inquire further he gets angry and closes himself off. He will regularly ask you during the day if he can “check up” on his little sister in the kindergarten class. He doesn’t have many, if any friends his own age. When you asked the class to draw a family portrait, you were alarmed because he portrayed his father holding a beer and with an angry expression. He portrayed his mother with a sad face and with a dark or perhaps “black” eye. He drew himself and his sister between his two parents with sad faces.

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?

Yes

No

Don't
Know

How likely are you to do each of the following?

Very
likely

Somewhat
likely

Neutral

Somewhat
unlikely

Very
unlikely

Talk to Dean's mother

Talk to Dean's father

Encourage Dean to talk to his parents about his feelings

Notify the principal

Support Dean on an ongoing basis

Call the Children's Aid Society

Notify the police

Seek professional development to learn more about children exposed to domestic violence

Make a follow up appointment to talk with Dean	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do nothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)					

3. Your grade 10 student Dianna always appeared friendly, outgoing and did well in your math class since the start of the year. Lately you notice her grades have begun to drop and she appears anxious and easily agitated. She reacted with a great deal of anger when a male student bumped into her by accident in class. You have been worried about her recent changes and decided to inquire about the reasons for her behaviour. When you asked Dianna to tell you if something has been bothering her, she told you that Ryan, a student she knows from her chemistry class had forced her to have sexual intercourse with him. She disclosed that things got out of hand when he came back to her home after the party they both attended. She kept telling him NO but she had a few drinks and was unable to fight back. Dianna admitted that she did not report the incident because she was embarrassed to tell what happened to her and also because she feared people would not believe her since she was drinking and was seen flirting with Ryan.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How <u>likely</u> are you to do each of the following?	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Talk to Dina's mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Talk to Dina's father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage Dina to talk to her parents about her feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notify the principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Dina on an ongoing basis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Find time within the next day or two to check up with Dianna	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notify the police	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Seek professional development to learn more about youth exposed to sexual violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do nothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)					

4. Britney, your grade 9 student, told you about her friend Joanna who was recently sexually assaulted by the captain of the football team. Joanna was pressured to take off her clothes and take nude pictures with other members of the football team. She was threatened that the pictures would be uploaded on the internet and the school's website if she reported the incident to the police or other authorities. After the incident, Joanna received numerous emails from unknown senders reminding her of the assault and telling her how they enjoyed seeing her naked.

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?	Yes	No	Don't Know
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How likely are you to do each of the following?	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Talk to Joanna's mother	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Talk to Joanna's father	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourage Joanna to talk to her parents about her feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notify the principal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Find time within the next day or two to check up with Joanna	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support Joanna on an ongoing basis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Notify the police	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Seek professional development to learn more about youth exposed to sexual violence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do nothing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)					

Appendix C

Pre-Service Teachers' Beliefs of Domestic Violence

LETTER OF INFORMATION

You are being invited to participate in a study to investigate the factors that influence reporting behaviours of incidents of domestic violence exposure. Approximately 250 B.Ed. students are being asked to participate.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning of the Safe Schools course in class. Adequate time will be given during class to complete the survey. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions about your views of domestic violence, how you would respond to a few different scenarios, and some background information. The background information includes a few questions on your experiences with domestic violence in order to evaluate how personal experience may affect attitudes and awareness.

Do not write your name on the questionnaire. The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and no identifying information will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. All of the questionnaires will be secured safely in a locked filing cabinet located at the University of Western Ontario, whereby after five years, the files will be shredded.

If you do experience distress because of any of the questions in the survey please contact the researchers right away and we will provide assistance. There are no known risks to participating in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status. A potential benefit of participating in this study is the opportunity to reflect on your knowledge, attitudes and preparation as a future teacher on domestic violence related issues. In appreciation for your assistance with the study, you will receive a \$5.00 gift certificate for use at the Faculty of Education's cafeteria.

Completion and return of the questionnaire indicates your consent to participate in this study.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Dr. Peter Jaffe or Ronit Futerman. If you wish to be emailed a copy of the results or would like to debrief, please contact Ronit Futerman by email. This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Curriculum Vita

Name: Ronit Futerman

Post-secondary Education and Degrees: York University
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2005-2009 B.A. (Hons)

The University of Western Ontario
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Related Work Experience

Student Intern
Vanier Children's Services
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Research Assistant
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